

REPORT



dr inż. Zofia Pawłowska
dr Małgorzata Pęciłło
dr Anna Skład

INITIATING OF ACTIVITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS' AUTONOMOUS FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON ACTIVE AGEING AND AN INTER-GENERATIONAL APPROACH

Project VS/2019/0007

April 2021



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OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS' AUTONOMOUS
FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON ACTIVE AGEING
AND AN INTER-GENERATIONAL APPROACH**

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Authors: Zofia Pawłowska, Ph.D. (Eng.) Małgorzata Pęciłło, Ph.D. and Anna Skład, Ph.D. (Department of Safety and Health Management, Central Institute for Labour Protection – National Research Institute, CIOP-PIB)

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FOREWORD

The purpose of this report is to summarise the findings experts have made in the course of the project “Initiating of activities for implementation of the European Social Partners’ Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach” (VS/2019/0007) in the years 2019 - 2020.

The key contributors to the project were Maria Żytko and Karol Nosal who were responsible for its management and coordination. This involved collecting data from the Partners, evaluating materials developed subsequently and organising training and Steering Group meetings. Other contributors to project materials included Barbara Surdykowska, the project’s legal expert, and Jerzy Jaworski of NSZZ Solidarność.

The project would not be possible without the engagement of experts selected by partner organisations who sourced the materials for this project report. They are (in alphabetical order of the organisations’ countries):

Stefaan Peirsman (Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond – Confederation Syndcal Cretien, ACV-CSC, **Belgium**),

Liene Liekna and Irina Semjonova (Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia, LBAS, **Latvia**),

Angel Panev and Maja Stefkovska-Paneva (Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Macedonia, KSS, **North Macedonia**), Dona Dimov-Markovska (Organization of Employers of Macedonia OEM, **North Macedonia**),

Barbara Surdykowska (NSZZ Solidarność **Poland**) and Robert Lisicki (Lewiatan Confederation, **Poland**),

Ioan Narosi and Agnieszka Ghinararu (Democratic Trade Union Confederation of Romania – CSDR, **Romania**),

Ilaria Carlino and Francesco Lauria (Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori, CISL, **Italy**), Emma Garavaglia (Università Cattolica di Milano), Francesco Marcaletti (Zaragoza University -ES)

It must be stressed that the project was supported at the European level by the European Trade Union Confederation, ETUC and the European Federation of Retired and Elderly People, FERPA.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Demographic processes in Europe and their effect on the labour market

Between the 1970s and 1990s the governments of European countries pursued a policy which promoted “early exit” from the labour market, i.e. early retirement. The purpose was to tackle the problem of unemployment, in particular in the youngest age groups. The policy worked well for employers helping them restructure their business (and reduce employment among other things), for trade unions who were able to negotiate good retirement packages for their members and for those employees who were willing to leave the labour market.

As well as the benefits, the “early exit” policy brought about a number of negative consequences. Older workers were increasingly perceived less attractive and incapable of work entirely or largely. As a result, older people were discriminated against on the labour market, which was particularly acute during recruitment. Experienced employees would quit, leaving companies without their valuable know-how¹.

All this was accompanied by demographic change which had a huge relevance for the labour market. With a significant fall in birth rates starting in the mid 1980s and longer life expectancies, the result was an aging society and a growing disproportion between people in work and pensioners (Fig. 1).

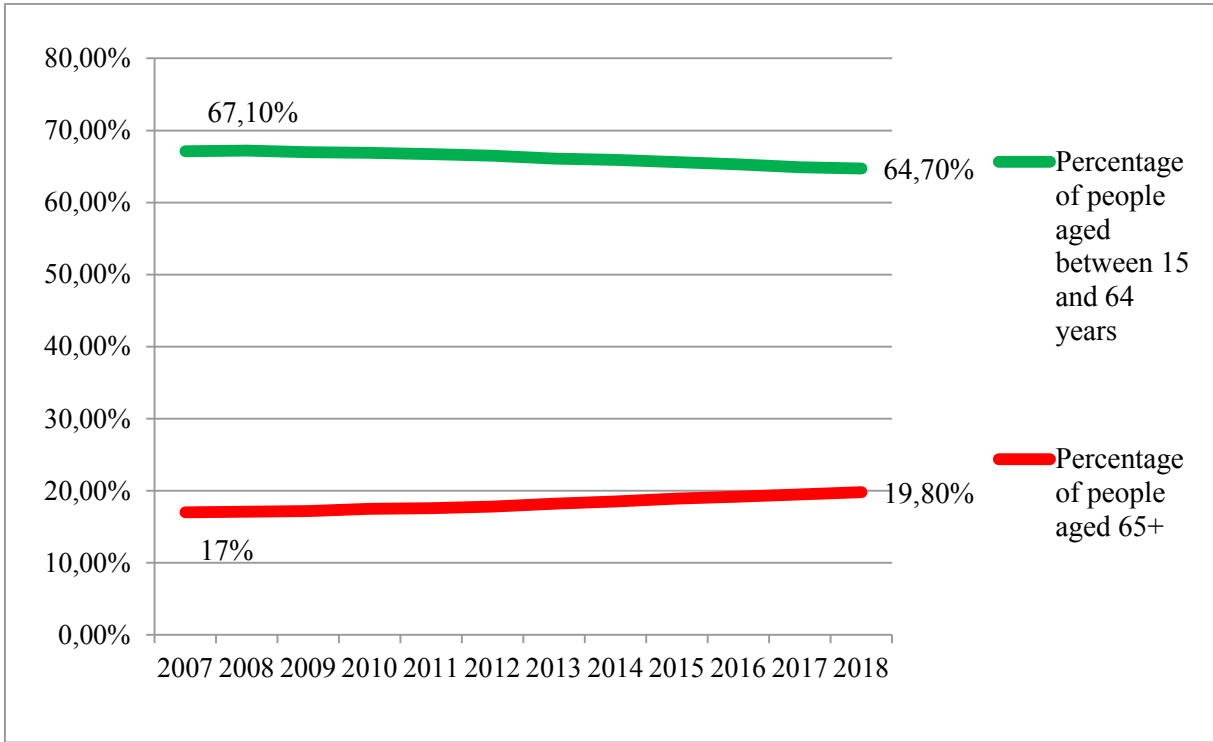


Fig. 1. Share of people aged between 15 and 64 years and 65+ in overall population in Europe.

¹ Walker A. (2005), *The Emergence of Age Management in Europe*, International Journal of Organisational Behaviour, Volume 10 (1), 685-697

Forecasts show that the process will continue to deepen: in 2050 in the European Union per 100 working age people 52 people will be 65+, compared to 2019 data when the rate (called the demographic dependency ratio) was 31.4 (Fig. 2). This calls for action to extend working lives and ensure that workers are fit for work while they are economically active.

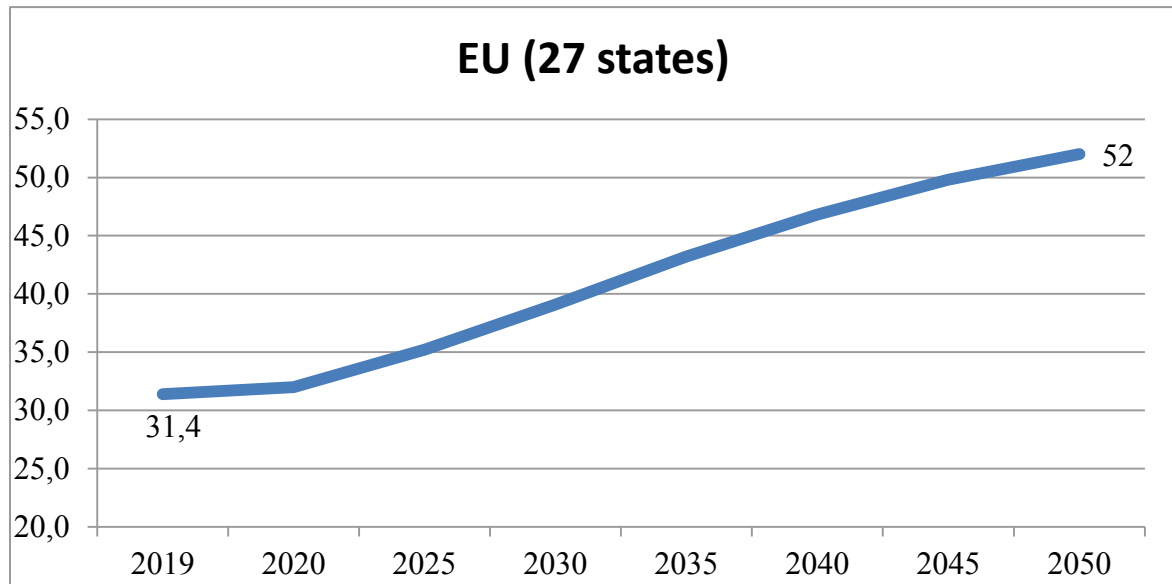


Fig. 2. Demographic dependency ratio in the EU – forecast until 2050.

1.2. Concept of age management

treatment and applies to all those in work.

The overall objective of age management is to promote the sustainability of prolonged work careers. To address the problems of Europe’s poor labour supply, a new concept emerged called “age management”. Designed to ensure that workers can stay in the labour market healthy and active until and after the legal retirement age, age management involves a variety of activities whose purpose is to make a more rational and efficient use of human resources by catering to the needs and capacities of workers of all ages. The idea is not equivalent to giving older workers a preferential

One of the first European approaches to age management - that has been broadly adopted by employers and Governments - is based on the concept of. Work Ability (Ilmarinen, 2006²). The concept, developed in the 1990s by the Finnish Institute for Occupational Health, is defined as the result of the interaction between the physical and mental demands of work and the worker’s functional abilities and skills and their health and their own assessment of how they function in a specific organisational and social situation. The basic factors that determine work ability include:

- the individual’s resources such as health and functional abilities which are physical, mental and social;
- knowledge and skills which make up the individual’s competences;
- the individual’s values and attitudes and motivation to work;

² : Ilmarinen J. (2006), Towards a longer worklife! Ageing and the quality of worklife in the European Union, Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki.

- the type of work and its tangible and psycho-social environment and the management's leadership.

Other factors that support growth and sustain work ability include family, social environment (friends and acquaintances) and the outside environment with its efficient healthcare systems and support for health and safety in the workplace. Workers' work ability can be measured through a questionnaire (the Work Ability Questionnaire) that allows measuring the individual Work Ability Index.

Sustaining individual work ability means ensuring the right balance between the person's resources and the work demands. Because the resources are controlled primarily by the worker and work is controlled by the employer, the only way to ensure a good work ability is the cooperation of workers, employers and managers towards the same goal. . Studies have shown that an improved work ability results in an improved quality of life and productivity within 2-3 years, bringing real benefits for workers and employers alike. In addition, if fostered, activities aimed at sustaining the work ability can improve people's health and quality of life also when they are no longer economically active.

Beyond the Work Ability Model, other approaches to age management, as well as various strategies have been developed across Europe. Nevertheless, as scholars highlight, still employers tend not to consider age management a strategic priority - even if it has been broadly demonstrated that their role is crucial for promoting older workers' employment and employability (Garavaglia et al., 2020³).

If age management needs to become a common practice for enterprises, it must become a key priority of health and safety management and human resources management. policies and strategies This means that employers have to take into account the diverse age-related needs of their employees in areas such as:

- recruitment,
- continuous education,
- career planning and development,
- ensuring a good work – life balance,
- health promotion and protection,
- workplace design,
- assessing occupational hazards and introducing measures to reduce the risks which includes the ability to change jobs to better match the worker's capacities,
- supporting workers' retirement transitions.

1.3. European Social Partners' Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach

Given today's demographic dependency ratio across Europe and its likely increase, worker age management is a challenge for the entire European Union.

For age management measures to be effective and to ensure that they respect workers' rights and comply with employers' interests, all social partners must join forces.

³ Garavaglia, E., Marcaletti, F., & Iñiguez-Berrozpe, T. (2020). Action Research in Age Management: The Quality of Ageing at Work Model. *Work, Aging and Retirement*.

Signed on 8 March 2017, the European Social Partners' Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach (AAIA for short) is an expression of such a commitment. The signatories represented:

- European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC),
- BusinessEurope, an association of entrepreneurs and employers,
- Central Europe Energy Partners (CEEP), an EU level association of Central European energy companies,
- European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (UEAPME).

The aims of the agreement are as follows:

- Increasing the awareness and understanding of employers, workers and their representatives of the challenges and opportunities deriving from demographic change;
- Providing employers, workers and their representatives at all levels with practical approaches and/or measures to promote and manage active ageing in an effective manner;
- Ensuring and maintaining a healthy, safe and productive working environment;
- Fostering innovative life-cycle approaches with productive and quality jobs to enable people to remain in work until legal retirement age;
- Facilitating exchanges, mutual cooperation and fostering concrete actions to transfer knowledge and experience between generations at the workplace.

The signatories agreed that social partners can support the delivery of these aims by pursuing actions using specific measures and tools in five areas. The first area involves a strategic assessment of workforce demography meaning a workforce diagnosis to understand the age structure, skills, qualifications and experience and to set the results against an assessment of the working conditions, health and safety requirements and ICT (information and telecommunication technologies) tools that are or can be used. The results of the analysis should be the starting point for planning further actions. The second area involves health and safety action at the workplace, i.e. to reduce the occupational hazards to ensure that workers can continue work until the legal retirement age and retire in good health. The third area includes actions designed to support lifelong learning, which is so crucial in the context of gaining new competences required to continue in work. The fourth area is about work organisation which is adapting work to the needs and capacities of workers of different ages. Area number five envisages measures promoting inter-generational solidarity in the workplace.

The signatories committed themselves to promoting and implementing these measures at the national, sectoral and company level.

1.4. Project “Initiating of activities for implementation of the European Social Partners’ Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach”

Once signed, the AAIA Agreement provided an incentive for social partners across Europe to launch initiatives to implement the agreement. One such initiative is the project “Initiating of activities for implementation of the European Social Partners’ Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach”.

The project leader is the National Commission of the Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union NSZZ Solidarność (Poland).

The project's participants include workers' and employers' organisations from six European states:

- Poland (Konfederacja Lewiatan – Polish Confederation Lewiatan),
- Latvia (Latvijas Brīvo Arodbiedrību Savienība - Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia),
- Italy (Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori, CISL),
- North Macedonia (Confederation of Free Trade Unions of Macedonia, KSS and Organization of Employers of Macedonia, OEK),
- Belgium (Algemeen Christelijk Vakverbond – Confederation Syndcal Cretien, ACV-CSC),
- Romania (Democratic Trade Union Confederation of Romania, CSDR).

There are also pan-European partners:

- European Trade Union Confederation, ETUC;
- European Federation of Retired and Elderly People; FERPA.

The project was actively and scientifically supported by the Central Institute for Labour Protection – National Research Institute (Poland). Day-to-day project management was provided by the Steering Group with representatives of all project participants.

The project began in March 2019. Although initially scheduled to end in December 2020, the project was extended due to the COVID-19 pandemic until October 2021.

The goal of the project is to create conditions for national implementations of the AAIA Agreement. This is to be achieved by analysing the current situation in the area of age management, drafting national action plans and a catalogue of good practices and recommendations. The second goal is to improve the knowledge of social partners on better working conditions in the context of extending people's working lives and promoting the contents of the AAIA through training and promotion in partner countries during the project.

The main project activities which are reflected in this Report are designed to:

1. Identify the legal solutions which support age management in the countries using a questionnaire specifically developed for this purpose. The questionnaire asks about the existing legal requirements and how they relate to the different groups of measures promoted in the AAIA Agreement. Chapter 2 of this Report gives an overview of the legal solutions applied in the countries.
2. Identify and describe 36 good age management practices (6 for each project country) using a questionnaire and explain the measures already implemented and the reasons why they were taken, the results achieved and success factors. Chapter 3 of this Report gives an overview of good practices.
3. Conduct two rounds of national workshops in the project countries to develop action plans of social partners to implement the AAIA Agreement. Chapter 4 of this Report gives an overview of the workshop results.

Apart from that, using expert knowledge, literature review and information supplied by the other Partners, the Central Institute for Labour Protection developed training materials on the practical aspects of age management education in enterprises. The materials were prepared in Polish and subsequently translated into Italian, Flemish, Latvian, Macedonian and Romanian.

They became the basis for conducting five rounds of three day international training courses for representatives of trade unions and employers' organisations from six countries (due to the COVID-19 pandemic the training took longer than originally planned).

This Report is available in printed form in two languages – in Polish and English and the executive summary is available as a separate document in electronic format in the languages of all the partners (Polish, Flemish, Italian, Latvian, Macedonian, Romanian).

CHAPTER 2. Review of legal requirements and policies supporting the implementation of the Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach in the project countries

2.1. Goal and scope of the review

The basic objective of the review was to identify national policies and legal requirements which in the opinion of trade union representatives involved in the project are designed to implement the Agreement on active ageing and inter-generational approach in their countries.

The review was conducted using a questionnaire specifically developed for this purpose. It asked questions about strategies, policies, legal acts and guidelines in the project countries which social partners may use to implement the Agreement. It looked at:

- a) In areas: “Health and safety at the workplace” (*point 4B of the Agreement*) and “Skills and competence management” (*point 4C of the Agreement*):
 - national strategies or long-term action plans on safety and health which define goals and actions in keeping with the aims of the Agreement;
 - legal acts which define actions required to understand the risks to health and safety in the workplace, assess and prevent the risks (in accordance with the European Union’s directive on safety and health of workers 89/391/EEC) with a particular focus on age-related requirements to ensure that older workers are properly protected;
- b) In areas: “Work organisation for healthy and productive working lives” (*point 4D of the Agreement*) and “Inter-generational approach” (*point 4E of the Agreement*):
 - legal requirements to ensure that social dialogue at company level takes place, with a particular focus on involving workers in work ability measures as needed and provision of information and tools to ensure that workers and/or their representatives can be part of the process;
 - legal requirements to ensure stable employment for pre-retirement age workers (e.g. protection from dismissal while in pre-retirement age).

The review also looked at voluntary standards, national and sectoral guidelines, etc. in all of the areas.

The sub-sections below present the results of the review. They reflect the opinions of project partners about the existing legal and other solutions in their countries which can be applied to implement the Agreement.

2.2. Review results: Health and safety at the workplace (point 4B of the Agreement)

Table 1 lists national strategies and long-term action plans identified in the review which can support the implementation of the Agreement in the area of “Health and safety at the workplace”. They are related to issues which were considered relevant in the EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014–2020. It stressed that “*it is vital to provide a physically and mentally safe and healthy working environment throughout people’s working life in order to achieve the goal of active and healthy ageing for all workers*”.

Table 1. Long-term strategies and plans which may support the implementation of the Agreement in the area “Health and safety at the workplace”

Country	Strategies and long-term plans
Belgium	National strategy on well-being in the workplace for the years 2016-2020
Latvia	Guidelines on the future of workplace safety for the years 2016-2020 Workplace safety development plan for the years 2016-2018
Macedonia	Policy of Health and Safety in the Workplace Strategy for Safety and Health at workplaces 2020
Poland	Multiannual programme “Better health and safety at work”
Romania	National strategy on health and safety in the workplace for the 2018-2020 National strategy for breakdown prevention
Italy	Annual report on the state of application of health and safety legislation and on its possible development (art.6, subparagraph 8, lett.e), dlgs. n. 81/2008)

Each of the countries under review through its trade union representatives has identified a number of legal regulations which can be used as tools to support the delivery of the Agreement. They are mainly to be found in legal acts implementing the provisions of the framework directive 89/391/EEC.

In Belgium the basic legal acts which regulate occupational health and safety are the Workers’ Well-being Act and code of well-being in the workplace. Trade union representatives point out that all requirements implemented in accordance with directive 89/391/EEC (including risk assessment, information, consultation and training, medical check-ups, establishing preventative and protection services in the workplace, collaborating with contractors) can be considered useful for implementing the Agreement.

Trade union representatives from Latvia point out that as regards Agreement-related requirements, the employer is required to organise a system of work protection which includes internal supervision over the work environment, including risk assessment and drafting a plan to reduce the risk, training requirements and employee health check-ups.

In North Macedonia the regulations implementing framework directive 89/391/EEC provide a basis for protecting workers against work-related hazards. As regards older workers, the following requirements have been introduced in the labour law:

- women aged 57 years and over and aged 59 years and over are given special protection although it is not clear what that protection should entail,
- older workers cannot be assigned to overtime and night work unless they agree to do so.

Polish trade union representatives find that regulations on occupational hazard assessment requirements are critical to the implementation of the Agreement; they also highlight the requirements to limit monotonous work and work at a pre-defined pace and to ensure ergonomics.

In Italy the basic health and safety regulation is the so called “consolidated act” which implements EU directives. The act stresses the relation between safety and work organisation which means having to:

- assess all hazards, including psychosocial ones,
- involve all stakeholders (company management, workers and worker representatives).

Italian regulations state that worker age and health must be taken account of when conducting a risk assessment and evaluating worker skills and health when assigning jobs. Workers who are temporarily unable to do their job must be assigned, where possible, to other jobs while keeping their previous pay.

The implementation of the Agreement in this area can also be supported in the opinion of trade union representatives from Italy, Romania, Macedonia and Latvia, through voluntary standards and national level guidelines, including the national versions of ISO 45001 “Requirements and guidelines for occupational health and safety management systems”.

2.3. Review results: “Skills and competence management” (point 4C of the Agreement)

The implementation of the Agreement in this area can be supported by national strategies and plans for human resource management. The countries under review feature a variety of situations. No relevant strategies or plans have been identified in Macedonia, Poland and Latvia. Romania has three strategic documents in this regard, they are the National Strategy for Green Workplaces, National Strategy for Human Resources RATEN for the years 2016-2025 and Integrated Strategy for the Development of Human Resources for the years 2009-2020.

Belgium has a collective agreement on delivering a plan on employing working age workers. The idea for the plan is to define measures which are appropriate for the company designed to maintain or increase employment of workers aged 45 years and older in one or several of the areas below:

- recruitment and hiring of new employees;
- developing employee skills and qualifications including access to training;
- career development and support at company level;
- possibility to be moved internally to a function which is consistent with the qualifications and skills of workers and how they can develop;
- possibility to adjust working time and conditions;
- worker health, prevention and possibility to eliminate physical and psychosocial obstacles to staying in work;
- systems for recognising new skills.

At the regional level in Flanders, there are sectoral agreements in place which define how sectoral social partners and the Flemish government will work together. They cover issues such as linking education with labour market and encouraging skill development; the ageing of the workforce and ways to deal with it are also included. Flanders also adopted a skills strategy which was developed in cooperation with the OECD. The strategy fosters a culture of lifelong learning and identifies the need to develop a knowledge-based economy which makes an optimal use of the human potential.

In Italy lifelong learning is supported by the state which finances training for public sector employees, all part of three year training plans. Private companies which belong to bilateral inter-sectoral funds pay a statutory amount towards lifelong learning which they then use by participating in training organised by the funds.

There are strong differences between the countries in terms of the legal regulations they have to support the Agreement in this area. In Macedonia there are no legal regulations in this area. Romania's vocational training is covered in the labour code. In Poland trade union representatives point to an insufficient implementation of measures set out in the act on employment promotion and labour market institutions to provide support for older workers.

As required by law Latvia offers leave for education or training. It can be granted to workers if it is covered in the collective agreement or work contract. In addition, all workers are entitled to a leave which is 20 working days to study for a state exam or write and defend a diploma work. The employer decides whether training leave is paid or not.

In Belgium the arrangements for adult education differ region to region. At the federal level worker training is regulated by the act on efficient and effective work. Under the regulation workers are entitled to five days of training on average annually. It is up to social partners to enforce the law under industry agreements. Private sector employees are entitled to a break from work or part-time work over a limited period of time with some of the pay they lose compensated through social security benefits. The maximum time a break from work or part-time work can last is negotiated at industry or company level (in the case of training it is a maximum of three years).

At the regional level in Flanders numerous training incentives are offered to workers and employers. Each private sector worker is entitled to 125 hours of unpaid educational leave annually. Once the training is completed, the employer can claim the costs back. Training is available to all workers, regardless of age.

In Italy workers who attend regular courses in primary, secondary and vocational schools are not required to do overtime and may choose the shifts to ensure that they can continue their training and study for their exams. They are entitled to a paid leave in order to take the exams. The majority of collective agreements include the right to a paid leave if used for training and education. Bilateral inter-sectoral funds have been set up to support lifelong learning promoted by social partners and supervised by the ministry of labour. A tax relief is offered on training expenditure if the course teaches 4.0 technology skills.

The implementation of the Agreement in this area is also supported in the opinion of trade union representatives from Italy, Romania, Macedonia and Latvia by standards and national level guidelines that can be applied voluntarily. This includes national versions of standards ISO 26000 Guidance on Social Responsibility and ISO 45001 Requirements and guidance on Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems.

2.4. Review results: Work organisation for healthy and productive working lives. Inter-generational approach (points 4D and 4E of the Agreement)

Implementing the Agreement in the areas can be supported, among other things by legal requirements on co-participation and social dialogue. A large part of the requirements is similar in EU countries which have implemented Directive 2002/14/EC establishing a general framework for informing and consulting employees and framework directive 89/391/EEC which sets out how workers can participate in measures for safety and health of workers. What differs is the perception of how effective the laws are in enforcing social dialogue and consultation in the different countries.

In Belgium at the request of trade unions a group representation may be set up which is authorised to approach employers and ask for information. Companies with at least 50 workers must set up a Committee for the Prevention and Protection in the Workplace. Its main task is to develop, put forward and actively engage in occupational health and safety

actions. In companies with at least 100 workers a Works Council may be established as an elected body. The Works Council receives information, gives advice and has certain decision-making and control rights. The employer is required to consult the Council on matters such as work organisation, employment conditions, introduction of new technologies, vocational training and retraining, camera monitoring, control of online communications (e-mails, Internet), criteria of professional qualifications, HR policy, promoting cooperation between employers and employees, structural change within the company, groups layoffs, early retirement, closure of plant or department, bankruptcy, delayed payments, night work and return to work. The employer provides the Works Council with information about social, economic and financial issues. Depending on the nature of the information, it should be given annually, quarterly, periodically or occasionally. Social information covers primarily employment (current structure and future perspectives). Economic and financial information is to give workers a good understanding of the company's financial and economic situation.

In Romania social dialogue is regulated in the Social Dialogue Act. In the opinion of trade union representatives the current legal regulations ensure sufficient co-participation of workers in areas such as maintaining work ability, access to information and tools needed for co-participation in measures involving work organisation and inter-generational approach.

In the opinion of trade union representatives from Latvia while co-participation requirements set out in national legal acts are usually appropriate, practical implementation may lag behind. Trade unions would like to see more control functions passed on to them to better protect worker rights. At present, trade unions do not have a say on company efficiency, which may be interpreted in a number of ways. Trade unions and worker representatives are entitled to such information, but the company may ban them from copying documents and limit the time to read documents, etc.

Italy's social dialogue at company level is not regulated by law. It is, however, defined in tripartite agreements and at inter-sectoral level. Under the regulations companies must consult trade unions when deciding on the Redundancy Fund and group layoffs. The law is not specific enough on the right to inform workers.

Poland's legal basis for social dialogue at company level is the trade union act. Because works councils de facto do not exist, the act on worker right to information and consultation can hardly be considered implemented. Macedonia does not have legal acts to regulate the principles of social dialogue.

Each of the countries has regulations in place supporting older workers towards the end of their working lives.

In Belgium the right to a pension can be claimed at the age of 60 years. There are, however, some exceptions where these benefits can be claimed before the person turns 60. Should an employer dismiss an older worker, they must pay a severance pay which depends on the monthly pay and years with the company.

Latvia's regulations set out the rules for dismissal. Unless workers have vastly different work results and qualifications, those that will keep their jobs will have less than 5 years until legal retirement age. This requirement, however, comes with no guarantee of employment for pre-retirement age workers since there are about 10 groups of employees who might get similar benefit.

In Macedonia the labour relations act ensures special protection to women who are 57 years and over and men who are 59 years and over. However, there is nothing in the law or collective agreements to specify what the special protection entails. The law limits overtime and night work for older workers if they are fine with it.

In Poland these issues are regulated in the labour code under which the employer cannot terminate an employment contract if the employee has not more than four years until legal retirement age, if their employment history allows them to retire when they reach retirement age. In Romania as well this is regulated in the labour code.

In Italy it is legal for companies to sign an agreement with trade unions to increase worker numbers by reducing working hours of current workers, reduce their pay and hire new workers under contracts for an indefinite period. The agreement also defines the conditions of earlier retirement for older workers. This is hardly used because there is no reserve for pension contribution for unworked hours which means that pensions are lower. The law also allows an early retirement at the age of 62 under the condition of having paid pension contribution for 38 years.

2.5. Review results: Strategic assessments of workforce demography (*point 4A of the Agreement*)

In Belgium strategic assessments of workplace demography are conducted using a practical tool called “age pyramid”, an aspect that must be considered especially when companies reduce employment. Group layoffs must comply with the information and consultation procedure and ensure that those dismissed represent the right age group proportions (below 30 years, from 30 to 50 years and more than 50 years).

Latvia’s approach is to follow the Latvian National Development Plan for the years 2014-2020, prepared by the Inter-sectoral Coordination Centre, and a conceptual report "Strategy of active ageing for a longer and better working life in Latvia", developed by the Ministry of Social Welfare; additional guidelines are still to be developed.

In Macedonia trade union representatives are happy with the Labour Force Survey which is conducted by the State Statistical Office (other countries run the survey as well) because it is one of the most valuable sources of labour market information. The objective of the survey is to collect data about the size, structure and characteristics of the working age population.

Trade union representatives in Poland suggest that workplace strategic assessments could become mandatory and the first to adopt these should be large enterprises.

In Romania this area is addressed by the national employment strategy 2014-2020 which is to be implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice, National Employment Agency (ANOFM) and enterprises. There may be additional guidelines on that possibly coming from the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice, Ministry of National Education and National Employment Agency (ANOFM).

Trade union representatives from Latvia, Romania and Macedonia believe that there should be national level guidelines for conducting strategic workplace assessments.

CHAPTER 3. Good practices in age management

3.1. Review of good practices

A good practice is a solution which was implemented in a specific enterprise, is innovative and has produced measurable benefits, and what is more, it can be successfully used in other enterprises.

One element of the project was to collect information about good practices in the area of age management in enterprises from six European countries of our project Partners. To collect good practices interviews were conducted with representatives of companies that have already implemented them or are in the process of doing that. To ensure that good practices are described in the same way, a questionnaire was developed specifically for the project, and used subsequently for interviewing.

The questionnaire begins with a description of project background. It then goes on to explain what good practices are and why they are described.

Next, a classification of areas for age management is given and respondents are asked to identify those areas where they have applied good practices in their companies. These areas include:

- adapting processes and workplaces to the needs of workers taking into account their physical and mental abilities due to their age and health;
- ensuring adequate division of duties and tasks among workers taking into account their physical and mental abilities due to their age and health;
- considering age-related issues when negotiating and implementing collective agreements;
- recruiting;
- training and lifelong learning;
- collecting and sharing specialist knowledge/skills and know-how that comes from professional experience made in the workplace and passing it on to new workers;
- fighting age-related stereotypes;
- planning and developing workers' career paths;
- flexible work organisation to match the needs of workers;
- promoting health in the workplace;
- supporting workers as they progress towards retirement.

Further in the questionnaire many open-ended questions were asked going back to why age management activities were undertaken, what was their characteristics and how they were delivered, the effects achieved, success factors and barriers and the role social partners played in initiating and implementing these actions.

Thirty six interviews were conducted using the questionnaire with representatives of companies that have implemented a variety of good practices specific to age management – six in each project country. The majority of good practices identified in the interviews covered several age management areas. Most of the good practices were related to health promotion (25), training (23) and knowledge transfer (20), and adapting work processes and places to worker needs (19). The lowest number of good practices involved recruitment and

fighting age-related stereotypes – with six examples of such good practices identified in each area. Fig. 3 and Table 2 show the number of good practices broken by the different age management areas.

Fig. 3. Number of identified good practices by age management areas.



Table 2. Number of good practices identified by country and age management areas.

Area	Belgium	Latvia	Macedonia	Poland	Italy	Romania
Adapting processes and workplaces to the needs of workers taking into account their physical and mental abilities due to their age and health	5	1	1	3	4	6
Ensuring adequate division of duties and tasks among workers taking into account their physical and mental abilities due to their age and health	4	1	2	-	2	4
Considering age-related issues when negotiating and implementing collective agreements	5	4	1	1	1	2
Recruitment	2	1	2	-	1	1
Training and lifelong learning	5	3	3	5	6	3
Collecting and sharing specialist knowledge/skills and know-how that comes from professional experience made in the workplace and passing it on to new workers	3	2	3	5	1	6
Fighting age-related stereotypes	-	1	1	2	1	2
Planning and developing workers' career paths	4	-	1	4	1	3
Flexible work organisation to match the needs of workers	4	1	-	5	2	5

Area	Belgium	Latvia	Macedonia	Poland	Italy	Romania
Promoting health in the workplace	5	3	1	6	4	6
Supporting workers as they progress towards retirement	5	5	-	3	1	5
Others					1	1

Nearly all good practices implemented in Belgian enterprises involved training, promotion of health, adapting processes and workplaces to worker needs and inclusion of age-related issues when negotiating and implementing collective agreements. No good practices related to fighting age-related stereotypes have been identified.

In Latvia nearly all of the enterprises asked (except one) have implemented good practices with regard to retirement. Four cover aspects of age when negotiating and implementing collective agreements. Three have launched good practices in the area of training and health promotion. No good practices related to career development have been identified.

As regards Poland, all of the interviews mentioned good practices in the area of health promotion and 5 good practices each in areas such as training, knowledge transfer and flexible working time. None of the good practices involved task allocation between workers to take account of their age and health or to recruitment. Only one good practice involved collective agreements.

Good practices implemented in North Macedonian enterprises are largely designed to replace older workers with younger ones if they cannot sustain any more hard physical labour and their health is seriously affected due to the occupation. The idea for these good practices is to transfer knowledge between generations of workers and, on the other hand, to understand that older workers may feel exploited and then rejected once they have shared their experience. At the same time, the importance of providing them with mechanisms for voluntary transition into early retirement with dignity is stressed.

The interviews conducted in Romania showed good practices with regard to health promotion, knowledge transfer and adapting processes and workplaces to worker needs, five interviews revealed good practices in the area of flexible working time and transitioning towards retirement.

In Italy most of the good practices involved training. Four of the enterprises have implemented good practices to adapt processes and workplaces to worker needs and promote health. There was one good practice each in age-related issues when negotiating and implementing collective agreements, recruitment, fighting stereotypes and career development.

Table 3 gives basic information on the good practices and what activities they involved.

Table 3. List of good practices in the area of age management collected in the project

No.	Name of good practice / company	Country	Industry	Activities
1	Age management in VELUX	Poland	industrial production, sale of building materials	<p>The company has implemented a number of actions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health /ergonomics in the workplace • Measures to prevent routine /professional burnout • Support for workers struggling personally • Improving qualifications/skills • Respect for diversity in the workplace • Flexible organisation of working time <p>The company sets positive trends which gives it its competitive advantage.</p>
2	Mentoring and health-oriented programmes in Siemens Sp. z o.o.	Poland	automation of production processes, electrification, manufacture, services, sales	<p>The company has implemented a number of actions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring • Programme "I look after myself – for my well-being and success " • Audit of health risks
3	Organisational activities in the IT sector	Poland	IT	<p>The company has implemented a number of actions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lifelong learning /improving skills/training • adapting working time to worker expectations • health promotion in the workplace
4	Age management involving production workers and white collar workers	Poland	automotive	<p>The company has implemented a number of programmes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Supporting Physical and Mental Health • Programme Human Resources Planning and Selection • Programme Human Resources and Staff Education • Programme Good Nutrition • Programme Inter-generational Transfer of Knowledge

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Diagnosis of Health • Programme “Stop-Smoking” • Programme Organising the Workplace • Programme Flexible Forms of Employment • Programme Supporting After Work Activity
5	Seniors Policy in Nestle S.A.	Poland	Food processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of rules that are superior to the mandatory rules as regards working time arrangements (such as longer and more frequent breaks at work, working flexible hours, etc.) • Using mentoring to transfer knowledge and experience between generations of workers • Offering substantial benefits to workers (severance pay for permanent and total inability to work, life insurance, Employee Pension Programme) • Offering health care packages to workers with a private medical centre • Health promotion under the programme “WellNes in Action”
6	Health / effectiveness of workers – programme in Philip Morris S.A.	Poland	Tobacco products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health care (packages: Healthy man / Healthy woman, psychological help, dietetics and rehabilitation) • Promoting a healthy lifestyle
7	Reducing workplace hazards for 50 + workers / Tarkett S.p.A	Italy	production manufacture of buileders' ware of plastic, types of business: manufacture of natural linoleum flooring	<p>Training, adequate personal protection equipment, operational controls, health supervision.</p> <p>The company has launched comprehensive and integrating efforts starting from risk assessment, designed to reduce workplace hazards. The company’s top management, management team, in-house doctors and health and safety worker representatives are now part of the preventative planning and implementation process.</p>
8	Analysis of attitudes and training for technical services staff / Azienda Trasporti Milanesi (ATM)	Italy	Public transport	Awareness campaigns, screening and information tests and training on healthy lifestyle and cardiological and oncology prevention. The focus today is on prevention as part of age management. As a result, the activities concentrate on people’s attitudes and healthy eating to promote healthy and active ageing.
9	Training and development of cross-cutting competences	Italy	metallurgy industry, produces diamond wheels for processing stone / marble / ceramics	Filling the skills gap of workers supporting innovative processes (in accordance with the national collective agreement in the metallurgy industry), strengthening individual skills and developing a methodology to help identify hidden competences of workers.

10	Retraining older workers in Telecom Italia S.p.A. (TIM)	Italy	Telecommunications	Training designed to retrain workers and develop digital skills to keep their jobs.
11	PATH4YOUNG / Provincia Autonoma di Trento - PAT	Italy	local government, manages local policies on health, education, welfare and transport infrastructure	Knowledge transfer by mentoring or reverse mentoring where older workers transfer their knowledge and experience from the company and young workers share their digital skills with older colleagues.
12	Collective agreement / LUXOTTICA GROUP S.P.A.	Italy	Design, production and distribution of clothing, luxury and sports eyewear	Programme of exchange between generations with older workers voluntarily changing to part-time work, as inter-generational relay (while keeping the full pension contribution)
13	Plan to maintain ability to work in Pasendale	Belgium	Cheese factory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional leave for older workers • Programme of knowledge transfer from experienced workers to new workers • Adjusting work to the capacities of older workers (e.g. by offering part-time work if they can no longer work full time) • Organising events for employees and their families
14	Janssen Pharmaceutica	Belgium	Productions of pharmaceuticals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talent FIT centre – supporting workers with finding new jobs internally or outside the company in connection with restructuring • Day of Change – information campaign for workers about the company’s plans for the future to keep staff engaged • Enabling workplace changes for a week to help with planning career paths (familiarisation with the work and a possible change for good) • Allowing older workers to work the day shift only (maximum for a year or two) so that they can improve the process, support the development of materials to ensure transfer of knowledge, etc. • Training for foremen on how to support older workers • Health promotion programme (additional medical check-ups, combatting stress, advice from a dietician, improving sleep quality)

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge transfer programme • Possibility to exchange a part of the annual bonus for additional leave (5 days before 55 years old, 10 days after turning 55)
15	KBC bank	Belgium	Banking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MINERVA Plan – identifying career paths for 55+ workers in talks with their superior (a choice of one out of five paths: from continuing as before, through reducing hours and effort, to leaving the company whilst keeping the benefits) • Competence Centre – support with transferring to another job within the company • Talent mobility – in cooperation with a sectoral organisation, discovering talents and ways to use them outside the company • KBC University • Flexible working time
16	TVH	Belgium	Rental of forklifts, handling equipment, telescopic handlers and forklifts for horizontal transport, basket, port and container lifts, tractors and spare parts, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three additional days of leave at 50, 55 and 60 – which means 9 additional days of leave within 10 years • Time credits – possibility to work part-time while collecting compensation from the government for days off work. Additional time credit is offered by the company - possibility to work at 80% for a maximum of 5 years without losing pay during the professional career • Using alternating hours in the logistics department – workers work not more than two hours per shift in the same job, doing light and heavy work • Workplace control by an ergonomics expert once a month • Providing workers with regulated work stations to sit and stand and with computer screens • Flexible working time • Helping workers return to work after they have had an accident or extended sickness: adapting work stations, possibility to resume work from one day a week • Possibility to work from home for office workers for a specified number of days • Health promotion (gym and leisure area on factory premises, fitness class, cycle

				<p>facilities, massage chairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free fitness tests for workers 45+ during working hours • Healthy meals in the canteen • Events for staff and their families
17	Izeco/Feel Good	Belgium	Snacks factory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For white collar workers: a plan prepared by an ergonomics adviser, regulated workstations (standing – sedentary), controlled screen brightness, lighting adjustment, possibility to work from home one day a week for people aged 45 and over • For blue collar workers: internal adviser for prevention, installation of an automatic packing line, in some packing zones the option to choose sitting or standing, training on lifting methods, possibility to regulate forklifts, new stools, alternating workplaces (depending on the department: every hour, every day) • Sickness: when returning from a sickness absence lasting more than three weeks - a visit to an occupational medicine doctor (Occupational physician), if the sickness is related to work – trying to find a job that will be adjusted to the worker's capacity, if that fails, the employer lays off the worker and pays all the benefits they are entitled to. If the employer adjusts the workstation, and the worker refuses to work there, the employer is allowed to fire that worker without extra pay. Thanks to this the employer will always do their best to find the right work. • Additional leave for workers aged 45 • A bonus of 650 euro for all workers for complying with safety rules • Events for staff and their families
18	Aperom	Belgium	Metal industry (Inox steel manufacture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits for workers 55+: additional leave (10 days of paid leave and 10 of unpaid leave), possibility to work the day shift only, possibility to work 80% in the time credit system, starting from 56 / 58 years workers may retire early if their work involves hard manual labour • Ergonomics solutions: the company's occupational physician visits workstations together with a nurse with a diploma in ergonomics, automation of production lines to reduce the load on the musculoskeletal system by installing a lift for handling sandpaper, reducing the exposure of workers to vibration thanks to a new metal rolling line, ergonomic screening of all new machines, raising the

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> packing area by 90 cm above ground Return to work after sickness: workers who have been sick for a long time are paid by the company the regular health insurance and the difference to what they would normally earn.
19	Support for active ageing and longer working life in the joint stock company "Cēsu Alus"	Latvia	Brewery and producer of alcoholic beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seniors' Day for 55+ workers (centred around health and safety and healthy lifestyle) Additional leave for years worked with the company Pensioners' Club offers tours and other company events Health promotion activities
20	Support for 50 + workers	Latvia	Production and distribution of birch plywood products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jubilee bonuses Extra pay for years worked for the company Additional leave for silvery or golden wedding anniversary Pension insurance in the third pillar Training to improve qualifications delivered using the most experienced workers Additional leave for non-smokers Additional health insurance Stability Fund (may be used to pay workers if the company has financial problems)
21	Recruitment campaign addressed to 50 + workers in "Rimi Latvia"	Latvia	Retail sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three editions of a campaign to encourage people 50+ to take up work with the company Using different channels of communication: television, radio, digital media, visual materials available in the shops Emphasising the advantages of older workers during the campaign So called ambassadors participating in the campaign – workers who have shared their experience in the company
22	Support for active ageing and longer working life	Latvia	Power engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection for workers in pre-retirement age Retirement severance pay

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jubilee bonuses • Pension in the third pillar • Additional leave • Additional health insurance • Inflation rate compensation • Holiday allowance • Child birth allowance • Additional leave for parents of young children
23	Support for active ageing and longer working life	Latvia	Handling of oil and oil products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection period for retirement age workers • Additional leave having worked for 15 years for the company • Jubilee bonuses • Pensioners association • Gym for staff and their families • Training
24	Support for active ageing and longer working life in "Liepājas RAS" Ltd.	Latvia	Waste management and production of electricity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional health insurance • Working from home • Gymnastics in the workplace with a physiotherapist • Training (vocational, general, e.g. time management, communication, team work, stress management) • Additional paid leave for years worked for the company • Holiday allowance (half of the monthly pay) • Fitness equipment available in the recreation hall • Health Days • Retirement severance pay
25	Negotiations with social	North	Commercial organisation involved in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of negotiations to improve workers' economic and social situation

	partners	Macedonia	education	
26	Surplus of employees in the Bank	North Macedonia	Banking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiring a group of young employees for a project designed to implement a new IT credit card system Implementing a monitoring programme which involved experienced workers transferring their knowledge about the bank and card services to the new hires At project end – a special benefits package provided to staff who decided to take voluntary retirement
27	Good practice in an educational entity (SUGS Vlado Tasevski Skopje)	North Macedonia	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of a mentoring programme which involved teachers with many years of school work looking after newly hired teachers teaching the same subject The programme went on for a year during which the newly hired teachers worked as interns with each of them assigned to an older mentor by the head teacher The programme involved training, seminars and courses for teachers; upon completion, the teachers would receive a certificate to confirm they have acquired new skills and knowledge
28	AD Evropa Skopje	North Macedonia	Cocoa products and other confectionery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of solutions to reduce exposure to noise – workers who have lost their hearing and older workers to move to packaging where noise levels are much lower than in the production hall, noise level tests conducted, promoting hearing protection to be worn by staff
29	Construction enterprise in the Republic of North Macedonia	North Macedonia	Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because older workers were in the majority, a decision was taken to hire a group of young workers Older workers asked to do jobs which did not require much physical effort Workers in pre-retirement age (58+) were offered early retirement and the benefits they were entitled to (a bulk sum of their pay for 5 years until retirement age) An additional amount of severance pay was negotiated and a list was drafted of all workers who want to and may choose early retirement; those who want to stay on are able to do it
30	Army YNA (Yugoslavian	North Macedonia	Military organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training organised for recruits to strengthen their psychophysical preparedness

	National Army)	onia		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the training is completed, recruits join a programme where older colleagues share with them their knowledge and experience
31	Negotiating working conditions for older workers in SC ZIROM SA	Romani a	Metallurgy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better working conditions to ensure that older workers perform well (55-64 years)
32	Social dialogue in international enterprise SC Joyson Safety System SRL	Romani a	Production of automotive parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection equipment provided to match the needs of older workers Improving the well-being of workers
33	Fair labour relations in Medgidia	Romani a	Cement production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging workers in pre-retirement age to stay in work or take on the role of trainers for new workers
34	Labour relations in the public system Water Basins Administration Mures - National Administration Of Romanian Waters	Romani a	Water supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actions to maintain high productivity and skills to take new challenges by workers of all ages
35	Special working conditions in the National Society Of Salt Bucharest- Ocna Mures Salt Mine Subsidiary	Romani a	Salt mine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving working conditions with a special focus on older workers
36	Underground works in the National Society Of Salt Bucharest - Ocna Dej Salt Mine Subsidiary	Romani a	Salt mine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efforts to support efficiency of workers across all age groups

3.2. Descriptions of good practices

Support for active ageing and longer working life in the joint stock company "Cēsu Alus", Latvia

Enterprise: Cēsu Alus

Employment: 205

Sector: brewery and manufacturer of alcoholic beverages

Average employee age: 37

Reason for action

The need to address age management became clear to the management of the company and trade unions as they read and analysed data about ageing workforce. A decision was taken to support the company's staff and ensure that they stay fit to work. The motivation for one of the actions undertaken (Seniors' Day) was to offer an attractive option to go beyond what is legally required. The other action (Pensioners' Club) was initiated by the CEO who was inspired by a similar activity in another enterprise which is part of the Capital group, in Finland.

Actions taken

"Seniors' Day" is organised once a year for workers aged 55 years and over but younger workers are equally invited. Seniors' Day has been around for four years. Developed by an environmental health and safety specialist and trade union representatives, the event has the support of the company's management. Each year a special event programme is prepared which includes: information about health and safety in the workplace, ergonomics, healthy approach to work and health as such; interactive tests about the problems above; advice from invited specialists on health, active ageing and stress reduction; gymnastics, etc. Although Seniors' Day takes place on a working day, all the participants receive normal pay. The main objective of Seniors' Day is to provide older workers (55+) with useful information about staying in good health and longer working lives and fostering a sense of ownership with the company. The activities that are part of Seniors' Day preparation include: development of a special programme for the current year and gaining management approval for the programme, inviting specialists, sending out invites to staff who are 55 and over and conducting the event. The trade union has plans to include Seniors' Day in the collective agreement.

As set out in the collective agreement, workers are entitled to additional days of leave for years worked in the company. Those with 20 years or more are given additional 2 days of paid leave annually. This was offered to the staff to say thank you for their loyalty. This activity is controlled by the trade union.

The company also has its Pensioners' Club whose members are pensioners both employed and unemployed who have been with the company for 10 years or longer. The members of the Pensioners' Club receive a gift package twice a year with all the new products the company manufactures (about 30-50 new products yearly), twice a year (on the Līgo festive day – summer solstice in June and for Christmas in December) – an invitation to a special dinner with the company' top management, and once a year – a trip paid for by the company

(they have already visited all of the Group's companies - in Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, Belarus). They also participate in different events - e.g. the Latvian Beer Festival, study visits to the company, etc.

The purpose behind the Pensioners' Club was to appreciate the workers' loyalty and to improve their quality of life in retirement. The Pensioners' Club has been around for five 5 years. Managed by a former company CEO, it is supported by the company's current management. The trade union is not involved actively in the Pensioners' Club, but is happy to support the activities and ready to help if needed.

Apart from the above actions the company organises regular activities targeting workers of all ages, e.g. sports and games, New Year's ball, health promotion (e.g. provision of ginger, lemon and honey to make hot drinks in the winter), etc.

Age management activities are conducted cyclically and in the future the trade union would like to see the number of Seniors' Days doubled in a year. The activities can be easily implemented in other companies, no matter what the size. Thanks to these events, staff feel they are looked after by the company which increases their loyalty and work satisfaction.

Results achieved

An employee satisfaction survey showed that older workers mostly appreciated the package of benefits and that significantly boosts their loyalty to the company. In recent years employee satisfaction has been observed to grow. Thanks to the activities the intended goals have been achieved: workers have the understanding on health issues and identify themselves with the company.

While the activities did not have an effect on inter-generational relations, the company makes a point of shaping these relations through a variety of initiatives. Last year, as an example, the annual staff conference was themed around digitalisation and understanding between generations.

Success factors and barriers

The main success factors of the actions include having active people in the company who are ready to identify and propose management improvements, support from management and engagement of the target group of beneficiaries. The engagement is only possible if we can communicate well with the group. An observation was made that older workers appreciate personal communication: by inviting them directly to join an activity, we can ensure a much higher uptake as opposed to putting up the information on an information board.

The main barriers that had to be overcome had to do with having to engage the targeted group of beneficiaries. Ensuring the engagement of 50 + workers was often challenging.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

The trade union takes an active part in organising the annual Seniors' Day.

The trade union has a lead role in the process of preparing and signing the collective agreement and has been instrumental in ensuring additional days of paid leave for years worked in the company.

The trade union does not take an active part in the Pensioners' Club activity, but is happy to support it and ready to help when needed.

Support for 50 + workers, Latvia

Enterprise: not stated

Employment: 2,000

Sector: production and distribution of birch plywood products

Share of 50+ workforce: 40%

Reason for action

Some of the age management actions had their origins long ago and date back to the times before the transition. As an example, jubilee bonuses were paid for many years and in 1990 at the request of the trade union they were made part of the company's collective agreement.

The reason why the company started doing more was the observed change in the workforce age structure. The share of older workers was gradually increasing and the additional inspiration came from the company policy of sustainable development. Guided by a sense of responsibility for the future of the workforce and the experience from economic crises the company struggled with in the past, the decision was taken to support workers in accumulating capital for the future. They were offered retirement insurance in the third pillar. The next incentive to boost the package of benefits offered to workers was to gain their loyalty and encourage them to stay with the company.

The reason for training and knowledge transfer activities was an attempt to improve the quality of work in the company.

Actions taken

At the request of the trade union, the collective agreement now includes the following benefits:

- jubilee bonuses in the form of a fixed monetary sum which does not depend on the position, pay or any other factor;
- extra money for years worked for the company (from 10 years, and then after each 5 years). The allowance depends on the number of years worked, those with 20 years also receive a silver badge and a gold one for 30 years;
- additionally paid one day leaves for silvery and golden wedding anniversaries.

Since 2006 workers are offered retirement insurance in the III pillar if they have been with the company for longer than one year. The contribution paid to the retirement fund represents a specific percentage of the employee's salary and depends on the number of years with the company (the more years, the higher the percentage). This scheme was suggested by the trade union and agreed to with the company's management.

While there is no dedicated training for 50 + workers, every three years compulsory training is delivered to improve qualifications. It is addressed to all occupations and relates to workers' everyday work. The training is part of lifelong learning because it helps to improve qualifications and maintain them throughout people's working lives.

To ensure knowledge transfer between workers, the company has a practice where more

experienced workers teach young ones which are only just starting with the company. The most experienced workers also help with teaching qualifications courses.

The main objective of these activities is to promote a sense of stability and satisfaction and to ensure long-term employment with the company.

Although the majority of the actions are addressed to all staff, it is in fact older people who are the target group because they appreciate these benefits more than younger people.

The activities set out in the collective agreement are delivered regularly and the trade union makes sure they happen. Training is delivered cyclically and run by the company's Training Department (the trade union is not involved in organising training).

Apart from the above activities, the company regularly provides workers of all ages with different bonuses, e.g. additional paid leave for non-smokers, performance bonuses, paid health insurance, Stability Fund (savings to go towards all workers' pay for three months which can be used in case of the company's economic problems), etc.

Age management actions are delivered and improved continuously. In the future the trade union would like to put forward a proposal to increase the percentage of salary which is paid to the retirement funds. In addition, negotiations have been launched on a work division system in shift work of older workers (e.g. to enable them to share a twelve hour shift between two workers). This is hoped to extend the working careers of these workers and pensioners who do not have the physical ability to work a full shift but want to stay in work. This action has not been approved by the management yet and may be introduced sometime in the future.

As regards using these good age management practices in other companies, company representatives would recommend in particular the provision of the third pillar retirement insurance because it gives employees a sense of security for the future.

Results achieved

The intended goals have been achieved – workers have a sense of stability of employment and work satisfaction. The workers (especially the older ones and those working many years) highly appreciated the benefits, in particular the retirement insurance in the III pillar (an employee satisfaction survey showed that about 30% highly appreciated the retirement insurance in the III pillar and would like to increase the percentage of their pay to go towards the retirement fund).

The schemes have a positive effect on the situation of older workers. This has strengthened their loyalty and job satisfaction.

The benefits guaranteed in the collective agreement did not seem to have any effect on inter-generational relations. Inter-generational relations were primarily affected by knowledge transfer between workers with more experienced workers teaching young workers who have only just started work in the company. The knowledge transfer promotes inter-generational communication and cooperation.

Success factors and barriers

The success of the schemes was largely due to a feeling of a shared interest of all those involved (company management, trade unions and workers) and their ability to communicate. Everyone worked towards a compromise and completion of the proposed activities. At some stages one of the sides was more active and pushed the process forward, but generally speaking it took the combined effort of everyone to make it happen.

The experience the company has made from its age management work shows that a key success factor is maintaining a balance between needs and expectations of workers from different age groups: some benefits work better for younger workers while others are more important to the older ones. What is really important is making sure that the collective agreement is equally attractive for all age groups.

The main barriers to implementing the activities were financial. While the trade union can suggest a lot of benefits for the workers, the costs of delivering them cannot exceed the company's financial capacity. What is most important is reaching a compromise when negotiating with the company's management.

Other barriers had to do with how difficult it is to strike a balance between the requirements of workers of all ages.

Certain problems emerged when communicating with workers who are 50 years and over, especially as regards innovation. Most 50+ workers do not like change and have grown accustomed to certain work processes. This makes it a challenge sometimes to use new or innovative elements in training programmes or work processes.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

The trade union has a major role to play in the process of preparing and signing collective agreements. They are just as important in ensuring that workers received all the benefits set out in the collective agreement. While no benefit can be offered without the management's agreement, the trade union is the driving force behind offering and granting benefits to workers.

Recruitment campaign addressed to 50 + workers in "Rimi Latvia" Ltd., Latvia

Enterprise: Rimi Latvia, Ltd.

Employment: 5,500

Sector: retail

Share of 50+ workforce: 30%

Reason for action

During a recruitment process in the company, those participating from older age groups complained that age-related stereotypes made it difficult for them to find work. On the other hand, the company has a hard time finding the right number of workers – turnover is high and there are app. 200 vacancies. This gave rise to an idea to run a recruitment campaign targeting people aged 50 years and over. The decision to do that was taken by company management to both find new workers and foster the inclusion of older people in the labour market. The trade union did not participate in organising or running the campaign.

Actions taken

The campaign was designed to inform and recruit and aimed to achieve two main goals: to find new workers for the company and tackle a social challenge which is to overcome age-related stereotypes. It was very important to persuade workers aged 50 years and over that they still have a place in the labour market and can continue to build a career – join the company and within a few years be promoted from cashier all the way to store manager.

The campaign's target group were people aged 50 years and over who are either unemployed or working for other companies.

At the time of describing this good practice the company had already run three editions of the campaign (about three weeks each) – in the autumn of 2018, winter of 2019 and spring of 2019. To that end different channels of communication were used and the media: television, radio, digital media and visual materials displayed in the shops. The company's motto is "We appreciate your life experience and will be honoured if you would like to work with us". Examples of the recruitment campaign's information materials are available online at: <https://www.rimi.lv/karjera>. The campaign not only encouraged older people to work for the company but was also very respectful of older people and emphasised the assets they bring as workers, life and professional experience, responsibility, work ethic, willingness to work, knowledge, etc.

The campaign was organised under an initiative of the company's management and conducted by the Human Resources Department and the Marketing Department. The campaign was carried out and prepared partly by the workers who shared their experience of working for the company. They were so called campaign ambassadors (there were three ambassadors in the first round of the campaign and six in the third round). The stories of the ambassadors showed that even older workers can be successful in the company.

As well as the information and recruitment campaign, the campaign's age management activities also include the possibility given to all workers to work flexible hours (so called

shift-sharing), a scheme frequently used by older or retired staff. The campaign keeps improving the physical working environment, a fact particularly important for older workers (e.g. ergonomic workstations for cashiers, anti-slippage rubber mats in the workplaces, removing thresholds and raised floors, lowering shelves, providing height regulated tables in the offices, etc.). The campaign is also taking part in a country-wide project "Support for a longer working life" and will conduct an overall assessment of the working environment, individual evaluation of employees aged 50 years and over and implement actions to improve the working environment and health.

The company believes strongly that the campaign was worth the effort not just for the campaign but for society as well. On a national scale we should talk more about hiring older people, active ageing and overcoming age-related stereotypes.

Results achieved

The goals were achieved. The number of job applications from people aged 50+ went up. Many of these people could be persuaded that they are welcome in the labour market, that they can learn new things and build their professional career. The campaign was very well received by the public.

It is not clear whether the actions have had any effect on inter-generational relations. Generally speaking, inter-generational relations at company level are good and as employee satisfaction surveys show, employees are very happy with their team relations.

Success factors and barriers

The main success factor was the involvement of fantastic workers which were campaign ambassadors and shared their experience of working for the company. Their personal involvement made the campaign credible and honest which helped to win over the trust of the target group. Having a positive and supportive campaign management was very helpful for the campaign as well.

Overall, the campaign was clearly a success. New editions are planned. The previous model has worked very well and the upcoming editions will follow the same campaign ideas.

No barriers have been identified to the activities. The company understands the problems of ageing workforce and appreciates activities that address the needs of older workers, both those present and potential ones. This is why the campaign gained so much support from the management.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

The trade union did not participate in organising or running the information and recruitment campaign. A major role, however, was played by employee representatives – ambassadors who helped implement this good practice.

Support for active ageing and longer working life, Latvia

Enterprise: not stated

Employment: 550

Sector: power engineering

Share of 50+ workforce: 40%

Reason for action

The need to take action and support older workers became apparent with the realisation that they do heavy work on a daily basis which is more than they are physically prepared to handle and because they have enormous knowledge and experience. Newly hired young workers were not prepared to do the job because the schools they had graduated from did not prepare them sufficiently to work on their own. It was clear they needed practical training in the workplace (and the training may in some cases takes up to five years).

Actions taken

The company has a practice of moving older workers (aged 50 years and over) depending on their health and fitness to jobs that are not physically demanding (they do not involve working at height, digging ditches and are related to working more on documentation managing jobs). The position or salaries do not change.

Older workers share their knowledge, skills and professional experience with new workers. While the practice is not regulated on paper (e.g. in procedures), transfer of knowledge is key to the company's operations mainly because vocational schools do not teach courses required to work for the company.

Under an initiative of the trade union the collective agreement now includes the following benefits:

- pre-retirement age workers are protected – if a worker should be fired by the employer within five 5 years before retirement (which is not the worker's fault), the employer will pay compensation to the worker which is almost equal to the money the worker would be paid over the years until retirement). The worker must work for the company for at least 10 years to be entitled to this benefit;
- retirement severance pay paid out to workers who have worked for the company for longer than 20 years;
- jubilee bonuses for 20, 30 and 40 years worked;
- pension insurance in the III pillar.

The main goal of the scheme was to promote employee loyalty, extend workers' working lives and protect workers in pre-retirement age.

The target group is older workers (50 +) who have been with the company for a long time.

The activities set out in the collective agreement are carried out regularly and controlled by the trade union. Moving older workers to less physically demanding jobs or knowledge

transfer are regular activities delivered by department heads.

Apart from the above activities, the company offers attractive benefits for all workers, e.g. one week of extra leave in a year, health insurance, inflation rate compensation, holiday allowance, child birth allowance, additional leave for new parents, etc.

Age management activities are conducted on a continuous basis.

Results achieved

The goals have been achieved – employee loyalty has increased, working lives are now longer and pre-retirement age workers are protected. Many stay in work until they retire or even after they have retired. Workers (especially older and long-term workers) appreciate the benefits, in particular the pension insurance in the III pillar and retirement severance pay.

The main effect on inter-generational relations comes from knowledge transfer between workers in the company with more experienced workers teaching young workers who have just joined the company. This transfer of knowledge promotes two-way communication of different generations and builds an atmosphere of good inter-generational cooperation.

Success factors and barriers

The main success factors are: the strength of trade unions (more than 70% of the workers are trade union members) and supportive company management.

The main barriers have to do with the finances – offering benefits to workers while understanding the company's financial limits always calls for a lot of preparatory work from the trade union.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

The trade union plays a lead role in the process of preparing and signing the collective agreement and by the same token in the process of making sure that the workers receive the benefits set out in the collective agreement.

The trade union always takes action when a worker loses their job due to their age or health problems (but such cases are very rare).

Support for active ageing and longer working life, Latvia

Enterprise: not stated

Employment: 250

Sector: handling of oil and oil products

Share of 50+ workforce: 45%

Reason for action

The decision to start age management actions was taken due to the age structure of the workforce and a tradition of long-term employment in the company (average years worked is 16 years).

Actions taken

The following benefits were included in the collective agreement under an initiative of the trade union:

- protection of pre-retirement age workers – within one year before retirement the possibility to fire a worker is strongly limited;
- additional annual leave for working for 15 years for the company;
- jubilee bonuses.

Apart from that, there is an association of pensioners which works actively with the company. The enterprise organises trips and events for pensioners, gives presents for festive days and jubilees, provides financial support, etc.

Under an initiative of the company's management workers and their families can use a gym with a sauna, table tennis room and a massage chair. The company regularly organises campaigns promoting health and safety, e.g. cycling to work, family Safety Day and other actions for workers and their families.

To improve integration in the working environment all workers have the possibility to increase their knowledge they need to do their job, e.g. learning Latvian, English, IT (from basic knowledge to special computer programmes such as AutoCad, Adobe Captivate).

The target group are older (50 +) and long-term company employees.

The activities set out in the collective agreement are delivered regularly and controlled by the trade union.

Apart from the above activities, the company gives regular bonuses to all workers such as health insurance, accident insurance, child birth allowance, part of the cost to buy eyeglasses, transport cost cover, sports games, activities and presents for workers' children for Christmas, etc.

Results achieved

The planned goals have been achieved – employee loyalty has increased, working lives are

now longer and pre-retirement age workers are better protected. Nearly 50% of the workers have been with the company for more than 20 years, which shows that the conditions are motivating and the working environment is good. As a result, employee turnover is minimal.

Success factors and barriers

The activities have been a success mainly thanks to the support from the company's management.

The main barriers had to do with financial aspects and difficulties in the cooperation between company management and the trade union.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

The trade union plays a lead role in the process of preparing and signing the collective agreement and by the same token in the process of making sure that the workers receive the benefits set out in the collective agreement.

Support for active ageing and longer working life in "Liepājas RAS" Ltd., Latvia

Enterprise: Liepājas RAS Ltd.

Employment: 48

Sector: waste management and production of electricity

Share of 50+ workforce: more than 50%

Reason for action

The activities were initiated to improve the working environment and employee well-being. With a high share of 50+ workers, this age group requires special consideration when offering employee benefits.

Actions taken

Workers are offered the following benefits:

- health insurance;
- possibility to work from home, if the job allows it;
- gymnastics in the workplace with a physiotherapist (at present once a year);
- events related to professional development (conferences, etc.);
- training (both vocational and general, e.g. time management, communications, team work, stress management);
- additional paid leave for years worked for the company;
- holiday allowance (up to half of the monthly salary);
- fitness equipment available in the recreation hall;
- health days (e.g. Heart Health Day with doctor consultations);
- retirement severance pay.

At company level there is no collective agreement and none of the workers is a member of a trade union. But two employee representatives have been chosen to ensure continued communication between staff and company management. Soon a collective agreement is due to be signed to confirm all employee benefits in a single document (at present employee benefits are established in the work regulations and pay regulations). Despite not having a trade union, all workers are informed about the benefits and receive them regularly.

The activities aimed to achieve several goals: to improve the working environment and mutual relations, ensure employee loyalty, promote longer working lives and improve the professional qualifications of workers.

Even though the majority of the activities is addressed to all workers, it is safe to say that the main target group are older workers because they, more than younger workers appreciate social and health benefits.

Before the activities were selected and implemented, a preliminary study was conducted to understand what actions are needed and possible, given the availability of finances. All workers are informed about the benefits at least once a year at a conference. Because all employee benefits are defined in the work regulations and pay regulations, they are provided as part of regular day-to-day work of the relevant departments.

The activities are conducted continuously and the company management is always considering ways to adapt the working environment to worker needs and improving the package of benefits. In the future the company is planning to introduce more ergonomic furniture for workers, provide a more differentiated and advanced sports equipment and increase the frequency of physiotherapist's visits to the company.

The company believes that other companies should also introduce the same or similar activities for older workers (aged 50 years and over). At present, the labour market is changing and employers are affected by labour shortages. This is why it is so important to reduce the turnover of older workers by offering them attractive packages of employee benefits. Efforts should be taken to make workers feel part of the team rather than just workers. It is important (especially in the case of companies with limited finances) to offer even some small arrangements that do not cost a lot of money but will significantly improve the working environment.

Results achieved

The planned goals have been achieved: working conditions and mutual relations have improved, employee loyalty has increased, working lives are now longer and workers' professional qualifications are still valuable. Thanks to this the company's strategic goals can be met regularly.

The activities had a positive effect on older (50+) workers as can be seen from the low turnover rate in this group, less sickness absence in a year, lower stress levels among workers and a stronger sense of security. It should be stressed that app. 30% of workers aged 50 years and over participate in different training courses.

Inter-generational relations are a challenge both for the younger and older workers. This is why it is so important to find the right forms of communication. At company level training is provided on team building and team communication which promotes a successful inter-generational cooperation.

Success factors and barriers

The main success factor is ensuring the engagement of the CEO and company management because they understand worker needs and are ready to support improvement initiatives. It is also necessary to have good communications between company management, worker representatives and older workers (aged 50 years and over).

The main barriers have to do with organisational issues: is the idea going to work, will there be enough funds, are we going to have enough time.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

The trade union does not play any role in the process of introducing or delivering benefits because none of the workers is a member of a trade union. Despite that selected employee representatives work actively with company management in the process of implementing employee benefits and improving the working environment.

Comprehensive age management in Velux, Poland

Enterprise: VELUX Group and sister companies

Employment: 4,300

Sector: industrial production, sale of building materials

Average employee age: 39.

Reason for action

For the employer having friendly and comfortable working conditions is fundamental to ensuring safety and health of workers of all ages.

Actions taken

While the programmes are in principle targeted at all groups of workers, they are also adapted to the needs and uniqueness of a workplace, type of work and location of the workplace.

The activities are time consuming. The employer is responsible for implementing projects, but employees are often involved in the practical implementation.

The activities described are of permanent nature and undergo regular reviews.

1. Health/workplace ergonomics

Awareness, responsibility and good habits are key elements that help to improve working conditions, or more broadly, living conditions. This is why the VELUX Group attaches importance to knowledge sharing, especially involving older workers with more years of work in the organisation. The company educates workers on good practices in the professional and private sphere which have a positive effect on health (e.g. healthy food, physical activity, prevention), safety, comfort, etc.

Below are the most important activities:

- office workers have electrically regulated desks. In addition, they use ergonomic chairs, profiled for the best possible position of the spine. What is important, workers who report problems with their backs can sit on orthopaedic balls. In the office each place of work is planned to ensure that everyone using it has access to daylight and fresh air (windows can be opened);
- as regards sales representatives and technical advisers who do field visits, efforts are made to reduce the burden of all activities. As an example, webinars are organised where employees learn how to:
 - move heavy objects at work,
 - load and unload cars,
 - fix chairs in the car,
 - eat healthy while working in the field,

- do exercises while working;

The objective of webinars is to, in particular, prevent spine injury in workers;

- efforts are made to improve ergonomics and automate work to make it the least strenuous physically and not be a source of discrimination due to age, health and gender. Thanks to this in VELUX Group plants women represent app. 40% of the workforce and that share is constantly growing. The activities include training and more emphasis on automation and robotics in production processes. As an example, electric forklifts have been introduced, production materials now weigh less and are selected to ensure that no manual layouts are necessary and there are automatic feeders on production lines. The objective of the improvements is to reduce the need to manually move components and products;
- the employer provides private medical care and additional insurance with rehabilitation packages related to what the work involves;
- in the sales company office workers can use massages which the employer provides once a month;
- meetings and workshops are organised for workers about preventive health care; the objective is to raise awareness of pro-health behaviour at work and at home;

Health promotion includes availability of fruit every day, provided by the employer. All employees receive fruit (all in all it adds up to several tonnes of fruit weekly). A special educational programme was developed “Sales representative’s diet” which explains how to get organised for the day and have access to meals and avoid unhealthy fast food.

What is more, personal protection equipment which is still valid but slowly withdrawn from use by the company, may be taken home by employees.

2. Activities against routine / professional burnout

The employer allows for work to be carried out at several workplaces, while ensuring full compliance with health and safety standards and in keeping with the workers’ qualifications and skills. Skills matrixes have been developed for workers which show the positions they can work at as their careers progress.

Measures to stop professional burnout are also part of ad hoc campaigns. In one of them office workers would take sales training and could start work as sales representatives in the field (the project was very popular).

3. Support for workers in difficult life situations

Employee Foundation of the VKR group of which VELUX is part. Established to support current and retired workers and their family members when they go through a difficult time. In addition the Foundation supports education of employee’s children when they get ready for the first job and social projects involving local communities.

Since the company started its operations in Poland the Employee Foundation has supported 318 workers in difficult situations (PLN 2.94 million), delivered 107 projects of funding for the education of employee’s children (PLN 747,000), and funded 303 projects involving non-profit organisations in areas close to the production facilities of VELUX (PLN 2.62 million). In total the financial help amounts to about PLN 6.3 million.

It is important to stress that the Employee Foundation grants financial support to active and retired workers and their relatives. An employee of a company which is part of the VKR Group may ask for funding for themselves or a close family member (husband, wife, children aged up to 30 years), if they have worked for the company at least three years. In special cases the Foundation may waive this requirement. Applications are submitted to local HR departments for a formal check and are then passed on to the management of the Employee Foundation for a final evaluation.

4. Improving qualifications /skills

The employer has implemented a development programme Level-up. It includes training in the form of short workshops in three areas:

- skills – training on cooperation, interaction, team work, project work and culture of the organisation;
- knowledge and tools – workshops on IT tools, product and process knowledge;
- health and healthy lifestyle – meetings on preventive health care and topics around personal growth, e.g. workshops of educational skills.

5. Respecting diversity in the workplace

Employees are treated equally. The company has conducted a valuation of jobs. Each year salaries are verified according to market trends. The company is the industry's only company to have signed the Diversity Charter.

6. Flexible organisation of working time

Flexibility depends on the actual job. For office/administrative work people can work from home and work flexible hours in some of the jobs.

The initiatives fit in with the company's organisational culture and its philosophy. The founder of the VELUX Group set himself the goal of creating a Model Company understood as a company with social responsibility which not only supplies useful products but also treats its clients, suppliers, employees and shareholders better than the majority of other companies.

In addition, today jobs are chosen not only on the basis of pay. What counts is the image and an employer who is able to provide the right employee benefits, who values safety, growth and health of the employees and comfortable work organisation.

Employee representatives are consulted on new initiatives. What is more, the employer implements and rewards ideas put forward by employees to make all sorts of improvements in the workplace. As a result, employees feel they are listened to, appreciated and motivated to continue their efforts.

Results achieved

Employee-oriented initiatives build a sense of security and comfort in the workplace, but they are just as important for people's private lives. As a result, employer attractiveness and company loyalty increase. There are also other tangible results such as less sickness absenteeism.

As an example, workers often stress that having the Foundation gives them a sense of security and builds company loyalty. They know they can count on support when they go through a difficult time in their lives. What this means for the company is an investment into what is most precious, i.e. human capital.

The goals and tasks are in principle long-term and must be monitored and adjusted to the circumstances as they change. Staff turnover was successfully reduced. Employee engagement has increased. People who have worked for the company for 25 years stay in work. The company recognises workers who have been with the company for a long time and awards jubilee rewards for 5,10,15,20, 25, 30 years with the company.

The activities implemented by the employer provide a sense of security and workplace comfort. Because the company does not leave employees on their own when they go through a difficult time in their private lives, they are happy to stay for longer. What is crucial is that the employer supports employees' return to work when workers had been away for longer and reintroduces them into the working environment and helps with updating their qualifications.

The employer supports diversity and equal opportunity in employment regardless of age, gender or disability. Diversity policy is part of the company's organisational culture as is clear from the signing of the Diversity Charter, a written declaration where the employer commits to ban discrimination in the workplace and work towards diversity and its promotion. The employer is ready to engage all employees, male and female employees and business partners into such activities.

Success factors and barriers

The goals of the programmes could be achieved thanks to the organisational culture, consistency and long-term plans and actions and thanks to the understanding and support from all staff.

The implementation did encounter some problems. The main barriers included:

1. difficulty in adjusting the programmes to the needs of different worker groups whose jobs differed or were located in a variety of places;
2. difficulty in making sure that the programmes are right for the different age groups.

When implementing programmes, it is important to maintain good communication with staff and understand their needs and collect feedback. Consistency of delivery is a guarantee of success. This is an investment and the return from that investment is effective employee recruitment, development and retention.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

Employee representatives have been consulted on new initiatives and activities.

Mentoring and health-oriented programmes in Siemens, Poland

Enterprise: Siemens Sp. z o.o.

Employment: 1,500.

Sector: automation of production processes, electrification, manufacture, service, sales

Average employee age: 42 years

Reason for action

The employer is determined to create jobs that people will be happy to come back to. Age management initiatives are implemented because of the conviction that employee well-being is important. This approach is a consequence of the company's organisational culture and the principles of corporate social responsibility. The activities help to increase employee engagement and effectiveness. Employees who have job satisfaction and look after themselves, are more effective in what they do for the company.

Actions taken

The employer promotes proactive activities to help employees grow, ensure security and health and inter-generational integration by taking a systemic approach to these areas. The goal is to improve employee health, well-being, professional growth and generate greater acceptance for diversity. The programmes are addressed to all groups of employees.

Implementing the programmes and activities was not particularly time consuming. As we know from experience key to this is a solid diagnosis of the needs and selecting the right measures to meet those needs.

Age management activities were initiated and continued by the employer. The activities are permanent in nature and undergo a regular review.

The main activities include:

- 1. Mentoring** – a formula for building relations which involves one person usually a more experienced one (a mentor, internal trainer) and often someone at higher levels in the organisation that has the authority and professional success, who helps another person (mentee) to better understand and discover their potential. This type of work is conducted separate from the superior-subordinate relation.

Mentoring is dedicated to people at different levels of the organisation. But because there are only so many employees who dedicate their time to mentoring and because the process is unique and has special importance, the role of mentor is usually offered to people in managerial positions and employees who hold expert positions or those who are preparing to take an important and/or strategic role in the near future.

Those interested in becoming mentees should accept that mentoring means being ready to embrace change and take responsibility for their own development, have a deeper observation and the courage to confront their own selves, their needs, ambitions, capacities and limitations.

Through mentoring those who have professional experience can engage in

company development and share their experience and programme participants can grow their professional skills and better understand their potential. The programme fosters relations within the company by enabling contact and joint work for people of different ages and different positions.

The programme is launched every year. There are 15 internal mentors in the company. Mentoring is conducted through meetings of the mentor and mentee. The meetings take place once every few weeks for up to one year. They are lectures/conversations/practical learning.

Yet the relation with the mentor does not stop when the last session is over. Following the completion of successive mentoring programmes, mentors and mentees meet to analyse their joint experience, have a discussion about what makes them fulfilled and satisfied in their roles and how the mentor-mentee relation is affecting their growth.

- 2. Programme “I look after myself – for my well-being and success”**- designed to raise employee awareness of mental health problems and promote prevention and, as a result, makes professional and personal success more likely. In the programme employees can conduct, if they wish to, an on-line test to assess their well-being, balance and learn more about the role of emotions.

The employer also enables contact with a certified psychotherapist. This may be a telephone conversation or a meeting in person. This is designed to support people who are struggling with professional or personal problems and are not in a good place.

Part of programme implementation, workshops were organised such as:

- *How to deal with co-worker difficulties knowingly and stay comfortable doing that*
- *Comfortable life – taking care of yourself*
- *Applied empathy – start from having empathy for yourself*
- *Stress is my ally – how do we work together*

- 3. Audit of health hazards** – extended prevention. As part of efforts designed to protect employee health, the employer works with medical centres. Aggregated and anonymised reports are made regarding hazards in the workplace. This applies to physical labour and monotonous office work. Based on this, hazards are spotted as they emerge and new working conditions are suggested to promote health in the workplace. This is designed to develop the right approaches and communicate the problems to employees to stay aware of the hazards.

Results achieved

As a result of the activities, staff turnover was successfully reduced. Employee engagement increased.

The programme “*I look after myself – for my well-being and success*” - 99.5% of the

participants found it useful and effective.

The programmes help to increase acceptance of diversity. They also help older people with dealing with new situations in their professional and private lives. They also disseminate knowledge among employees about what they can do to stay in good health.

The programmes proposed by the employer help the participants to understand themselves better and how to open for other people. They improve the relations between older and young people.

Success factors and barriers

Key to the success was having the company's management support and backing for the implementation of the initiatives. Staying consistent and ensuring the quality of the product was just as important. As regards the programme "I look after myself ...", self-awareness and encouraging people to look after their mental health was also important.

The barriers that needed to be overcome include:

1. financial issues,
2. difficulty in changing people's approach to things,
3. problems with encouraging middle management to support the programmes, concerns that employees will not understand or accept some of the programmes,
4. different locations and jobs.

Key to programme implementation is understanding the needs and collecting feedback and maintaining communication with employees and participants.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

Employee representatives were consulted on the new initiatives and activities.

Organisational activities in the IT sector, Poland

Enterprise: not stated

Sector: IT

Employment: app. 180

Average employee age: 33 years.

Reason for action

The company makes a point of being seen as an attractive employer and building lasting relations with staff. In its strategy the company acknowledges the fact that employee needs will change over time and wants to be able to respond to them.

While the initiative to diagnose needs and take action came from the employer, the company took account of suggestions and conclusions submitted by the employees.

The company wants to grow by building trust between employer and employees. One part of trust building is shaping the superior-subordinate relations which should be based on trust and joint decisions on work organisation.

The solutions were implemented due to:

- employee expectations,
- improved standards in the labour market,
- specificity of the IT sector.

There are no trade unions in the company. Employees are consulted on initiatives and activities which they assess regularly in conversations.

Actions taken

The employer promotes proactive activities for employee development, integration, including inter-generational integration and security and health. The objective is to improve employee health and well-being and ensure that they can grow professionally and better accept diversity.

While the programmes are addressed to all groups of employees, some of the solutions must take account of objective factors such as work organisation.

The activities are considered time-consuming and require engagement and understanding of people who take and implement decisions in connection with the new activities.

The activities are permanent in nature and undergo regular reviews.

1. Improving skills/training

- the company has systematic internal training courses (it has its own training platform) and external training designed to improve soft skills and qualifications,
- in cooperation with interested employees career / professional growth plans are created,

- the company follows the model 70/20/10:
 - 70% of planned development activities should be related to how a job is delivered in practice,
 - 20% of planned activities should provide support and regular feedback from the immediate supervisor, exchange of experience with co-workers,
 - 10% of planned development activities involve internal and external training.

The activities above take account of generational change in the company and that systematically average employee age will increase.

The activities are taken also because increasingly often employees care not only about pay and promotion, but also about growth which is seen as a value in itself.

The employer promotes an organisational culture which values efforts to improve competences and qualifications and sharing experience with others.

The training conducted in the company covers aspects of diversity, including equal opportunities for women and men or different ages.

2. Organisational changes

The employer makes sure that the activities and policies take account of possible organisational changes which may happen in the future. Employment conditions are such that employees may retrain if they wish to and find a new role for themselves in the company to respond to their current needs and potential.

When organisational changes are made, if the employee wants that, the employer is happy to support the employee in adjusting their competence and qualifications for the new job.

The employer is open to employee initiatives as regards their job descriptions given the current organisational capacity.

3. Organisation of working time

To the extent allowed by regulations and type of work, employees can arrange their working time around tasks and work remotely. That way employees can plan their working time to cater to different needs which depend on a number of factors, but in particular they depend on the stage in life they are in (e.g. education, child care, other dependents). The key here is that the employer is open to employee needs.

The working environment is designed to ensure that employees are not afraid to ask if they can use this solution. Virtually all employees want to use task-based working time.

4. Health promotion in the workplace:

- awareness campaigns – the employer promotes positive behaviour in the context of ergonomics, dealing with stress. To that end the employer organises workshops (e.g. on behaviour that minimises strenuous activities of a specific job, reducing stress levels, muscle relaxation, proper posture) and provides information (e.g. posters);
- additional benefits – the employer guarantees different kinds of employee benefits, including additional health care and health insurance. The health insurance package is

continuously extended, in 2019 an oncology package was added to pay for the costs of diagnosis, treatment and hospital stay.

Results achieved

The employer's activities increase employee satisfaction as can be seen from how active they are by using training and flexible working times; employee turnover has fallen and the employee survey has good results. The company has young staff, the activities and efforts are geared towards the future.

Success factors and barriers

Key to success is having employee understanding and trust for the employer as well as the will to cooperate. None of the elements can be viewed in isolation because they make up systemic solutions which produce a positive effect. What matters is having the willingness and support from the company's management and superiors for implementing the initiatives.

No barriers were diagnosed. A point was made, however, of how important it is to maintain communication with employees and participants. Understanding needs and collecting feedback is also key. The employer conducts employee surveys.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

Employees were consulted on the new initiatives and activities.

Age management involving production workers and white collar workers, Poland

Enterprise: not stated

Sector: automotive

Employment: Large enterprise

Average employee age: Average age of production line workers: 42.2 years, average age of white collar workers: 40.7 years

Reason for action

Population ageing is a fast growing process in the developed countries round the world and in Poland. The facts below were behind the decision to implement an age management programme.

1. The average age in the company increases year on year – “work ability” is falling.
2. The number of working age people is falling – the problem: new workforce not easily available.
3. The unemployment rate in Poland is falling – the problem: shortage of labour.

Some of age management programmes applied to production workers only and some to office workers.

The HR department carried out a simulation of how worker age will be changing over the next few years. It showed that average age will continue to rise. The simulation of worker age helped to identify worker work ability which will be falling each year. The fall in work ability will negatively affect competitiveness.

The objective of the trade unions is to force the employer to move workers to jobs that are less strenuous. They do not agree to support the employer’s preventive efforts or publicly work with the employer in this area.

Actions taken

The company has its age management programme. It consists of modules designed to prevent significant drops in work ability which occurs as people grow older. They are:

- Programme Supporting Physical and Mental Health
 - On-the-job exercises, e.g. learning how to lean properly, etc. conducted by physiotherapists,
 - Lectures: Work-life balance, Mindfulness, Stress Management
- Programme Human Resources Planning and Selection
 - Cooperation with a vocational school
 - Internship programmes
 - Simulating the company’s demography
- Programme Human Resources and Staff Education

- Training conducted by physiotherapists
- Training on ergonomic assessment
- Campaigns on musculoskeletal load
- Individual Development Programme
- Programme Good Nutrition
 - Options to choose meals e.g.: vegetarian food, salads
 - Obesity campaign
- Programme Inter-generational Transfer of Knowledge
 - Internship Programmes
 - Cooperation with a vocational school
- Programme Diagnosis of Health
 - Voluntary (extended) package of medical examinations for 40+/45+ workers
 - Orthopaedic consultations
 - HCV tests
 - Flue jabs
 - Lectures: physiotherapy, sleep specialist, psychologist
 - Dietician consultations
 - Work inability management
- Programme “Stop-Smoking”
 - Quit Smoking campaign
- Programme Organising the Workplace
 - Ergonomic improvements
 - Extra break
 - Green enclave
- Programme Flexible Forms of Employment
 - Flexible working hours for office workers
 - Possibility of working remotely for office workers
- Programme Supporting After Work Activity
 - Possibility to join the OK System
 - Possibility to use the football pitch on the company premises
 - Forming groups of people who run, cycle, etc.

Each of the programmes is planned and delivered autonomously. Below is a description of the Programme Supporting Physical and Mental Health.

The programme is designed to reduce drops in work ability of workers and reduce

musculoskeletal ailments. The programme was provided to production workers.

Under the Programme the Health and Safety Team selected a pilot group of production workers. Next, invited physiotherapists learned about the working process and how the pilot group members do their work. The physiotherapists prepared theoretical and practical training dedicated specifically to the group. The theory training educated the workers on issues such as: what is pain, what are the possible ailments, when should you see a specialist, what are the ways to correct bad movement patterns, etc. The practical training taught the workers how to lean forward properly, rotate while carrying a load, they conducted exercises at their workstations and learned relaxation exercises that they can do at home.

At the end of the pilot phase the physiotherapists discussed with the management the loads that may occur during work and what needs to be done to eliminate or reduce them. One of the examples was to have a set of exercises specifically developed for a position which workers can do while on their break or at home.

The HR Department organised activities for production workers (pilot group).

Some of the programmes are still running, some unfortunately had to be discontinued due to lack of funding. The trade unions were informed about all activities.

Results achieved

No analysis was conducted of the results achieved.

Success factors and barriers

Although the programme was planned to continue, sadly due to a lack of funds it was discontinued. The other barriers included:

- failure by some of the management to recognise the problem (poor awareness)
- having to share the vision of age management with the social partners (social partners had a different vision of age management)

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

Social partners were kept informed.

The solutions proposed differed from those proposed by the social partners.

Reducing workplace hazards for 50+ workers, Italy

Enterprise: Tarkett S.p.A. - Zakład Narni Scalo (TR)

Sector: manufacture of builders' plastics ware , type of business: manufacture of natural linoleum flooring.

Employment: app. 150, of which 56 are aged 50 and more.

Average employee age: 47.5.

Reason for action

Older workers among the workforce were the main reason for the action. Thirty four per cent of the company's staff operating machines are aged 50 years and over. The majority of sicknesses occur in this particular age group. There are concerns in the company of cardio-vascular problems workers may have in connection with musculoskeletal disorders, loss of strength, deteriorated eyesight, sharp vision and falls.

The problem was identified during an occupational risk assessment. As a result, a programme was implemented designed to reduce the risks and improve the quality of workers' professional lives.

The worker and their representatives were kept engaged at every stage. The trade unions were informed about the activities and were actively involved in the planning and implementation of the new solutions.

Actions taken

The basic activities in the programme included training, provision of proper personal protection equipment, heightened supervision over working conditions and health checks.

Periodical health and safety training was conducted every 4 years for all workers. A decision was taken to increase the frequency of the training and hold it every 2 years for workers 50 +. A more rigorous oversight was introduced in terms of working conditions. The company increased the frequency of workstation check-ups to once every week for older workers and every two weeks for younger workers. The changes which resulted from those checks helped to reduce the physical workload thanks to an electric hoist subsequently purchased and more ergonomic equipment, e.g. standard toolboxes were replaced with tool carts, a hydraulic platform was installed for lifting materials - all of which helped to reduce the load carried by workers. Other steps designed to reduce the workload and improve the conditions included an upgrade of personal protection equipment (PPE) because easy-to-wear protection equipment makes the work less strenuous. Personal protection equipment was upgraded and the old equipment was replaced with new equipment which gives the same or better protection but workers find it more comfortable. As regards health, standard medical check-ups are conducted regularly for all workers by the company's physician. To cater to the needs of older workers, the company physician in cooperation with the prevention and protection department recommended extra preventive tests for workers aged 50 years and over. The additional checks include an annual fitness check, muscle flexibility and, apart from routine blood test, the PSA test, prostate specific antigen – a biomarker which is often higher in the case of prostate cancer. Cardiologic assessments, eyesight and psychometric tests are conducted

twice a year. The company recognised that older workers may need longer breaks than younger workers; workers aged 50 years and over may take longer and more frequent breaks if needed. Workers can also ask if they could change jobs temporarily for an unspecified period to help them go back to physical and mental well-being.

The project is still ongoing.

Results achieved

The level of occupational hazard for workers aged 50 years and over has been reduced. Since 2010 there have been no accidents involving a worker older than 50 years.

In 2016 all workers aged 50 years and over underwent a new and more comprehensive medical check. Engagement levels of all workers have risen.

Success factors and barriers

The factors which helped to achieve the planned results definitely included engagement and participation of all workers in health and safety management. The initial scepticism of the workers was a major problem.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

Social partners were fully engaged at every stage of the project.

Analysis of attitudes and training for technical services staff, Italy

Enterprise: Azienda Trasporti Milanesi (ATM),

Sector: public transport

Employment: 9,686

Average employee age: 46 years, number of workers aged 55 years and over: 1,600.

Reason for action

Preventing workplace hazards has always been important for ATM. Since 2010 there have been awareness campaigns, screening tests, information and training about healthy lifestyles and cardiological and oncological prophylaxis. Today the focus is on prevention in the area of age management. This includes activities centred around attitudes and healthy eating habits, all part of healthy and active ageing.

ATM has a large number of workers who are 55 years and over and that number is predicted to double over the next five years. This is a key issue from the perspective of providing top quality physical labour by older workers who more frequently than young workers report health problems.

For this reason in 2017 the company Welfare Service (which is in the business of human resources management) together with the Health and Safety Department, occupational medicine staff and external experts carried out a study of eight types of body positions that are characteristic for certain jobs. The objective was to find out whether they are performed properly and whether it would be possible to use mats, knee pads or lumbar belts to prevent musculoskeletal problems. In parallel, training was conducted and videos were posted on the Intranet showing the right body positions while working.

Actions taken

The basic activities included: awareness campaigns, screening tests, information and training on healthy lifestyles and cardiological and oncological prophylaxis. Today the focus is on prevention in the area of age management. This includes activities centred around shaping good habits in terms of body positions while working and nutrition to support healthy and active ageing. The main goal of the work is prevention.

Body positions were analysed for the typical jobs. some technical service workers were video recorded while working. At first, it was important to identify those positions that are most likely to be performed wrongly. As regards the training module on posture, a working group tested the chosen format.

Up until now app. 861 workers took part in safety training. The training is still ongoing and includes healthy food and healthy lifestyle. The trade unions were informed about the activities when they were being planned, but having their active engagement in the intervention was not necessary.

The activities are continued. The training was also offered to ground transport drivers and a new module was added on emotion and stress management.

Results achieved

The planned goals have been achieved. All workers from the target group were involved. After the training the workers implemented healthy habits which they had learned from the videos and training.

Older workers received useful information and tools which help them to maintain their well-being and prevent health problems. They are now able to put together a proper and balanced meal which is right for the work they do and their lifestyles.

Success factors and barriers

The success was down to the engagement of the workers. There were no major problems in the implementation. The wide range of activities was implemented to improve well-being of workers. Support is needed from all the stakeholders and experts in different fields.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

The trade unions played an important role in informing workers about the activities and their goals.

Training and development of cross-cutting competences, Italy

Enterprise: not stated

Employment: medium-sized company with a workforce of less than 200

Sector: metallurgy industry, produces diamond wheels for processing stone / marble / ceramics.

Average employee age: above 40 years. Workers aged 50 years and over represent app. 40% of the workforce.

Reason for action

With a lack of clarity about the roles and duties, workers' skills were underrated or overrated, and so it was important to implement actions designed to improve or strengthen workers' skills. There was also a need to fill the digital skills gap among older workers with lower levels of education.

Innovation in the 4.0 industry means that digital skills are an important part of work and with training hours provided in the national collective agreement for the metallurgy industry, it was a good solution to use this for the benefit of the company and workers alike. In addition improving workers' skills gives a stronger sense of being important for the company.

The role of RSU (Rappresentanze Sindacali Unitarie - United Trade Unions Representatives) was key to identifying worker needs.

Actions taken

The project helped to identify and analyse workers' training needs including their soft skills and, as a consequence of analyses, training agreements were signed. A training schedule was agreed. Training takes place during working hours.

Steps were taken to create a matrix of worker competences. This, however, is still in the early stages: the company has only just started to contact some workers who said they were happy to engage in competence mapping and creating matrixes.

The first step will involve a small group of workers. The goal is to roll out the solution across the entire company.

The activities were delivered by the human resources department which organised the work with the support of the production manager.

Results achieved

The project has only just begun so an assessment is not possible into the actual results.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

RSU and FIM CISL (Federation of Metal Workers CISL) promoted the project; employee representatives played a key role in identifying training needs and proposing solutions. Employee representatives also played an important role in motivating workers to join the project.

Collective agreement in LUXOTTICA GROUP S.P.A.

Enterprise LUXOTTICA GROUP S.P.A.

Sector: design, production and distribution of clothing, luxury and sports eyewear.

Number of employees: 10,500 in Italy

Average employee age: app. 40% pow. 50 years

Reason for action

The main reasons why the activities were undertaken include: having a large number of older workers, an increase in absenteeism, musculoskeletal problems as a result of repetitive jobs. While workforce ageing was obvious, it became clearer after an analysis of costs and benefits of employing older workers. The problem was discussed with the trade unions. The trade unions played an active role in analysing the problem and finding solutions.

Actions taken

The objective of the work was to improve working conditions for all workers. To that end as part of the collective agreement, the company introduced a solution which allows for a soft change of generations, so called “generational relay”. Under the relay scheme older workers voluntarily apply for shorter working hours while their pension contributions are transferred in full and the employer hires a young worker to fill the vacancy. The agreement on the “generational relay” applies to all staff including those aged 50 years and over and is in operation all the time.

The trade unions were consulted on the activities. The trade unions take action if the rules are broken and if certain situations have not been looked at properly.

Results achieved

The planned goals have been partially achieved. The “Generational relay” has been used by more than 30% of the project’s target group. Some initiatives set out in the recent agreement (signed on 21 June 2019) still have not been implemented so it is not possible to comment on them now.

There is still no feedback as to how the solution affects inter-generational relations and transfer of knowledge.

Success factors and barriers

The project’s success is down to its voluntary character and flexibility. The problem was lack of knowledge about the mechanisms and concern that workers might lose their pension rights.

During the project it became clear how important it is for workers to understand the solution and treat each employee individually.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

Employee representatives make sure that no part of the agreement is broken and keep monitoring the process of implementing the agreement.

Retraining older workers in Telecom Italia S.p.A. (TIM)

Enterprise: Telecom Italia S.p.A. (TIM)

Employment: 47.665

Sector: telecommunications

Average employee age: 51 years. Employees aged 50 years and over represent 50% of the workforce

Reason for action

Over the last ten years thanks to technology innovations the company has gone through wide ranging restructuring which involved a reduction in employment. Following negotiations between social partners and the company, the problem was solved by offering early retirement and a programme of voluntarily leave. In 2012 the retirement age was raised under the so called Fornero reform which deepened the problem of managing the extra staff. The enterprise had to face two problems: having to keep up with the digital transformation, the demand for new skills and managing older workers.

The trade unions negotiated with the company and were involved at all stages of the work.

Actions taken

In 2014 the company began a process of retraining staff to help them to take on new tasks. Initially, the retraining covered 3,000 office workers, including HR and sales employees. Under the new agreement signed in 2019 training is to be offered to all workers. The training will be paid by the company and from a contribution from inter-sectoral funds (IBF, Fondi paritetici interprofessionali). Prior to the training the company launched a campaign to raise worker awareness about the need for what was to be proposed. In addition, Telecom's claim that they care about the well-being and health of "older" workers is confirmed by a prevention programme which they have introduced. Workers aged 45 years and over have access to free, personalised medical tests, based on their needs and part of a package which takes account of age and gender.

The trade unions supported the campaign significantly to raise worker awareness about the need to retrain. The programme is still in operation.

Results achieved

All workers who decided to retrain have successfully changed their professional profile and scope of duties. None of the workers have obsolete skills. This is very important. The company appreciates the professional experience of older workers.

Success factors and barriers

The success was made possible thanks to the cooperation with the trade unions in solving

conflicts and explaining to the workers why it made sense to do it. Especially because the initial scepticism of many workers was a problem for the implementation. But it became clear that the training is important not only for workers to keep their jobs but also to improve the company's competitiveness and ensure customer satisfaction.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

Except for the implementation phase which was entirely on the part of the employer, the trade unions took part in all project stages, planning, monitoring and verifying the attainment of the goals.

PATH4YOUNG

Enterprise: Provincia Autonoma di Trento (PAT)

Employment: about 4,000

Sector: autonomous province of Italy, authority for health, education, welfare and transport infrastructure

Average employee age: 51 years.

Reason for action

The need to rejuvenate the organisation (average age 51 years, less than 3% of the staff are below 35) and strengthen the position of older employees using mentoring and reverse mentoring.

Two factors determined the decision:

- 1) an idea of the new General Director for Human Resources to improve public administration by strengthening the human capital;
- 2) results of a demographic analysis – a qualitative study (using a questionnaire and a focus study) on workforce ageing, established that older workers are ready to hand over their professional experience to younger colleagues and that young people are interested in teaching IT skills to older colleagues.

The trade unions approved the project which was designed to strengthen the position of older employees in the organisation.

Actions taken

Seventy young employees were hired (below 32). Each new employee is supported by an older colleague and mentor who introduces them into the organisation and helps to learn the basic skills. Mentors monitor the trainees, verify their education and certify that when the limited time contract expires, the recruits are fit for work for the company and it is OK to sign an unlimited time contract with them. Mentors help young workers to understand their aspirations and define a career path; they encourage trainees to submit proposals on how their jobs could be improved thanks to the fresh take on things as a young person who sees certain things for the first time.

Mentors pass on their knowledge and work ethos of a public sector employee.

Young people teach senior colleagues digital skills (reverse mentoring). Reverse mentoring is a strategic tool for exchanging skills between “digital natives” and older workers which is good for innovation and learning as an organisation.

The project is ongoing and has already been put to work in other areas.

Results achieved

After six months and after a year the project was evaluated. As we know from

questionnaires the project has helped to create a more positive workplace atmosphere and better relations between co-workers, improve technical and digital skills and increased motivation at work.

Success factors and barriers

The success factors definitely included continuous project monitoring using questionnaires and focus groups with mentors and trainees and continuous project monitoring carried out by a team of experts.

In the case of this type of projects it is important to explain to the manager that mentoring is part of the job description of the staff and that it should be included in workload planning of the mentors. It is also important to hold periodical evaluations of project participants' skills which they gain during the project. The realisation that mentors have learned new skills helps to keep them motivated and engaged in the project.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

No role at this stage.

Surplus of employees in a bank, Macedonia

Enterprise: not stated

Employment: not stated

Sector: banking

Share of 50+ workforce: not stated

Reason for action

As a result of the company's dynamic growth, the workload of existing employees was increasing. To reduce it a decision was taken to implement a new electronic system for recording credit card data. The system was to be operated by a group of newly hired young workers who did not have enough knowledge about the bank's processes and needed support from older and experienced colleagues.

In addition, the bank was sold to new owners. Before the acquisition they carried out a comprehensive analysis of the organisational system and decided that some restructuring was needed. They also decided to introduce changes with a new division of tasks and responsibilities of the employees.

Actions taken

To ensure that the company works well after the changes and to onboard the new hires, knowledge and skills needed to be transferred between experienced workers and their new colleagues. To that end both groups were given the conditions to work together directly. The new hires were supervised by older and more experienced colleagues on a daily basis who knew better how the bank operates. Older workers became mentors for their younger colleagues. This way the newly hired employees were trained on the operation of the banking system.

The whole activity went on for about a year. Both the mentors and trainees worked overtime to launch the new system on schedule. The implementation was an intensive and costly process and one that required continuous monitoring. As the process progressed, higher level colleagues who were mentors would have their workloads reduced gradually.

Upon completion of the project the decision was taken to reduce the number of older workers. A list was made of those willing to take voluntary leave and a compensation package was awarded to them.

Results achieved

The intended goal was achieved which was to implement the new system and train younger colleagues on its operation. During the implementation the trainees and mentors built good relations based on mutual trust.

Older workers who had put in a lot of effort and knowledge in training younger colleagues were not happy to learn about the layoffs. The company decided they were obsolete and that had a negative effect on their professional career. They felt exploited, cheated and –

initially – left empty-handed with no pay until retirement (the compensation package was only negotiated after an intervention from the trade unions).

Success factors and barriers

The main success factor in implementing the new system was that older workers were happy to share their knowledge and experience with younger colleagues and the ability to delegate and streamline work processes.

The challenges that had to be overcome included lack of understanding of the new system and the justified, as it later turned out, concern that younger workers would take over older workers' jobs.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

The trade unions negotiated with the management and were able to postpone the layoffs of workers who were considered “obsolete” after the new system was rolled out. Next a list was made of employees who were willing to take a voluntary leave with an adequate compensation package.

Reducing the exposure of employees to noise, Macedonia

Enterprise: chocolate and waffles factory

Employment: not stated

Sector: cocoa products and other confectionery

Share of 50+ workforce: not stated

Reason for action

The company's management observed that more and more employees suffered from health problems, in particular hearing loss, possibly a result of the noise caused by production machines.

Actions taken

A special commission was appointed to develop an action plan to protect workers' health.

The commission measured noise levels in the company and then presented recommendations such as the use of protection equipment, including ear plugs during working hours and rubber shoes near those parts of the machines that use water. Staff were informed that they have to wear protective equipment with regular reminders communicated at specific intervals.

In addition, the workers who have experienced hearing loss and the oldest workers were moved to the packaging department where they do lighter work than in production and are not exposed to high noise levels.

Results achieved

The frequency of work-related health problems has decreased and fewer workers are now affected. Productivity has improved because fewer workers are on sick leave.

Older workers now feel more secure. It has been demonstrated that factory workers who have been affected by work-related health problems do not have to stay unemployed, but can be moved to other departments where they can continue their careers and contribute to the company's growth while their health is not at risk.

Thanks to noise meters installed in the production halls, it is easier to keep acceptable noise levels. The workers agree that the activities were in the best interest of everyone.

Success factors and barriers

The main success factor was the determination of the management and in particular the general director to protect the well-being of staff and create better working conditions.

There was a barrier on the part of younger workers and others who have not been affected

yet. Their concern was whether the activities were sufficient to protect them from possible health problems in the future.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

Employee representatives were responsible for the negotiations with the management. In the course of the talks it was agreed that workers who have been diagnosed with an occupational disease will be moved to other jobs that require less physical labour. It was also agreed to have a check conducted every two years by the Health and Safety Agency.

Ad hoc measures in Aperom, Belgium

Enterprise: Aperom, Belgium

Employment: 1,100, including 350 white collar workers and 800 blue collar workers

Sector: metallurgical industry, manufacture of high quality Inox steel for industry and white goods such as washing machines, cookers, etc.

Workforce age: 56% of production workers are more than 45 years, and the average age is 45 years. Among white collar workers 61% are more than 45 years, and the average age there is 47.5. The average number of years worked for the company is 20 years.

Reason for action

Aperom is part of an international company with its seat in Luxembourg. Because the steel plant was relocated to developing countries and the company often changed hands, the factory was going through a difficult time and many workers had to leave. Today the situation has been stabilised and the company is recording increasingly higher profits. However, the historic developments have determined the age structure of staff: at Aperom many workers are older and an influx of young workers has been recorded; workers aged 35-45 represent a small proportion of the workforce.

The factory operates in three shifts.

The University of Leuven (Limburg) has carried out a study at Aperom to identify problems of ageing workers and to plan a respective set of actions. The study involved 10% of all workers at Aperom who were divided into 12 groups. The workers were asked questions about their well-being and questions to help identify what could be done to improve well-being and create a friendly working environment. After two years a study report was drafted. The employer did not take action on that.

Activities in the area of work ability are only ad hoc and negotiated point after point with the works council.

Actions taken

The activities undertaken at Aperom as regards age management apply to three areas: human resources management, provision of ergonomic workplace conditions and health policy activities:

Human resources management:

- Workers can take early retirement due to difficult working conditions at the age of 58 years and in some cases at 56. In the transition period until legal retirement age, the company pays workers who are on early retirement the difference up to 85% of their salary;
- From 55 years workers receive 10 additionally paid days of leave and 10 days of unpaid leave;
- From 55 years workers may apply for work on the day shift but no compensation is paid to make day shift pay equal to pay when working other shifts;
- From 55 years workers may work 80% of working time.

Ergonomics in the workplace:

- The company employs an occupational doctor and a nurse who also specialises in workplace ergonomics. There is no plan in the company to improve ergonomics, but the nurse visits the company when needed and interviews workers to establish what ergonomic improvements should be implemented in the workplace. Each identified need is negotiated in social dialogue before it is implemented;
- As an example in one of the metal grinding departments workers were diagnosed with musculoskeletal overload due to manual handling of sandpaper. To reduce this overload the department had a hoist installed to handle sandpaper;
- Each new machine in the company is analysed for its ergonomics;
- The company has just built a new metal rolling line; it is mostly automated which eliminates worker exposure to long-term vibrations;
- Packing workstations are now raised 90 cm above the floor.

The majority of the ergonomic solutions and improvements implemented at Aperon are in fact cheap and easy to do; those more costly need time and negotiations conducted by worker representatives and the company and they must be approved by the Board. Occasionally, solutions already negotiated are not approved by the Board and never implemented.

Health policy in the workplace

- Employees with long sickness absence receive money from the company to make up for the difference between their sick pay from health insurance and their normal pay.
- Each year the company organises for all employees a day dedicated to health and safety in the workplace.
- A new measure the company has introduced is that workers who have been moved to a new job due to their poor health or have a new job description are paid their last salary.

Results achieved

Aperam operates in a traditional industry where age management and work ability are not given priority whether by the board and trade unions, but step by step the situation is improving.

Next year 10% of all workers may leave the factory because they will have reached pre-retirement age. The employer still has not drawn any conclusions from this and has not taken any steps.

Success factors and barriers

No success factors or barriers to the implementation of the act have been identified.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

The trade unions negotiated the activities with the company and were involved at all stages of the implementation.

Age management in Janssen Pharmaceutica, Belgium

Enterprise: Janssen Pharmaceutica, Belgium

Employment: 4,850

Sector: pharmaceutical industry

Average employee age: not stated

Reason for action

All members of the chemical sector must pay 0.15% of the salary fund to an industry organisation Co-valent. The budget can be used to create a work ability plan and receive support to implement it.

Actions taken

At Janssen Pharmaceutica a number of age management activities are taken. The activities are quite diverse.

1. Talent Centre FIT

For the last ten years Janssen Pharmaceutica has been in a state of permanent reorganisation. This means that employees are forced to change jobs and workplaces frequently both inside and outside the company. The Talent Centre Fit supports employees in planning their professional careers. The Centre is the result of many years of work, but thanks to this initiative a demographic plan was developed which covers all employees at every stage of their career. They receive support in discovering their talents and competences and if they need it they receive support in finding a new job in the company or outside it (in the case of restructuring). The task of the Talent Centre Fit is also to support and develop the rotating of jobs. The Centre is very successful in ensuring adequate jobs for employees (at any age) in the company.

2. Day of Change

In previous years a lot of activities and initiatives were taken to address employee health and participation. The activities targeted only the employees who are in jobs that do not require a permanent presence (management, scientists, etc.). The company decided to obtain the engagement of all workers and came up with an initiative called “day of change”. On that day operators are released from their duties and participate in meetings during which they are informed about the future strategy of the company, development plans and production methods. One of the objectives of the meetings is to improve operators’ knowledge about different production processes in the company to promote employee rotation and support the full engagement of staff in company operations.

3. Mobility action

Employees may ask to be moved for a trial period to another job at the same level of the organisational structure. Employees then spend a week working in a new workplace

supervised by a colleague. The objective of the solution is to help the employee make sure whether they are ready to do the job in the future.

4. Flexible work for workers aged 50 years and over:

If it is justified, experienced workers may be temporarily moved from shift work to the day shift. As well as doing their standard job, the workers are involved in preparing work processes and knowledge transfer, for example in the form of brochures. This type of scheme is not a permanent solution and can last from a year to two years.

5. Foreman training:

Foremen are offered training on how to deal with experienced workers and how to support them in their daily work.

6. Health

As regards health, the company's motto was formulated which goes like this "The world's healthiest workforce ". To that end a variety of activities are implemented.

- control check-ups of employees: as well as having the mandatory health check, it is possible to ask for a detailed examination and advice on doing sports and general health,
- the company offers stress level tests and advice on how to handle stress,
- a dietician in the company supports and advises on healthy eating habits and a balanced diet,
- better sleep: because they work shifts, employees regularly suffer from sleep disorders. The company offers advice on how to improve sleep.

7. Programme of knowledge transfer

The Purchasing Department has a high employee turnover with new hires only working for short periods. A knowledge transfer programme was introduced involving experienced employees.

8. End of year bonus exchanged for days of leave:

Every employee may swap some of their annual bonus for a paid leave: employees who are below 55 – a maximum of 5 days, employees above 55 – up to 10 days of additional leave.

9. Active programme 55+:

When the company goes through restructuring, employees aged 55+ may leave the company and until they reach legal retirement age they will be paid 70% of their salary. The decision which employees affected by restructuring may join the programme is taken by the management of the company.

Results achieved

No effects of the activities have been explained.

Success factors and barriers

No success factors or barriers to the implementation of the activities have been explained.

Role of social partners and/or employee representatives

The role of social partners in the activities has not been explained.

3.3. Conclusion

The good practices which the project has identified and described cover a wide range of activities. Primarily designed to keep workers fit for work and improve their health and well-being, the practices address both older workers and workers in general, regardless of age. The areas of activity include occupational health and safety (e.g. adaptation of processes and workplaces to worker needs, health promotion) and human resources (e.g. training, knowledge transfer).

The primary reasons why these actions are taken include mostly:

- changes in the age structure of workers (ageing workforce);
- diminishing work ability of older workers (health problems involving the circulatory system, musculoskeletal disorders, loss of physical strength, deteriorated eyesight and visual acuity);
- problems with recruitment of new workers;
- employers concerned with the possible loss of knowledge and experience of older workers when they retire;
- the company's organisational culture based on social responsibility;
- willingness to be perceived as attractive employers and offering jobs which workers are keen to have;
- wanting to build long-term cooperation with workers, meet their expectations and keep up with market standards.

The benefits of the activities include:

- improved productivity;
- reduced sickness absenteeism and accidents, reduced stress levels for staff;
- reduced employee turnover;
- building a sense of security and comfort in the workplace and in private life;
- increased staff engagement, job satisfaction and loyalty, stronger motivation for work;
- higher acceptance of diversity;
- stronger employee awareness about healthy lifestyles and ways to prevent health problems;
- improved relations between older and younger people, stronger inter-generational cooperation, building a positive workplace atmosphere and better relations among employees;
- improved technical and IT skills of staff.

There are a number of factors which determine how effective the activities are and help to achieve the expected and sustainable results. The basic success factors include:

- consistent and systematic age management activities as part of day-to-day operations of the company,

- adjusting the activities to worker needs and making sure that they respond comprehensively to the age-related problems that they are experiencing,
- involvement of workers and/or their representatives in planning and delivering the activities.

Success also largely depends on:

- having consistent plans of age management activities, including long-term activities;
- voluntary involvement of staff in the activities and offering them a flexible solution;
- positive and supportive management;
- workers understanding and trusting the employer and their willingness to cooperate;
- a feeling that all those involved, i.e. company management, trade unions and workers, have a shared interest and communication;
- monitoring of the results and continuous improvement and adjustment to changing needs and expectations.

The basic barriers which made good practices more difficult to take and implement and in extreme cases to continue, include:

- lack of funds;
- workers and management being sceptical, poor awareness, reluctance and distrust to change;
- not understanding the reasons for changes and concerns that younger workers will take over older workers' jobs;
- younger workers not happy that older workers are given less demanding tasks and having to do more physically and/or mentally strenuous work for them;
- higher level management not understanding that mentoring is real work and that it must be part of decisions on workload allocation;
- having different locations and workplaces and the resulting need to create a diversified offer of age management activities for workers.

All of the good practices described here have been effective and may be implemented in other companies, depending on the needs. To support this process, the following can be done:

- build awareness of active ageing both among management members and workers, including representatives of trade unions; age management training is a possible tool with goals such as maintaining work ability of workers at any age and information and promotion campaigns
- develop internal communications and strengthen the co-participation of workers in age management activities and promote social dialogue in companies;
- introduce at the national level financial instruments and programmes designed to support activities addressed to older workers; these programmes can be helpful for exchange of good practices and promoting solutions which can be considered most effective for the particular conditions.

CHAPTER 4. Possible actions which social partners can take on their own or jointly to implement the Agreement

One of the project's two main goals was to initiate the implementation of the Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach. To that end each Partner conducted two rounds of national workshops. The purpose was to diagnose the current situation of age management in the different countries and develop action plans to implement the Agreement.

Chapter four presents the results of the workshops in the subsequent sub-sections.

4.1. Belgium

Belgium's systemic age management solutions have been in operation for many years. They centre around the provision of worker benefits if a person's age or current situation places them in an unfavourable position on the labour market. They also support employers of such staff, e.g. by reducing social security contributions.

One of the solutions for age management which Belgium uses is the so called "time credit" where employees are allowed to temporarily stop working or work shorter hours to help them keep a work-life balance. Time credit may be used for a variety of purposes (care, education, travel, hobby). Workers on time credit are entitled to a fixed benefit. The amount depends on worker age, number of years worked and family situation – generally the benefit is higher for longer employment periods.

Another systemic solution is a national level collective agreement (Collective Agreement - CA 104). Under the agreement all private sector enterprises with more than 20 employees are required to draft annual employment plans for workers aged 45 years and over. Employee representatives are consulted on the plans and may put forward suggestions. The idea is that the plans should cover preventive rather than corrective measures and cater to the needs of workers and not to the needs of the workplace. Lifelong learning is an important part of the activities and should follow bespoke plans which are based on employee evaluation and interviews.

Given the large number of Belgium's systemic age management solutions, the next steps in the area of active ageing and inter-generational approach are geared towards developing and improving the existing measures. The second round of a national workshop included invited experts from the Netherlands and Sweden who shared their experience and offered suggestions for new actions. A particular topic of the discussion was ensuring that workers can retrain and stay in work when they are no longer able to continue employment until the legal retirement age in their current job. There is a need to offer retraining not only within the workers' current sectors, but also to help develop new competences to allow them to move to another industry. This may be beneficial for sectors that are affected by labour shortages. Moving between sectors may be difficult for workers, the barrier being lower pay and loss of some benefits. To overcome this, sectoral funds may accumulate special funding and use it to reimburse workers for the loss.

Another idea for supporting workers in changing jobs comes from the Netherlands. The proposal is to build a network of employers which would allow workers to go to a recruitment meeting and talk to coaches without quitting their current jobs.

Moving from one place of employment to another is seen as an effective tool for age management. The worker stays on the labour market even though for different reasons they

are no longer able to continue their job. This benefits the previous employer who strengthens their reputation and brand by supporting their worker in making that transition. The new employer benefits as well because they are able to fill a vacancy and hire a new worker. The society at large benefits too because the result is a higher employment rate and lower social welfare costs.

It is recognised that employment transitions should be supported by a systemic approach. The proposal is to finance these measures using sectoral funds, and specifically by earmarking so called “transition funds” for that purpose. Such actions should also be supported by public employment offices, private recruitment companies and trade unions.

It is stressed that for workers to be able to change jobs they must maintain their work ability. The competences they learn in their workplace must be confirmed in a way that is clear and acceptable to other employers.

It is important to promote instruments which will help people to move from one position to another and those who consider changing their job should be given access to instruments which are normally only available to people out of work. Continuous changes of work processes are an additional challenge (mainly changes related to progress in technology). Workers must first be trained to do the new job before they are able to do the work on their own.

4.2. Latvia

Social partners in Latvia started a collaboration to promote age management under a joint project funded from the European Social Fund “Support for Longer Working Life”. The international project “Initiating of activities for implementation of the European Social Partners’ Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach” was in fact a continuation of work they had started earlier.

By the time they started work on the national action plan, they had gathered a lot of experience and conclusions as well as a wealth of knowledge on the challenges of age management in Latvia. The Latvian national workshop was attended by social partners and by representatives of the Ministry of Welfare.

The workshop helped to produce an Action Plan for the years 2020-2021 which is presented in attachment 1 to the Report.

As set out in the Plan, social partners made a commitment to sign an agreement on active ageing and inter-generational approach. They also decided to run a survey on the topic among co-workers and employers and then, based on the results, prepare a paper on the current situation on Latvia’s labour market.

Social partners also decided to propose some changes to the current legal regulations to support age management in Latvia. The proposals will address the following issues:

- number of sick days paid by the employer and state social insurance;
- withdraw the obligation to pay income tax and social insurance contribution on amounts paid by the employer on employee education (tuition);
- change the charge for services for the elderly if social assistance bodies decided that institutional care must be provided for these persons;
- improve the internal oversight over the working environment;
- optimise the system of mandatory medical check-ups;

- improve the management of remote work/risks;
- optimise the process of diagnosing occupational diseases;
- legislation to include flexible work organisation.

It was agreed that the proposed changes will be elaborated by 31 May 2021.

Plans were made to carry out a wide-ranging information and training campaign which will consist of: a cycle of quarterly meetings of social partners dedicated to active ageing and inter-generational approach, a national conference on that topic and regular educational meetings for employees and employers. To keep employers up-to-date on age management knowledge, guidelines will be prepared for them on that topic.

The last of the planned actions is designed to promote projects on active ageing and inter-generational approach in the upcoming programming period of EU funds.

4.3. Poland

In Poland social partners carry out their discussions on active ageing and inter-generational approach at the Social Dialogue Council. Established by the President of Poland, the body consists of representatives of the government, trade union organisations and employers' organisations and is tasked with conducting tripartite dialogue and cooperation.

The national action plan to help implement the Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach in Poland was elaborated by the Council and actively supported by the project partners, i.e. the National Commission NSZZ Solidarność and Polish Confederation Lewiatan. It was signed in the form of an agreement between employees and employers on 8 June 2020. It is added as attachment 2 to the Report.

The Agreement identifies areas of activities which support age management. The Signatories committed themselves to delivering the efforts. The first area aims to improve the conditions of employment, including additional breaks which should be part of the working time of workers whose daily working time exceeds nine hours. This is to be covered by the Labour Code. It is also postulated that public funds should be used to pay for adapting workplaces to the needs of older workers and that solutions should be developed to ensure that they can work flexible hours.

The second area addresses support for the employment of older people. This would involve tax relief and public aid for employers and developing new mechanisms of pre-retirement protection for older workers.

Skills and competence management should be strengthened. This is to be achieved in two ways. On the one hand, special funds should be set up to be financed from public sources and by employers. The funds would accumulate money to pay for building competence and improving qualifications of workers in line with the needs of the company. On the other hand, it is postulated that the "mentoring contract" should be regulated. Under the contract a person acting as a mentor in the company will train new hires or workers looking to retrain. Mentors would then be paid a salary to be part-funded from public sources.

The fourth area of actions set out in the Agreement is health promotion in the broad sense in the workplace to be based on solid knowledge the employer will have gained about their employees' health in aggregated and anonymised form from cooperating health centres. The objective of health promotion should be to make tasks less strenuous, provide access to medical services, build employee awareness on healthy lifestyles, including mental health,

and encourage personal development. The proposal is to consider the state's involvement in funding such activities.

The objective of the fifth area of activities is to raise employee and employer awareness of the challenges caused by demographic processes which lead to the ageing of society. It is stressed that age management strategies should be created at company level and that they should be consistently implemented, for example, through lifelong learning and work organisation that ensures good health of employees.

The signatories to the Agreement believe that companies that excel on their age management good practices should be granted special privileges when bidding for public contracts. They also committed themselves to promoting the Agreement, monitoring its implementation and reporting back on the delivery and evaluating the activities.

4.4. Italy

In light of the demographic situation, the raising of the retirement age, the data on youth employment in Italy and the consequences of these factors on the labour market and on social security aspects, the CISL launched an internal debate and prepared a document on Active ageing and intergenerational approach (attachment 3 to the Report). The document highlights a series of priorities and possible commitments of social partners in order to contribute to the implementation of the European Framework Agreement, in the following areas: promotion of health and safety, work life balance, skills development and maintenance, intergenerational transmission of knowledge, organization of work and the management of turnover and generational relays in companies and territories. The document takes into account the overcoming of gender disparities and the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and provides for the following commitments:

- to promote the dissemination of the life cycle approach in active ageing policies national, company and territorial bargaining, and in second welfare policies;
- to promote a joint strategic assessments and analysis of Italian workforce demography
- to stimulate the use of ad hoc resources, in particular social safety nets and bilateral funds, to promote agreements on active ageing and the professional retraining of older workers;
- to promote the creation and the use of inclusive digital platforms aimed at fostering the transfer of experiences and knowledge of mature workers;
- to link active ageing policies in the more general context of life-long learning promotion;
- to promote the awareness raising and the knowledge strengthening of social partners on the opportunities that supporting active aging and the intergenerational approach offers;
- to start a debate to find public and private resources (also from Recovery Fund) to support companies, SMEs in particular, in implementing active ageing policies;
- to monitor the agreements on active ageing that will be signed by social partners at company level with particular attention to SMEs, in order to create a shared catalogue of best practices;
- to consider the present agreement as a part of the implementation of the European Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational

Approach in Italy, to be included in the report on the implementation required by the European Social Dialogue Committee.

In the context of the second national workshop, the document was presented to the other most representative trade union organizations, the CGIL and the UIL, with the aim of finalizing a unitary proposal and starting a discussion with the employers' associations in order to sign a protocol for the national implementation of the European Framework Agreement.

The Confederal Secretaries of the CGIL and the UIL have positively welcomed the CISL proposal and offered their willingness to work jointly on the definition of a unitary document also enhancing the support of the CNEL (Italian National Council of Economy and Labour), offered by its President, Tiziano Treu, who attended the second workshop.

4.5. North Macedonia

on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach, and namely to: In Macedonia at the state level programmes have been developed designed to improve the situation of older people, including older workers, that take account of their health needs. The programmes are harmonised with global and European strategies for sustainable development, especially in the area of health strategies, social inclusion strategies, inter-generational solidarity, activity of older people and ageing with dignity. In practice, however, the implementation of these programmes is not very likely.

Failure to implement these programmes is largely attributed to the fact that social partners are excluded from activities for older people, including older workers. Trade unions and employers' organisations agree that they do not have sufficient knowledge, they are not engaged in finding solutions for active ageing and an inter-generational approach, neither are they engaged in delivering a social policy of the relevant ministries.

To support practical activities and implement active ageing programmes and to ensure an active involvement of social partners, an Action Plan was devised following the National Workshop organised under the project. The purpose of the Plan is to support social partners and other stakeholders in taking up activities to facilitate active participation of older workers in the labour market until their retirement. The Action Plan is given in attachment 4 to the Report. The Plan is related to five areas of the Autonomous Framework Agreement

- strategic assessment of workforce demography in North Macedonia,
- occupational health and safety,
- skills and management competences,
- work organisation to ensure health and a productive working life,
- inter-generational approach.

4.6. Romania

While Romania does have older people strategies, they are neither monitored or evaluated. The national workshop under the project identified barriers to the implementation of national strategies and the Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach and proposed activities to support the implementation of the above documents.

Social partners believe that there is very little government support to keep workers in the labour market. In addition, the extended bureaucracy discourages employers from applying for funding. They are of the opinion that digitisation of state institutions will streamline the procedures and that higher subsidies will motivate employers to keep older workers in work. In addition, older workers who want to continue work after they retire must be given a health assessment. Training programmes must be developed for older workers which will be adapted to their particular needs to eliminate their marginalisation and labour market exclusion.

The activities that should support the implementation of the Autonomous Agreement include: additional funding for spa treatment for people aged 50 years and over, trips and events for older people and voluntary activities.

The workshop suggested that a list of activities supporting active ageing in the workplace and an inter-generational approach should be drafted. These should be shared with trade unions to negotiate collective agreements at company level. In addition, it was decided that the Ministry of Labour should be approached and asked to initiate a national debate on keeping older workers in work.

CHAPTER 5. Examples of recommendations for systemic changes which should form part of national legal regulations

One of the issues addressed in the project was to identify the type of changes, if any, which should be made to national legal regulations to ensure an effective implementation of the Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach. The proposed changes have been formulated by the Partners in the questionnaire on the current legal regulations which address the issues covered by the Agreement. The changes were also raised at the project's national workshops. They are related to different problems and areas identified by the Partners following analysis of their country's legal status. The example are given below.

5.1. Belgium

While Belgium already has a number of systemic age management solutions in place, there is still room for improvement. In particular in Flanders it is important to ensure an effective implementation of Flanders skills strategy promoting a culture of lifelong learning so that citizens can gain competences to develop in a changing working environment.

Another important issue is ensuring a more effective prevention of musculoskeletal system problems, and in particular the development and introduction of comprehensive regulations to tackle these ailments at the European and national level.

5.2. Latvia

Latvia is of the opinion that changes are required in the legal regulations to cover the following:

- the age aspect should be included in occupational risk assessments and in requirements related to improved working environments and medical check-ups;
- there should be a clear link between occupational risk assessments and the people doing the job rather than the workplace itself;
- different systems of work should be provided (remote work, flexible working hours, breaks), especially as regards workers at risk of static loads to their musculoskeletal systems;
- procedures for diagnosing occupational diseases, especially in the early stages;
- procedures for compulsory medical check-ups to ensure the credibility of the results;
- the need to adapt workplaces to the needs of older workers (aged 50 years and over).

The legal regulations should be changed to improve workers' access to training and education. The proposed changes are to:

- introduce tax reliefs for employee training costs incurred by employers;
- financial support from the state both for companies and private individuals to fund training and retraining in accordance with the strategy on required training and retraining;
- ensure additional paid leave for training purposes for workers (e.g. 2-3 days in a year);
- make annual paid leaves mandatory in the case of workers who study at higher education institutions or take a vocational course lasting e.g. more than 80 hours;

- make employers responsible for covering the cost of worker retraining in the case of labour automation and if jobs are lost;
- make employers responsible for providing vocational training for all workers at least once every few years (at present employers are not required to do this).

It is also necessary to develop a national strategy on training and retraining to follow changes in the labour market (e.g. new occupations, new skills, etc.) to help all workers, including older workers, to learn new qualifications for which there is demand.

5.3. Poland

Trade union representatives from Poland highlighted problems related to legal regulations on the right to a holiday. This includes the disputed right to gain free time in return for overtime work at the request of an employee in a 1 to 1 model. Working time regulations for all workers (irrespective of age) which are questionable include a lack of protection of shift workers and night workers and the ability to work more than eight hours a day.

They point out the following issues which still have not been regulated in the legal regulations:

- education and training on reducing the mental and social loads in the workplace are not obligatory (which is of particular importance in the service sector);
- occupational medicine as regards people working on civil law contracts and self-employed; increasingly often the average person active in the labour market is an employee and later becomes self-employed; occupational medicine does not fully cover self-employed people or those on civil law contracts which has an indirect effect on workers and their situation;
- lack of an effective support for people who work under special conditions and in special character who will not be entitled to a bridging pension because this benefit is being phased out;
- long-term freeze of the amount of social benefit fund deductions which partly pay for health activities;
- lack of incentives in the tax system for employers who spend funds (other than those from the social benefits fund) on health of workers or the “well-being” of workers in the broad sense.

Training and improving qualifications of workers may be financed from the Labour Fund and the National Training Fund. The system of training must be made efficient and, in particular, training must be adapted to the needs of older workers.

Trade union representatives from Poland stress that activities designed to implement the Agreement should be carried out at the national and company level. To facilitate the elaboration of a company collective agreement, examples of possible clauses were prepared in the project which will support the implementation of the Agreement (attachment 5).

5.4. Italy

Trade union representatives from Italy believe that legal regulations should be changed to reflect:

- a higher frequency of medical check-ups;

- the requirement to adapt processes and tasks to worker needs;
- redistribution of tasks in accordance with employee health condition;
- incentives to flexible forms of retiring, not working full hours and at the same time hiring young people;
- a better link between occupational health and safety interventions and employee lifestyles (smoking, alcohol, wellness).

Italy must introduce a national system for lifelong learning, set out in the act and the agreement signed at the Unitary Conference in July 2014. With its integrated territorial network of services in education, training and work, the system enables youth and adult unemployed, those seeking employment and those in work, to obtain and implement an individual right to lifelong learning and a recognition and certification of skills gained in the formal process of education and outside it.

5.5. North Macedonia

In Macedonia the law and the existing although scarce collective agreements do not address the need to use special measures in the area of occupational health and safety regarding older workers. The government is working to find ad hoc solutions to mitigate the problem of ageing workers by motivating employers to keep them in work or providing special benefits that are paid for from the state budget. These solutions, however, are not sustainable and do not solve the problem long-term.

Trade union representatives are of the opinion that a national strategy must be developed to set up an integrated system for collecting accurate, relevant and comprehensive indicators of occupational health and safety as a basis for planning a relevant prevention policy, monitoring progress and establishing legal regulations which will make it mandatory to report occupational diseases and workplace accidents. At the present stage one of the main problems is introducing a procedure for recording occupational diseases and designating a responsible institution to collect data and conduct analyses of occupational diseases and workplace accidents.

Trade union representatives point out that issues such as better access to training for workers should be covered by collective agreements; older workers should be covered by separate legal regulations in this area.

Understanding the demand for new qualifications and introduction of regulations on how they should be gained (such as the state covering the costs of retraining) is important.

5.6. Romania

Trade union representatives in Romania support the introduction of regulations to reduce working time (this regulation is already in place in education), and regulations on matching work duties to the physical capacity of workers. They point out the need to develop a national health programme for older people, awarding subsidised spa treatment for people aged 50 and over and the need to improve the process of granting and spending budget money for older people who still lead an active working life.

5.7. Conclusion

All Partners have identified issues, which if better regulated, could support the implementation of the Agreement. As regards occupational health and safety, the issues are related to the aspects of age and health condition of workers in assessing occupational risk, adapting processes and tasks to the needs and capacity of workers, and occupational medicine activities such as the frequency of periodical medical check-ups. They also suggest that achieving a work-life balance means better working time regulations. Key to the implementation of the Agreement is introducing regulations that will help to improve training processes and improve worker qualifications in keeping up with the needs of the changing working environment.

At the same the Partners point out the need for an improved implementation of today's legal regulations and recognise the need to sign agreements which may regulate issues covered by the European Social Partners' Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach both at the national and company level.

ANNEXES

Annex no. 1



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

NATIONAL COMMISSION OF
NSZZ



Action Plan of the Social Partners (Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia and Employers' Confederation of Latvia) for 2020-2021 to promote active aging and intergenerational cooperation in Latvia

N#	Activity	Deadline
1.	Sign an agreement between the social partners on active aging and intergenerational cooperation	Until Dec 31 st , 2020
2.	Organize surveys for employees and employers on active aging and intergenerational cooperation in the workplace	Until Jan 31 st , 2021
3.	To develop an overview of the current situation in the field of active aging and intergenerational cooperation in Latvia	Until Feb 28 th , 2021
4.	Prepare proposals for amendments to legislation on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the number of days payable by the employer and State social insurance contributions (SCIC) within the sick leave sheet (Law on Maternity and Sickness Insurance);- non-taxation of payment for employee education (tuition fees) with Income tax (InT) and SCIC (Law on Personal Income Tax and Law on State Social Insurance);- changes in the payment for services for elderly people for whom the social service has identified the need for institutional care (Law on Social Services and Social Assistance);- improvement of internal supervision of the work environment;- optimization of mandatory health examinations;- improvement of remote work management / risks;	Until May 31 st , 2021

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - optimization of the detection of occupational diseases; - the inclusion of flexible working arrangements in legislation. 	
5.	Organize (quarterly) information seminars (face-to-face or online) for member organizations on active aging and intergenerational cooperation	<p>Until March 31st, 2021</p> <p>Until Jun 30th, 2021</p> <p>Until Sept 30th, 2021</p> <p>Until Dec 21st, 2021</p>
6.	Organize an annual national conference on active aging and intergenerational cooperation	Until Oct 31 st , 2021
7.	Implement regular (at least monthly) educational events (face-to-face or online) for employers and employees on active aging and intergenerational cooperation	Until Dec 31 st , 2021
8.	Develop guidelines for employers on active aging and intergenerational cooperation	Until Dec 31 st , 2021
9.	Promote and support the inclusion of projects and activities related to active aging and intergenerational cooperation in the next programming period of EU funds	Until Dec 31 st , 2021

Warsaw, 13 December 2019

**Agreement between workers' and employers' organizations,
members of Social Dialogue Council (SDC) on active ageing**

Social partners represented in the Social Dialogue Council (SDC) inspired by the European social partners' Autonomous Framework Agreement on Active Ageing and Intergenerational Approach of 8 March 2017 indicate that:

- recognising the demographic challenges, such as ageing and migration processes in Europe and Poland, they consider it necessary to take adapting measures in the area of social and economic policies.
- emphasising that in Poland, by 2030, labour resources will decrease by over 1.5 million people (i.e. by more than 6%), and that the sharpest decrease will concern persons of working age, i.e. between 18 and 45 years of age, therefore it is becoming more and more important to encourage employees to be longer economically active.
- noting that longer economic activity is also a condition for active ageing, which affects the quality of life in mature age, the level of income after the end of economic activity and access to public services.
- considering that active ageing measures are intended to enable workers of all age groups to remain healthy and active in the labour market until they reach the legal retirement age, as well as to strengthen a culture of responsibility, commitment, respect and dignity in every workplace where all workers are valued as important regardless of their age.
- following the conviction that active ageing measures should be based on the improvement of employment conditions while at the same time shaping them in such a way as to provide employment opportunities for a wider range of young and older workers.
- recognising that it is essential to support and encourage companies to adapt their work organisation to both their needs and those of their employees and to develop staff management skills.

jointly recognise the need to implement solutions for active ageing in Poland, including in particular the following actions.

1. Measures to improve employment conditions

- a. Introduction into the Labour Code the right to the additional break from work included in the working hours.

The social partners call for the following solution to be introduced into the Labour Code:

If an employee's daily working hours are longer than 9 hours, the employee is entitled to the additional break of at least 15 minutes (second break), included in the working hours.

If an employee's daily working time is longer than 16 hours, the employee is entitled, after 16 hours of work, to another break lasting at least 15 minutes (third break) included in the working hours.

- b. Co-financing of a part of investments aimed at adapting workplaces to the needs of older workers in the workplace - improvement in health and safety conditions, increasing ergonomics of workplaces, diagnostics and training in this area should be partly subsidized from the Labour Fund, the Disability Prevention Fund and/or other public sources.
- c. Discussion and development of solutions to increase autonomy of the working time of older workers (overtime, night work with employee's consent).

2. Measures to support the employment of older persons

- a. Supporting employment of older persons and prolonging their professional activity - undertaking discussion and developing tax and social security solutions and subsidies from the Labour Fund, which will favour employment of women over 55 and men over 60.
- b. A new form of pre-retirement protection - discussion on a new mechanism of pre-retirement protection in the Labour Code. The starting point for the development of the draft regulation by the social partners is the proposal of art. 39 of the Labour Code worked out by the Labour Law Codification Committee.

3. Managing skills and competences

Actions in this area not only enable employees to adapt to new challenges, but also meet the needs of companies in which generational changes are taking place and the average age of employees will systematically increase.

- a. Support for investment in human capital in enterprises

According to Statistics Poland (GUS) data, in 2016 54.1% of people aged 28-69 did not raise their competences in any form. In total, educational services in the form of exams, courses, trainings and workshops were used by only 32.7% of people. This means that the majority of the population of working age did not develop competences. Meanwhile, only within one year thousands of new products, services, technical solutions and legal changes are introduced to the market.

It is necessary to enable the creation of a Competence and Qualification Improvement Fund (FPKiK) in the workplace, financed from part of the contributions paid to the Labour

Fund and the employer's own contribution. The funds of the FPKiK - with the possibility of limited accumulation - would be used exclusively for increasing competences and acquiring qualifications according to the current needs of the company. The establishment of the FPKiK would be voluntary for the employer while retaining the possibility to choose between its establishment and the use of the National Training Fund (KFS).

b. Implementation of the so-called mentoring agreement

An important element of the activities is to create a working environment that would allow workers of all generations and all ages to work together, supporting cooperation and solidarity between the generations. One of the ways to achieve this is to transfer knowledge and experience between workers of different ages.

The aim of mentoring is the transfer of knowledge/skills, both by younger and older workers (mentor), who have appropriate seniority and skills. The mentor would initiate (train) newly recruited persons or support persons seeking retraining. Work should be undertaken to regulate the additional payment for such persons (mentor's allowance) from the Labour Fund.

4. Health promotion at workplace and beyond

The following solutions should be promoted:

- health risk audit - extended prevention. As part of activities aimed at protecting workers' health, the employer cooperates with medical facilities. Reports are made in an aggregated and anonymous form on the risks perceived in the workplace;
- reduce the strenuousness of performing the particular activities through:
 - ergonomic furniture, workstations;
 - webinars, courses - what exercises to do to reduce the risk of illnesses and accidents;
 - adapting workplaces to the specificity of a given gender;
- providing additional access to health care taking into account the specificities of the employer's activities;
- actions against routine/occupational burnout - they consist in enabling work to be carried out on several positions;
- workshops, trainings on health prevention and personal development issues;
- raising awareness of mental health problems and promoting preventive measures, thereby increasing the chances of personal and professional success;
- training in proper nutrition.

The implementation of specific health investment plans by employers should be treated by the state as a type of investment that brings concrete benefits to the state and its citizens. It is therefore worth considering reimbursement of part of the employer's costs, i.a. by accounting the investment as costs or reimbursement from PFRON funds as long as certain conditions of social control (social partners' agreement) and public control (audit, report) are met.

5. Raising awareness and understanding of the challenges and opportunities of demographic change among employers and employees

Individual organisations undertake to disseminate age management strategies and activities for active ageing among their members.

Actions taken by companies may include

- actions to raise awareness among managers and employees;
- implementing good practices in the company;
- developing age management strategies covering: recruitment, training and development, in particular, of older workers;
- implementing lifelong learning programmes;
- implementation of programmes in the field of health and safety at the workplace, in particular work organisation and shaping of working time schedules that will reduce burdens, fatigue of workers;
- implementing high quality flexible forms of employment with mutual benefits (teleworking, remote working).

6. Promotion and monitoring of the agreement

- a. The solutions outlined above should be promoted and implemented with the cooperation of the social partners, and companies with good practices should be given legally sanctioned special privileges in tendering for public contracts, in contacts with public institutions and offices.
- b. The social partners will draw up, as an annex to this Agreement, an implementation schedule and work plan for the individual SDC Problem Teams.
- c. Starting from 2023, the social partners and, at their invitation, the government representatives will submit reports on the implementation of the above mentioned tasks by the organisations and represented companies and company organisations, and the report on the implementation of the agreement will be evaluated at the meeting of the Social Dialogue Council.

The social partners signed below, represented in the Social Dialogue Council, confirm the need for implementation of solutions on of active aging in Poland presented herein and undertake to take actions for this purpose on all appropriate levels, in the spirit of dialogue of social partners and in the dialogue with public authorities.

DRAFT

Rome, _____

**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 8th 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 17th 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 characterised 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

Annex no. 4

ACTION PLAN

North Macedonia

The application process of accession of Republic of North Macedonia to European Union was submitted on March 22nd 2004, the process of harmonization of the national legislation with the European legislation commences. The European Council officially granted candidate status on 17 December 2005. On 26 June 2018 a pathway to starting accession negotiations were open to North Macedonia after the name dispute was resolved with Greece. Since North Macedonia is not member of EU the process of harmonization and transposition of EU Directives in national legal framework is ongoing process which requires lot engagement and changes to be done.

One of them will be the implantation of the strategic goals of the Framework agreement AAIA

1. This Action Plan is written by NLA from North Macedonia as regard the outcomes achieved from National Workshops organized with KSS (Confederation of Free Trade Unions) to acknowledged participants with the structure and the aims of FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT on Active Ageing and an Inter-generational Approach.

Adoption and implementation of the proposed ACTION PLAN should be one of the priorities of the stakeholders and social partners in taking measures to make easier for older workers actively to be involved in the labor market until they are legally retired.

A) Strategic assessments of workforce demography in North Macedonia

Background

According to data taken from the Employment and Social Reform program⁴ the population structure in North Macedonia is getting older, i.e. the percentage of the old population rises and so does its share in the total population. In the period from 2005 to 2015, the percentage of the younger population (0-14 years) in the total population decreased from 19.4% to 16.7% and the percentage of the old population (65 and above) increased from 11.1% to 13.0%.

⁴ Employment and Social Reform Program 2020

The Republic of North Macedonia exceeds the limit of 12% of old population and enters the group of countries which are demographically characterized as countries with old population.

Potential pressure, changes and problems that the aging population may cause are clearly depicted through values of certain demographic indicators. The average age of population notes continuous increase and in 2015 it amounted to 38.5 years (37.6 for men and 39.3 for women). Having in mind the projections, the average age will increase in the following years as a result of the increased share of the old population.

Objective:

- Establishing clear demographic database of the ageing structure of active workforce in North Macedonia,
- Creating database of the active worker's skills, experience and qualifications in North Macedonia
- Creating working register with specifically defined conditions of the working places
- Increasing the awareness and better understanding of the AAIA from the side of the employers, workers and trade unions.

ACTIVITIES

- Drafting Memorandum for Cooperation amongst (KSS, ORM, and Business Confederation) in order to implement measures that will enable elderly workers to stay active until they legally retired
- Conducting research regarding eventually existing demographic database of active workforce in North Macedonia,
- Set up of mutual Coordinative Council (trade unions, ORM) that will coordinate the activities regarding the implementation of the AAIA especially dealing with the issue of Strategic assessments of workforce demography
- Organizing mutual training with the stakeholders (Ministry of Labor, Agency for employment and of course State Labor Inspectorate in order to increase knowledge of the AAIA aims.

Overall achievement:

- The proposed activities will provide new demographic database of active workforce in North Macedonia, and give overall picture on the current demographical structure of the active workforce in North Macedonia
- Also will increase the level of understanding of the role of social partner to decrease the negative impact of rapidly change of the demographic structure of workforce in North Macedonia.

B) Health and safety at the workplace

Background

The Law on Occupational Safety and Health was adopted on August 1st 2007 and at the time of its adoption it was fully harmonized with Framework Directive 89/391/EEC. The Law was drafted in order to introduce measures and activities aimed at improving the workers' safety and health. Simultaneously, by virtue of this Law the legislator defines the measures for occupational safety and health, the obligations on the part of the employer and the rights and obligations of the employees in the field of occupational safety and health, as well as the preventive measures against occupational risks, elimination of the accident-related risk factors, information, consultation, training of workers and their representatives and their engagement in the planning and undertaking of occupational safety and health measures.⁵

Pursuant to the Law, the employer is to perform job risk assessment, draw up a Safety Statement, train the staff, inspect the equipment being used and perform periodical measurements within the work environment.

Unfortunately in practice the law provisions are implemented very poorly.

Also in 2017 the Government of Macedonia adopted Strategy with the Action Plan for Safety and Health at workplaces 2020. The Ministry of Labor and Social Politics is competent institution and the National Council was established as coordinative body to run the activities defined in the Action Plan.

Amongst the parties defined in the strategy is the idea of establishing special department responsible for the issues which are in the Ministry for Labor and

Objective:

- Increasing the role of the OSH⁶ Officer and changing the Law regarding the engagement of the OSH officer
- Strengthening of capacity of the State Labor Inspectorate
- Improving the "special protection" of elderly workers determined by the Labor Law
- Raising of the awareness of the management bodies in establishing safer and healthier tools to protect the workers safety and health
- Change of the current national Labor Law strictly defining the meaning of the "special protection" of elderly workers

ACTIVITIES

- Continuing Training of the OSH⁷ Officer

⁵ PROJECT – "INCREASING CAPACITIES AND STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF THE REGIONAL CSOS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE LABOR CONDITIONS AND DIALOGUE WITH PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS" – Study of Macedonia

⁶ Occupational safety and Health officer according to the Law is person who has passed the special exam and who is employed by the employers responsible to exercises the working tasks in line to secure safety at work.

- Training of the State Labor Inspectorate
- Preparing guideline which will determine the obligations of the employers in providing special protection of elderly people
- Establishing internal active body that will strengthen the role of the social partners in negotiation process with the Government officials to improvement of the inspections procedure in promotion and control of the safety and healthy workplaces
- Providing the best new IT technology (computers, monitors and etc) in order to protect the health of the workers from unwanted radiation

C) Skills and competence of the management

Background

Having into account that population in North Macedonia is getting older as well considering the process of migration of the young educated people more or less this process will produce insufficiency in available workforce in near future in North Macedonia.

Therefore there is urgent need National program to be prepared as one of the strategic aim to indicate the most required competent workers in North Macedonia

As result of leaving the country during the Covid 19 period Macedonia is facing with the lack of trained medical staff.

As well lot of skilled craftsmen has left the state in order to find better paid jobs.

Unfortunately the social partners and Government official do not undertaken any measures to overcome the current situation although according to official data stated in the annual report for 2019, 17,1% from the population in Macedonia is unemployed

According to official data taken from the annual report of the Agency for employment⁸ the biggest rate of unemployed people even 41, 1% (41793) is those who are over 50 years old.

Objective:

- Preventing stereotype of “older worker”
- Reducing the high number of unemployed people over 50teen

⁷ Occupational safety and Health officer

⁸ Annual Report for 2019 of the Agency for employment

- Stopping the trend of dismissing older people and employing younger
- Fostering the role and impartiality of the Economic Social Council⁹ (ESC)

ACTIVITIES

- Social Partners through their representatives should Draft Operation Plan which will include training program for the workers who are over 50 years old.
- The social partners will initiate change of the Law on Labor aimed to ban dismissal of workers over 55 years old except when it is question of criminal offence done by the worker.
- Developing training plan for fostering and strengthening the role of the ESC towards improving the labor policy in the country regarding lifelong learning
- Roundtables organized by the social partners to detect the reason why the percentage of unemployed people over 50 years old is so high.

D) Work organization for healthy and productive working lives

Background

In regard of the work organization in North Macedonia Law on Labor regulates working time, night shifts, etc, what is more important regarding the work organization there are no readily available data in Macedonia on shift work. In 2004 LFS used an additional questionnaire on shift work, and hence the finding that came from the survey shows that on average, 34.8% of all employed workers work in shifts. As usual, shift work is mainly concentrated in hotels and restaurants (67.3% of workers in this sector work in shifts), health and social work (54.1%), transport and communications (43.4%), manufacturing (43.2%), trade (41.6%) and education (41.2%). The result from the survey showed that male and female workers working in shifts is almost the same, 34.7% and 34.9%¹⁰

Objective:

⁹ ESC is tripartite body established by the Government and social partners for social dialog

¹⁰ Decent Work Country Report – The FYR Macedonia

- Reducing working stress
- Better coordination amongst the social partners
- Keeping health and safe workers
- Strengthening the role of State Labor Inspectorate in preventing violation of the legal provision for working in shift or working during the holidays and reducing the night work
- Creating better and safer work places in order to maximize the potential of the workers

ACTIVITES

- Regular Reporting procedure for undertaken measures in work organization
- Training for social partners and management on how to adapt the work organization
- Organizing coordinative meetings in order to provide the management with information from the workers to reconsider task allocation for ensuring healthy and safe workplace.
- Improving the social dialog through more active participation of ESC in creation of national and social agenda regarding the issues related to work organization

E) Intergenerational approach

In regard to this action area of the AAIA North Macedonia doesn't have strategy develop to overcome the possible inter generational gap and according to the result gained during the workshop the intergenerational gap is becoming deeper

Social partners could not achieve agreement in action activities that could be undertaken to overcome the age difference amongst the workers due to the reluctant behavior of the young worked to accept and respect the knowledge and the work experience of the older workers.

Mostly of the participants agreed the young workers are too ambitious and overnights are willing to achieve in better work position.

Hence having in mind the ambitious of the young workers to overtake to work position of the older we could come to situation when employers do not need older worker anymore since the younger workers are considered as more effective, faster in using IT technology which is deepening the intergenerational gap and is producing disrespectful relation of the young workers towards the older.

This situation might be reasonable explanation why the percentage of the unemployed people who are older than 50 is the highest in North Macedonia comparing to others so it has to be one of the main reason to start with reducing the stereotypes and prejudices of older people.

ACTIVITES:

- Raising the awareness of the importance of older workers who can be tutor or mentors to young workers.
- Transferring the knowledge from older workers to the younger workers.
- Providing control position of the elderly workers

**ACTION PLAN
2020-2022
IMPLEMENTATION OF FRAMEWORK
AAIA**

AAIA	ACTIVITES	MEASURES	AIMS
1. Strategic assessments of workforce demography in North Macedonia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cooperation amongst (KSS, ORM, and Business Confederation). ➤ Conducting research regarding demographic structure of active workforce in North Macedonia. ➤ Coordinate activities regarding the implementation of the AAIA especially dealing with the issue of Strategic assessments of workforce demography. ➤ Organizing mutual training with the stakeholders (Ministry of Labor, Agency for employment and of course State Labor Inspectorate). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Drafting Memorandum to enable elderly workers to stay active until they legally retired. ➤ Research on demographic structure of active workforce in North Macedonia. ➤ Set up of mutual Coordinative Council (trade unions, ORM). ➤ Finding international or EU organization which will provide trainings to increase knowledge and the benefits of implementing FA of AAIA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving and enhance the cooperation amongst social partners in negotiation procedures with the Government officials. • Creating database with specific details on active workforce and conditions of workplaces. • Improvement of coordinative activities regarding the implementation of the AAIA especially dealing with the issue of Strategic assessments of workforce demography. • Increase the knowledge of the AAIA aims to improve the position of elderly workers till the legally retired.

AAIA	ACTIVITES	MEASURES	AIMS
2. Health and safety at the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing Training of the OSH¹¹ Officer • Desk research on position and responsibilities of OSH authorities in EU countries. • Establishing control mechanism to strengthen the position of OSH officer in North Macedonia • Training of the State Labor Inspectorate • Determination of obligations of the employers. • Negotiations in establishing internal active body to strengthen the role of the social partners in negotiation process with the Government officials. • Lobbying and fostering the change of the current national Labor Law strictly defining the meaning of the “special 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing training with support of EU partners in regard the position of OSH officer • Comparative analyze and legal solutions of EU legislation regarding the position of OSH officer in the legal system • Monitoring and reporting the work of OSH officer in North Macedonia and providing comparing analysis with good practice cases on how it is established in EU countries. • Organizing training with support of EU partners in regard the position of the supervision or inspection body responsible to suppress possible work abuses. • Preparing guidelines to achieve provision of special protection of elderly people. • Establishing internal active body composed by representatives of social partners and Government officials. • Change of the current national Labor Law strictly defining the meaning of the “special protection” of elderly workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the role of the OSH¹² Officer • To draft version of the law which regarding the engagement and position of the OSH officer in national system. • Strengthening the position of OSH officer in the national legal system and its impartiality to report any inconvenient or abuse on workplace • Strengthening of capacity of the State Labor Inspectorate in compliance with the EU legislation. • Improving the “special protection” of elderly workers determined by the Labor Law • Raise the awareness of the management bodies in establishing safer and healthier tools to protect the workers safety and health. • Improvement inspection body role and its impartiality and improvement of more effective conduction of inspections

¹¹ Occupational safety and Health officer

¹² Occupational safety and Health officer according to the Law is person who has passed the special exam and who is employed by the employers responsible to exercises the working tasks in line to secure safety at work.

	<p>protection” of elderly workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing the best new IT technology (computers, monitors and etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply the best new IT technology (computers, monitors and etc) with the support of the Government 	<p>procedure in promotion and control of the safety and health workplaces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better protection of the health of the workers from unwanted radiation
AAIA	ACTIVITES	MEASUARES	AIMS
Skills and competence of the management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training program for the workers who are over 50teen years old. • Initiation for amending the Law on Labor to ban dismissal of workers over 55 years old. • Fostering and strengthening the role and the cooperation of the ESC trough organized trainings and roundtables • Developing labor policy in the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting Operation Plan. • Lobby group composed of social partners who are going to draft the new version of the Law and proposed to competent Ministry. • Trainings to increasing the acknowledgment of the role and power of ESC in social life especially in improving the position of the workers. Organizing roundtables to detect the reasons why the percentage of unemployed workers over age of 50teen years old is so high. • Drafting and introducing the labor policy to support lifelong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcoming and Preventing stereotype of “older worker” • Suppress the trend in dismissing older people and employing younger which will reduce and \ the high number of unemployed people over 50teen enable the elderly people to achieve legal retirement. • Recognition of the strong and impartial role of Economic Social Council ¹³ (ESC) as well more active position in protection of the workers over age of 50teen. • Reduce of redundancy of the

¹³ ESC is tripartite body established by the Government and social partners for social dialog

	country to support lifelong learning.	learning.	workers over age of 50teen
AAIA	ACTIVITES	MEASUARES	AIMS
Work organization for healthy and productive working lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular Reporting procedure for undertaken measures in work organization • Organizing trainings for social partners and management how to adapt the work organization to the needs of elderly workers • Strengthening the role of State Labor Inspectorate in preventing violation of the legal provision for working in shift or working during the holidays and reducing the night work. • Coordinative meetings between the management and the workers to reconsider task allocation for ensuring healthy and safe workplace. • Improving the social dialog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly meetings to review the reports on work organization • Trainings for social partners and management on how to adapt the work organization to the needs of elderly workers • Coordinative activities and measures amongst the social partners • Organizing regular coordinative meetings between the management and the workers to reconsider task allocation for ensuring healthy and safe workplace. • Activation the role of ESC in creation of national and social agenda regarding the issues related to work organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better coordination amongst the social partners • Reducing allocation of elderly workers at workplaces • More active role of SLI to ensure existence of better work organization which is one of the conditions for healthy and productive working lives. • Better communication between workers and management. • Better social dialog which will result with better labor policy in North Macedonia
AAIA	ACTIVITES	MEASUARES	AIMS
Intergenerational approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness on the importance of older workers who can be tutor or mentors to young workers • Transferring the knowledge from older workers to the younger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed working teams with position, for coordinator given to the elderly worker. • Weekly meetings between younger and older workers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcoming generational gap. • Young workers will be better trained which will be very

	<p>workers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instead of putting aside the elderly workers shall be give position to coordinate and control the working process 	<p>with discussion of working issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers shall draft compulsory measures which will grant the elderly workers with position of coordinator 	<p>important benefit for the company.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better respect for elderly workers from younger employees.
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Prepared by:

Maja Stefkovska Paneva

Skopje, North Macedonia

Annex no. 5

Sample provisions of the collective labour agreement which may be used to implement the AAiA Agreement

1. The employer shall:
 - a) implement the recruitment procedure for vacancies after submitting an offer to own employees, regardless of their age, and only in the absence of such opportunities, external recruitment will be carried out.
 - b) take actions aimed at retraining own employees, including older employees (50+), into vacancies as a result of their appropriate training.

I. Training

1. The employer shall:
 - c) create a training fund intended to finance training to raise the professional qualifications of employees and training aimed at acquiring new qualifications or a new profession, with focus on older workers. The rules for creating and using the fund will be established by the employer in agreement with the NSZZ "Solidarność" Committee.
 - d) provide older employees (50+) with training and career development opportunities on a par with younger employees, especially if there is a need to retrain them according to the existing needs of the plant by adjusting the training level to the abilities of these employees.
2. Trade unions undertake to encourage older workers to participate effectively in training.
3. Training topics will be introduced to the vocational training program, considering the need to retrain employees for other positions due to their health condition or a decrease in their abilities to perform their current job.

II. Matching the career path

1. The employer shall take steps to develop a career path for individual positions, considering the possibilities of older workers, including promotion procedures and internal transfers between positions.

III. Sharing knowledge (Mentoring)

1. The employer shall create a system of incentives for the sharing of experiences by older employees by assigning (e.g.) 20% of the employee's working time or allocating part-time of an employee for training younger employees for the profession.
2. The employer shall formalize mentoring as part of the professional duties of older employees with abilities to transfer knowledge and professional experience to designated employees and for additional remuneration.
3. As far as the funds are available, the employer shall introduce internal mentoring consisting of the transfer of skills and competences by younger employees to older employees, while the older ones will pass on professional experience, and above all, the tradition and culture of the company.

IV. Voluntary flexibility

1. In workplaces, wherever possible, the employer shall introduce flexible forms of work.
2. After agreeing with the trade unions, the employer shall allow teleworking at the employee's request at least once a week.

V. Workplace Adjustment (Workplace Ergonomics)

1. The activities of the trade union H&S inspectors shall include the needs of the senior workers with special focus on ergonomics at work, health prevention and rehabilitation.
2. The employer shall provide protection against the deterioration of ergonomics and physical fitness of senior workers by:
 - installing lifts to eliminate excessive lifting.
 - providing ergonomic seats for employees performing their work while seating.
3. The employer shall guarantee periodic inspections of workplaces in terms of the requirements of ergonomics, occupational medicine, with focus on the needs of older people (50+), with the participation of an occupational medicine physician, occupational health and safety specialists and representatives of trade unions.
4. The employer, to the extent possible, shall introduce innovative devices to eliminate excessive lifting and nuisance related to work in a forced position.

VI. Time and type of work

1. Night work does not apply to employees 50+ who have submitted a written application not to perform night work.
2. Overtime work is not used for employees 50+ who have not agreed to work overtime.
3. In overtime work or an equivalent work system resulting in work of at least 10 hours a day, the 50+ employee has the right to an additional 20-minute break, which is granted immediately after 8 hours of work.
4. The employer shall, as far as possible, take into account the requests of older workers (50+) to adapt the scope of duties to reduced professional activity, employ them in a 1-shift working time system, or transfer to work to another position, or reduce working time after reaching that age.
5. The employer, as far as possible, shall accept applications of older workers (50+) to adjust their employment and their working hours in order to enable them to participate in rehabilitation activities or to perform caring functions for their parents and grandchildren. (This applies in particular to applications for an individual employee's working time schedule under the applicable system or for the determination of work for the 1st or 2nd shift).
6. For 50+ employees, additional paid breaks for rest will be introduced, e.g. a 10-minute break after each hour of working on the computer or breaks for dealing with important personal or health matters, e.g. 2 hours per week. The length and frequency of such breaks will be subject to individual arrangements between an employer and an employee.

VII. The annual leave

1. The employee is entitled to additional leave:
 - 2 days - after having worked for 25 years
 - and on the next day for the next 5 years of work, where years of work mean "contribution years" according to the Act on pensions and disability pensions from the Social Insurance Fund.
2. The condition for obtaining additional leave is that you have worked 200 working days in the previous year, including the holiday period.

VIII. Health prophylaxis

1. The employer shall equip employees aged 50+ in workplaces requiring high physical activity with special reinforcements, protectors or special protective clothing with special reinforcements at the joints.
2. As part of health prevention, the employer shall:

- a) provide senior employees with access to wide scope medical services under a contract with a medical service company,
 - b) finance recommended (justified) preventive examinations resulting from age advancement,
 - c) finance rehabilitation treatments and a sanatorium stay,
 - d) finance a meal during work as much as possible in dairy products, whole grain cereal products, vegetables, fruit, low-fat meat.
 - e) co-finance the annual fixed costs of preventive examinations (PSA, mammography, hormone tests in menopausal women).
3. The employer, together with NSZZ "S", shall promote a healthy lifestyle among employees by organizing football / volleyball tournaments or co-financing swimming pool tickets.
 4. For employees aged 50+ who need eye protection with a vision correction function, employed in mechanical departments, the employer will finance the purchase of protective glasses with corrective lenses, adapted to the individual employee, according to the doctor's recommendations.
 5. An employer will provide to the employees who have a disability certificate, an additional cash benefit in the amount of PLN 120 (one-hundred-twenty zlotys) gross per month for the purchase of drugs and rehabilitation treatments, provided that the number of disabled employees at the plant does not exceed 10% of the workforce.

The benefit is not part of the remuneration for work therefore it will not be included in the basis of the amount of remuneration used to calculate sick pay, sickness benefits, holiday pay, etc.

IX. Support in caring responsibilities of older workers

1. The employer shall, as far as possible, take into account the request from older employees for unpaid leave within the meaning of Art. 174 of the Labour Code in order to care for their grandchildren or parents. The length of the indicated leave will be subject to individual arrangements between an employer and an employee.

X. Miscellaneous

1. The employer, at an employee's request, will enable them a "smooth-path" to retirement by, for example, shortening their working time, changing hours or days of work.
2. The employer, in consultation with an employee, prior to their retirement, or if they wish to continue work after reaching the retirement age, will agree the form of their work. Such an agreement shall provide the possibility to adjust the working time, working hours, type of contract, taking into account the abilities and needs of the parties, as well as the type of work and scope of duties.
3. Every year, the employer shall analyse the workforce structure in terms of the age and the positions at which they are employed. When a certain position is predominantly taken by employees from the 50+ age group or under 35 years of age, the employer shall strive to differentiate the age of employees in this group.
4. The employer shall introduce jubilee awards for long-term employment.
5. The employer shall appoint a committee for the implementation of the age management strategy. The committee will be composed of representatives of the employer, trade union, a company labour inspector, and a trade union H&S inspector. The parties will agree an implementation program for the committee, rules of its functioning and the schedule of meetings which will ensure effective operation.
6. The employer, together with trade unions, shall conduct an audit of internal rules in order to eliminate discriminating based on age, if any, and replace them with provisions ensuring equal treatment.