





**Ageism is acknowledged as being the most widespread discrimination within the workplace across all of the European Union. This unacceptable situation continues despite the introduction of new laws and an ageing population.**

**Time to change**

Bringing together our partner's expertise - **The Pan-European Older Person's Learning and Employment Network (P.E.O.P.L.E)** have produced a series of **P.E.O.P.L.E Best Practice** guidebooks that include: Employers, Research, Training, and 'Helping the Unemployed over 50s', and this Campaign Guide.

**Who are we?**

P.E.O.P.L.E exists thanks to funding from the E.U's Leonardo Da Vinci programme to develop best practice and integrate work in relation to education and training, employment, research and campaigning on behalf of older working age people.

**Campaigning**

Generally, societies throughout Europe accept the idea that seniors have expertise and experience that is useful. However, this is not really taken seriously by employers, the media or governments. Over 50s are the most likely to be made redundant, and are not seen as attractive applicants by recruiters. Some of the reasons behind this are based on perception and myths such as unfamiliarity with ICT, ill health and a lack of flexibility. Seniors are not only dedicated workers, but often care for their grandchildren and parents. There is a need for flexibility from both employers and workers to ensure business can use age diversity as a positive force. Government, the media, the public and older working age people themselves need to be better informed about the barriers currently facing the 50+ workforce. Also, the benefits offered by both older workers and age diversity both to the economy and society as a

whole, so we can move towards an age positive society and age diverse labour force.

For more information on P.E.O.P.L.E and our work, please visit:

[www.europeanpeoplenetwork.eu](http://www.europeanpeoplenetwork.eu)

## Age Platform Europe 2012 recommendations:

### Active ageing in employment

2012 is the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. The EU programme is being supported by Age Platform Europe, who has produced a series of recommendations for improving Employment practices, which we not only endorse, but also aim to give practical support and focus.

- 1. Promote active ageing** across the life cycle, with more flexible retirement ages - to enable older workers to remain in the labour market and to help those who have reached pension age combine their pension with paid work, if they wish or need to.
- 2. Ensure adequacy of old-age** income while promoting employability of people aged 50+ - make working longer financially rewarding both for older workers, without penalising those who have shorter careers - mainly women or disabled people - for valid reasons such as informal carer's breaks and ensure an adequate income in old-age to all who contributed to society through paid and unpaid work.
- 3. Combat in-work poverty** - apply decent work principles to ensure quality working conditions and quality jobs which in turn helps prevent poverty and exclusion and their consequences.
- 4. Combat multiple-discrimination** faced by older workers – state the value of older workers and seek to change their negative image by presenting older women and men from all ethnic origins as a valuable resource for societies, with equal rights to participate in employment for as long as they wish.

**5. Encourage employers** to retain and to hire older workers - to value the expertise of older women and men, through financial incentives for introducing innovative solutions to adapt the working environment to an ageing workforce, lower employers' costs for employing older workers, provision of mentoring or tutoring schemes etc.

**6. Provide opportunities** to upgrade professional skills of ageing workers - provide older workers with possibilities to learn new technologies and to participate in job-related training.

**7. The working conditions** and workplace should be adapted to meet the evolving health or ergonomic needs of the older worker.

**8. Rejuvenate careers** by age-friendly measures - transition from full time activity towards retirement is a process and therefore should be introduced in the workplace gradually, and well in advance of one's retirement age i.e. through flexible working conditions, tailor-made training, lifelong learning or professional conversion programmes.

**9. Implement health promotion** programmes - encourage longer and healthier working lives in order to raise the national Healthy Life Years Indicator i.e. set up by the European Commission in the framework of the 1st European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing.

**10. Support Intergenerational cooperation** and knowledge transfer in the workplace - Foster mutual learning and skills transfer between age and gender groups i.e. through mentoring/ coaching of younger workers by their older peers and ICT training for older workers by younger age cohorts or by facilitating intergenerational entrepreneurships within family-owned business.

## **Our P.E.O.P.L.E 10 Point Charter**

### **To realise Age Platform Europe's recommendations for 2012**

- I.** Encourage employers to retain and to hire seniors.
- II.** Upgrade professional skills throughout the working life for seniors.
- III.** Provide working conditions that adapt to the needs and benefits of seniors.
- IV.** Implement health promotion programs for older and all workers.
- V.** Rejuvenate careers with age-friendly measures beneficial to employers.
- VI.** Support intergenerational co-operation and knowledge transfer in the workplace.
- VII.** Promote time sharing expertise between seniors and other workers.
- VIII.** Promote self employment to seniors and encourage opportunities for seniors and age diverse partnerships to buy small companies.
- IX.** Promote Active ageing in employment, flexible retirement.
- X.** Support full employment, liveable wage and combat exclusion for seniors and all groups of the workforce.

## 1. Encourage employers to retain and to hire older workers

- A)** To value the expertise of older women and men through financial incentives to employers for introducing innovative solutions in this area
- B)** To adapt the working environment to an ageing workforce, lower employers' costs for employing older workers, provision of mentoring or tutoring schemes etc
- C)** No Age discrimination in recruitment or redundancy should be enforced, as it is the law. Arbitration should be used, with legal action as a back up if necessary. Random checks are to be encouraged and carried out on organisations in order to identify if age discrimination has taken place. This can be done on recruitment and using duplicate CV's with different ages on them for example.
- D)** Some companies have already adopted a Charter (recruitment of seniors, unemployed and retired people) this should be promoted to all target companies. We recommend all companies promote Age Diversity within their organisation and audit and maintain this commitment annually.

### Case Study:

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emcc/content/source/eu04009a.htm>  
Realkredit Danmark: Recruitment of employees over 50

#### Company background

Realkredit Danmark is one of Denmark's largest finance institutions with 1,200 employees, having an average age of 40 years in 1995. The firm's market share is 27% and it services about 60,000 customers. In 1995, Realkredit Danmark received a prize for their high level of customer service and the quality of their products.

In recent years, the sector faces an increasingly older workforce. Traditional solutions applied to solve this problem were based on early retirement and letting go older employees.

Regulatory changes and low interest rates led to an increased demand in permanent staff. Furthermore, the task nature of the firm changed, requiring more direct customer service. Previously, only 30% of the customers contacted the bank directly, but with the new financial system about 56% of the customers were in direct contact. Thus, it became important to have a broader age distribution of the staff, as the middle-aged and elderly customers usually preferred to talk with advisors of a similar age profile.

### **Company initiatives**

#### **Realkredit Danmark recruited employees aged 50 and over in order to:**

- Avail of the high level of unemployment within this age group
- Fill the need for more employees in direct customer service
- Increase the age distribution within the firm
- Take on those who would retire 'naturally' within a limited time period
- Match the age profile of the customers
- Facilitate more direct contact with customers
- Draw on their previous experience and training
- Gain local knowledge
- Achieve greater stability in the workplace
- Benefit from the employees' ability to adapt quickly to the job

After discussing the problem with senior members in the firm, the idea of recruiting workers aged 50 and over was suggested by the managing director. The managing director and the personnel manager planned the recruitment programme and introduced it to Realkredit.

#### **The recruitment programme for employees aged 50 and over included:**

- Advertising in national newspapers
- Limited demands, special customer service and advice
- Fixed salary
- Recruitment procedure
- Induction period
- Education and training

## **Outcome**

About 1,400 applicants responded. The gender distribution was 50 - 50 and one third was not working. A total of 58 people were recruited. The age distribution ranged from 48 to 59 years of age. After a short period of training they were allocated to 24 local offices throughout Denmark.

In the beginning, other employees' attitudes and reactions were moderate to negative, but after an introduction period attitudes became more positive. The permanent staff saw their new colleagues as very competent and with high ability to solve problems in new tasks.

Primarily, the idea was to achieve greater flexibility within the firm. Realkredit Danmark believes that the recruitment of older employees has been a success for both the younger and older employees. Very few of the 58 senior recruits have left the firm and most are well integrated.

## **2. Provide opportunities to upgrade professional skills of ageing workers**

- A)** Support training opportunities being offered to all employees regardless of age.
- B)** Provide older workers with the chance to learn new technologies and to participate in job-related training. Equal funding, and the same funding support to be made available to the entire workforce regardless of age. Employers should not receive less subsidy payment for training older people than that which they receive for younger people when the training programme is the same.
- C)** Provide an appraisal one year before retirement between the employer and employee to discuss future working conditions, changes in employment priorities, salary and hours. It might be that an employer wants to change the nature of the seniors work to include training the younger workers. The hours and consequent salary might need to be adapted in order for the employee to stay in work. It might be that the employee wants to stay on, but is happy working part-time and that suits both parties.

**D)** Introduce a European wide training break for all employees regardless of age, which allows the employee to take a break to learn a new subject unpaid. However, they must then be taken back by the employer on the same wage and conditions with the employee agreeing to return to the employer to work for a minimum period following the sabbatical. This practice exists in France.

## **Case Study:**

**Siemens AS:** Career mobility and ageing employees

### **Company background**

Towards the end of the 1980s the company became concerned about the ageing of its workforce. There was hardly any internal mobility. Some parts of the firm were in a steady market situation and employees tended to stagnate. The company wanted more mobility and development of employees, particularly among managerial staff. As a result, the company implemented a new career system in 1987. In order to advance, professionals did not need to take administrative responsibility. Siemens introduced the system of 'Constructive Management Mobility'.

### **3. Provide working conditions that adapt to the needs and benefits of seniors**

To connect with Government, Health and Safety bodies, employers to ensure that where necessary, the working conditions and workplace should be adapted to meet the evolving health or ergonomic needs of the older worker.

Build partnerships with suppliers to develop an ergonomic appropriate environment and to support them to make their services and products that consider the needs of seniors and that make the workplace more senior friendly. To promote the reality that if the workplace is good and healthy for seniors to work in, then it is good for all and leads to increased productivity.

## Case Study (1)

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emcc/content/source/eu04009a.htm>

**SSAB Tunnpååt:** Occupational health and well-being

### Company background

SSAB Tunnpååt (SSAB Strip Products) is part of Swedish Steel (SSAB) and consists of two steel plants located in Luleå and Borlänge.

SSAB Tunnpååt's interest in ageing employees began over 15 years ago when a research study found that early retired workers had much better physical and mental health than those still working. In this context, the company focused their attention on how to improve health and well-being of older workers.

### Company initiatives

SSAB Tunnpååt's initiatives addressed three main areas: Improvements of work environment and individual health check-ups: Workplace lighting was improved, sight examinations were provided and employees were given spectacles for specialised work. Conference rooms were equipped with hearing loops for the hearing impaired and ergonomically unsuitable working places were rebuilt. Special devices for packaging steel coils and sheets and for driving overhead cranes were introduced. These measures were combined with rotation at different work stations to avoid overstraining individual workers' muscles, joints and ligaments. Initiatives aimed at improving the general health of employees included individual health check-ups and rehabilitation.

## Case Study (2)

<http://www.michelin.com/corporate/EN/group/sustainable-mobility/answers?selectTab=respect-for-people>

**Company:** Michelin

### Company initiatives

Michelin employed one ergonomist for 2,000 production workers in order to preserve health at the workplace, and in particular preventing musculo-skeletal disorders. Michelin combated such disorders first and foremost by improving the ergonomics of their workstations. In addition, they endeavoured to help people maintain their staff health on a proactive basis.

## 4. Implement health promotion programmes

- Encourage longer and healthier working lives in order to raise the national Healthy Life Years Indicator i.e. set up by the European Commission in the framework of the 1st European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing
- Connect seniors with professional organisations, HR and medical care

## Case Study:

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emcc/content/source/eu04009a.htm>  
Uppsala University Hospital: Retention of ageing employees

### Company background

The hospital in Uppsala is both a university hospital and the county hospital for Uppsala County. It is split into 10 divisions and 16 clinics. In 1995, approximately 8,000 employees worked at the hospital including around 800 physicians, 5,600 other healthcare professionals and 1,600 other employees.

The average age of the employees is high. In 1995 it was 41.3 years and will be 55 in 2010. This age composition has created problems. Older physicians and healthcare professionals do not have the same levels of tolerance for working long shifts, late nights or early mornings, and being on-call. By focusing on the integration of ageing employees, the Uppsala University Hospital aims to increase preparedness for future changes in management, organisation and work routines. At the same time, the hospital wants to contribute to a good working environment and the development of employees who are 45 years of age or older.

### **Company initiatives**

Healthcare: Investments in healthy living included time for health and exercise in the regular work schedule as well as the offer of various health and exercise alternatives, and the provision of individual support.

### **5. Rejuvenate careers by age-friendly measures**

- Transition from full time activity towards retirement is a process and therefore should be introduced in the workplace gradually and well in advance of one's retirement age i.e. through flexible working conditions, tailor-made training, lifelong learning or professional conversion programs
- Encourage seniors to continue working by enlarging the application of phased retirement

### **Case Study:**

[http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emcc/publications/2004/ef0479en\\_3.pdf](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emcc/publications/2004/ef0479en_3.pdf)

**Company:** Thales

The French Thales Group – formerly known as the Thomson CSF Group – is a global player in electronics, serving the defence, aerospace and information technologies (IT) markets worldwide. As the group grew in the 1990s, many valuable senior managers were becoming redundant due to

restructuring. Thales wanted to keep these people and prevent a 'brain drain' of highly qualified senior managers. As a result, in 1999, the company created an in-house consulting unit, Missions & Conseil. Originally created to provide a solution for senior employees, Missions & Conseil has grown to serve Thales employees in younger age groups too. The average age catered for today is around 50 years.

Missions & Conseil developed an 18 - month programme to guide managers towards new jobs within the group. Employees expand their capabilities by working as consultants under the supervision of an experienced tutor/ mentor while also receiving special training and coaching. As consultants, they have the opportunity to come in contact with staff from many different units. The programme aims at making this co-operation so successful that both sides want to make it permanent. And, with few exceptions, employees in this way find their new job within the Thales Group. Missions & Conseil has provided the Thales group with a resource of loyal managers of proven ability, a commitment and employability that would have otherwise been lost to the company.

The unit Missions & Conseil created a win-win situation for the group and for the individuals participating in the programme. By providing consultancy services internally and by distributing Thales' knowledge and experiences across the various disciplines and practices of the group, Missions & Conseil saves money for the group. The managers involved gain both professionally and personally as the consultancy missions in real-life situations allow them to better recognise their assets and skills. They learn new competences, develop talents and gain self-confidence and motivation.

## **6. Support Intergenerational co-operation and knowledge transfer in the workplace**

- Foster mutual learning and skills transfer between age and gender groups i.e. through mentoring/coaching of younger workers by their older peers and ICT training for older workers by younger age cohorts or by facilitating intergenerational entrepreneurships within family owned business.

[http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emcc/publications/2004/ef0479en\\_1.pdf](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/emcc/publications/2004/ef0479en_1.pdf)

**Company:** Deutsche Bank

### **Company profile**

Deutsche Bank is a leading international financial services provider with its headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany.

The bank serves more than 13 million customers in 76 countries worldwide. More than half of the bank's staff of 67,700 people are based outside Germany. Within the 25 Member States of the European Union, the bank has a sizeable presence in the United Kingdom, and is also present in Belgium, Italy, Poland and Spain through its own branch network. New learning, teaching and work models were initiated. Employees built up experience and knowledge in fields outside their immediate function. Younger and older employees worked increasingly together in teams or 'tandems', thus ensuring transfer of experience on the one hand and absorption of energy and ambition on the other. The challenge is to enhance employability, flexible enough to suit the needs of individuals, while being adaptable to all employees in all life-cycles.

To adapt to and manage the challenge of demographic change, Deutsche Bank sees its diverse workforce as an important asset. The company's goal is to have sufficient numbers of young people in the workforce; to attract, recruit and retain people with different cultural backgrounds; and to keep people employable throughout their working life. In this context, demographic change is a diversity issue for Deutsche Bank, and diversity is its answer to business needs changing over time.

### **7. Promote time sharing expertise**

Encourage the formation of employers' groupings, especially as far as SMEs are concerned, inasmuch as many smaller companies cannot afford to hire senior executives or even managers on a full-time basis.

## **8. Promote self employment to seniors and encourage opportunities for seniors and age diverse partnerships to buy small companies**

- Promote Self entrepreneurship to those seniors facing unemployment or retirement and facilitate the elevation of the status of “auto-entrepreneur” towards that of corporate body, offering practical help towards starting up in business or self employment.

### **Case Study:**

#### **Organisation:** PRIME

The Prince’s Initiative for Mature Enterprise (PRIME) helps people over the age of 50 set up in business for themselves. PRIME was founded by HRH The Prince of Wales in response to letters he was receiving from people desperate to work but unable to find anyone to employ them – because of their age.

PRIME offers free information, workshops and business networking events. It can refer people to accredited advisers for free business advice, and in some parts of the country can also offer free mentoring and other services.

A third of those aged between 50 and state pension age are not working, with the large percentage dependent on benefits. By comparison self-employment, or perhaps setting up in business with other people (a partnership, social enterprise or co-op), are attractive options.

Encourage seniors who are retiring or unemployed to buy small companies either on their own or as part of an age diverse partnership. This is particularly important at time when there are many businesses facing closure unless they are taken over – often by the former workforce.

For the forthcoming ten years, 250,000 SMEs will probably be sold in the Ile de France area.

## 9. Promote Active ageing in employment, flexible retirement

To promote this across the life cycle and encourage more flexible retirement ages - to enable older workers to remain in the labour market and to help those who have reached pension age combine their pension with paid work if they wish or need to.

### Case Study:

#### **Uppsala University Hospital:** Retention of ageing employees

The hospital in Uppsala is both a university hospital and the county hospital for Uppsala County. It is split into 10 divisions and 16 clinics. In 1995, approximately 8,000 employees worked at the hospital including around 800 physicians, 5,600 other healthcare professionals and 1,600 other employees.

Flexible work hours and retirement age: Flexibility is desired with respect to work hours and retirement age in order to enable optimum utilisation of individual capacities. This could be achieved through a trial period with a six-hour work day and flexible retirement age.

## 10. Support full employment, liveable wage and combat exclusion for seniors and all groups of the workforce

- While promoting employability for people aged 50+ - make working longer financially rewarding both for older workers without penalising those who have shorter careers - mainly women or disabled people - for valid reasons such as informal carer's breaks
- Ensure an adequate income in old-age to all who contributed to society through paid and unpaid work.
- Apply decent work principles to ensure quality working conditions and a quality job which in turn helps prevent poverty and exclusion and their consequences.

## Case Study:

**Organisation:** Fundación Konecta

This non-profit international organization aims to support social groups at particular risk of exclusion. They focus on groups of immigrants, young people, women, 45+. Long-term unemployed people (especially with children), groups prone to violence, discrimination of any kind and disabilities. It also aims to contribute to the elimination of all barriers and obstacles to facilitate access to the labour market and society, all people with special difficulties and achieve equal opportunities for all.

