



Employment and labour market policies for an ageing workforce and initiatives at the workplace

National overview report: Italy

Part I

Part II

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Part I

Despite the foreseen increase of the ageing workforce (both for demographic trend and raising of retirement age) over the years, many Italian companies today are not equipped to deal with the issue of managing their staff on an age basis, and probably showing lack of foresight. The positive initiatives we encountered amongst Italian case studies were in favour of all employees, including (so indiscriminated) older persons, who enjoyed the same benefits as others. Above all, companies never analysed employee involvement in the adopted initiatives by age group (precisely because employee age is not considered a critical element by companies, who have no intention of “wasting” resources on a theme they do not feel to be crucial), so we are unable to obtain a detailed picture (including by data) of the impact that these initiatives have on older workers, leading us almost always to a “perceived” assessment.

It should be considered that the companies who apply these types of initiatives for employees are an exception, especially as there is an economic recession. In fact, we are looking at companies in good economic health, or if they are companies suffering a crisis, the actions can be attributed to safeguarding the jobs of excess employees by a process of redeployment. 14 Italian cases brought to light about 28 initiatives, of which only 9 were only for older workers; one initiative was abandoned and another 3 are quite weak, possibly because they were only just initiated.

1. Main characteristics of the evolution of the company case studies over the last decade (expansion, narrowing, extension, abandonment)

The initiatives of the 14 Italian companies investigated addressed mainly training and development, and recruitment, although there were also some flexible working practices, changing mentality, exit policy and redeployment initiatives, and to a lesser extent, health and promotion, and wage policy.

In general, over recent years, initiatives have extended and developed, and in some instances have continued unmodified, compared to previous years, which means they are to some extent a success. The annual budget given over to training initiatives has increased over time, recruiting initiatives have continued with lower or higher numbers, in line with corporate needs, others have evolved and been fine-tuned, and yet others have emerged over time. For instance, UPA shifted from an original redeployment initiative in 1999 to over-50s training in 2004, whereas the cooperative L’Incontro set up an initiative for recruitment of older workers in 1992, and in 2003 added another for these workers of flexible work.

Only one initiative was abandoned or, in any case, substantially modified: a flexible working practice established in 1997 by ANM, in support of drivers aged over 50, and modified in 2003, retaining it only for those involved before 2003 (when it was no longer possible to subscribe, even if the driver had reached the required age). The initiative was a success, but its conclusion was decided by the company (disputed by the trade unions) for internal reasons (lack of drivers).

2. What are the main impacts of measures/initiatives at the company level (e.g. benefits to older workers and benefits to employers, any unintended consequences)?

In general, the impact of the initiatives was positive both for the older workers and for the companies. Almost all initiatives brought an improvement in worker motivation, increasing both worker and employer satisfaction. Thanks to them, many workers have developed an increased sense of belonging and loyalty to the company, and this is often accompanied by improved interpersonal relationships. Workers actually feel as if they are employed by companies who are interested in them, not just in their mere production ability. Frustration and alienation diminish, and a process of retention and greater productivity (“a happy worker is a better worker”) also emerges, to the full satisfaction of the companies. This is not always a declared corporate objective: sometimes it is the almost accidental consequence of the initiatives that aim at a shorter-term objective, for instance beating absenteeism (especially with flexible working and

health promotion initiatives), availability of better-trained, competent staff (with training initiatives), creation of new production lines, increasing turnover, cost-cutting, decreasing overtime, etc.

With regard to benefits for older workers that derived from the initiatives, the Italian scenario shows improved career advancement, development of new competences and colleague interrelations (using training initiatives), health conditions (with health promotion and several flexible working initiatives), management of work–life time (with flexible working initiatives), enthusiasm and motivation, especially for staff aged over 45, often following burning disappointment for applicants to other companies where they were judged too old. Redeployment initiatives following training by companies managing excess staff (rare, in Italy), also make it possible to safeguard jobs for older workers.

Lastly, one of the unexpected consequences of employment initiatives for the over-45s, should include that of re-establishment of an age-related equilibrium amongst personnel, which was the case for Coop Adriatica.

3. Driving forces for implementing good practice at the company level (Please make special reference to the influence of public policy, e.g. legislation or financial incentives, and collective agreements – at national, sector or company level – if applicable)

The major driving force for implementing positive initiatives for older employees, but more in general towards all employees, almost always comes from the companies. Usually, the company decides to implement an initiative, decides the contents of the initiative, and only afterwards informs workers of it. After informing the employees, a debate ensues between company and workers, and last of all, internal agreements are signed.

In the case of recruitment (Coop Adriatica), the push to commence the initiative (that was then repeated over the years) was from an external training institution, who invited the company to recruit older women workers (given classroom and on-the-job training) who had been pushed out of the labour market prematurely.

Public policy has little influence: older workers are not an issue that is currently to be found on the Italian political agenda, neither nationally nor locally. Sometimes (but this is the exception, rather than the rule), initiatives can derive from some specific national legislation (like Decree Law 626/94, which obliges companies to provide safety training) and are then extended and improved. Costs of initiatives are shouldered by the companies, there are few financial incentives to encourage them (and when they do exist they are not, in any case, the driving force behind the initiative), with the exception of (as far as recruitment initiatives are concerned) several incentives (like the temporary reduction of company contributions) for recruitment of workers registered on special unemployment lists (job mobility lists, Law 223/91), comprising mainly over-45s “dumped” by other companies. In some cases, moreover, companies have enjoyed contributions (marginal compared to the overall dedicated budget) for training and recruitment initiatives from the European Social Fund and/or regional funds.

4. Which characteristics of particularly successful measures/policies can you provide? (Please provide short exemplary description of individual cases)

In general, the initiatives that penetrated best amongst employees were those in companies whose worker representatives are involved in decision-making process, and not only with regard to initiatives, but generally in management of the company. This is a large-scale change of attitude for the Italian context (where companies usually take a decision first and tell trade unions afterwards), and in the course of the research it was seen mainly in two scenarios: ZF Marine Padova and Box Marche.

At ZF the worker representatives are actually part of management, whilst at Box Marche (although it has no trade union), employees and management meet informally once a month to discuss and decide HR and general corporate policy together.

Nevertheless, it is important to mention primarily initiatives that focus only on older workers, which, as was already mentioned, are few and far between in Italy, so it is worth looking at the some of the better ones.

Recruitment

Coop Adriatica: in 1995 Coop Adriatica began an initiative for the recruitment of older women through a redeployment course for women who had been forced out of the labour market. The experience was innovative, since the general trend at that time was for all companies to recruit young workers, so the CV of older applicants was not even taken into consideration.

At the end of the course, and at the time of recruitment, several women responded with great joy, and almost incredulity, when they heard the company was offering them a job. From that moment on, in return for the “trust” afforded them by the company, they repaid Coop Adriatica with greater than average enthusiasm and commitment to their jobs, and complete willingness to adapt to hours and duties. Success factors: enthusiasm in over-45-year-old workers.

Cooperativa L’Incontro (recruitment and flexible working practices): in 1992 L’Incontro began a recruitment initiative for older workers who had just retired or had left the production scenario early (and from 2003 introduced flexible working schedules for them), since it was difficult to find qualified staff in the health sector. Success factors: experienced, competent workers, working life extended past retirement age.

Training

Unicredit Produzioni Accentrate (UPA): this recent (2004) initiative developed from a redeployment scheme initiated in 1999. The company decided to dedicate an initiative completely to the training of employees aged over 50, to provide them with new employment tools and strategies, as well as an overall revalorisation and motivation of over-50s. The training process focused on the importance of new learning, teaching cognitive strategies and memory enhancement. Success factors: approval from the staff involved in the initiative, awareness on the part of the company of age-related problems.

Changing mentality

IBM and Unicredit Produzioni Accentrate (UPA): these were pioneering initiatives for Italy, and indicative of the increased awareness that slowly took root in the country with regard to older workers. In 2004, both companies took part in a study of their employees, intending to analyse corporate resources in the over-45 age group (in the context of managing staff diversity with analysis of groups at risk of discrimination), through focus groups and interviews with managers. The companies used the study to understand which policy to apply for its older employees. UPA has already implemented concrete measures (see the training scheme mentioned above), whereas IBM (because of contingent problems, not least of which a recent reorganization of the company) still has not envisaged concrete initiatives in favour of workers aged over 45. Success factors: awareness on the part of the company of managing employee age diversity.

Exit Policy

Ferrero Spa: another recent (2004) initiative, and so far with quite slight impact, but looking promising. Ferrero, through its Foundation (a structure open to retirees with at least 25 years of service), activated a pilot transition course for workers approaching retirement age. The objective of the course was to prepare future pensioners psychologically for their “new life”, and the initiative was intended to make people understand that although one period (working) of their lives was drawing to a close, another, and equally positive, period was on the doorstep, including participating in

artistic, cultural and social events organised by the Foundation. Success factors: awareness on the part of the company that a psychological preparation is important in the transition from work to retirement.

Flexible Working Practices

Azienda Napoletana Mobilità (the ANM): the initiative no longer exists but it stands as one of the best examples, because it was bringing excellent results. It began in 1997, and allowed older drivers to use two consecutive days of rest per week, always at the weekend, for every five days worked. It was implemented chiefly because the health of older workers was found to deteriorate and this led to greater absenteeism. For organizational/management reasons, however (lack of drivers to replace older colleagues during the weekend), the initiative was wound down in 2003 (although the employees already in the scheme continue to enjoy its benefits). Success factors: happier, more motivated older workers, which cut absenteeism in that age group.

5. Which key lessons can be drawn from implementing measures and initiatives cases (e.g. role of actors, main reasons for success or failure, innovative features)

After careful case study assessment, it can be said that the initiatives most appreciated by the workers were those that involved their representatives at decision-making/planning level. Over and above this, initiatives were found to be successful when sufficient investment was made, when the employees were the focus from a human, not just an economic profile, and when companies planned appropriately. This was strategic above all from the worker loyalty angle, a sense of belonging to the company, and also brought an improvement in performance, often the acquisition of new expertise, and sometimes extended working life or, in any case, safeguarded jobs in the event of a company crisis. In Italy, the most evident innovative feature of initiatives in favour of older employees was precisely the fact that they began to exist, compared to the total lack in previous years, and it is no coincidence that the few that do exist are of recent initiation (UPA, IBM and Ferrero).

6. What are future issues concerning age-management raised at company level? (problems not resolved in individual companies so far, challenges faced etc.)

Future prospects with regard to age management in Italian companies are quite weak. In general, companies are quite aware that the older worker group will increase in the future, but tangible, planned actions to address the issue are very rare. In fact, companies almost always use the conditional tense in describing future intentions: UPA, for instance, might extend its training program in future, to include all its workers over 50, not just a sample as has so far been the case; the Coop might begin specific training programs for older workers to improve the corporate atmosphere and their on-the-job motivation; IBM could implement some actions after the study of its over-45s; Ferrero could restart and extend the retirement transition course and concede access to the Foundation even to older workers who have not yet retired; the ANM might be considering using older drivers on less exacting, heavy-duty bus routes. Overall, however, these were simply ideas that emerged during the interviews, rather than systematic strategies already planned in detail by the companies.

Part II

I. Perception of demographic/labour market issues in national policy over the last decade and development of national policy concerning an ageing workforce (employment policies incl. legislation, pension reform etc. and influences of EU-policies/programmes)

As was also recently underscored by the OECD¹, despite the fact that the ageing process in the Italian population is more noticeable than in other European countries (Italy is described as “the oldest country in the world”), the employment rate of Italians aged 50 and over is especially low². Compared to the OECD average, Italy is 13 percentage points below the male average and actually 21 points below the female average. If this is linked to the country’s low fertility rate, the ageing of the population (which will become increasingly noticeable with the passing of time and will reach its peak in about 2020), indicates that there will be a future labour shortage, with a gap that can only be partially resolved by the use of immigrant labour, with evident consequences on the social security front (because the number of pensioners continues to rise whereas the number of employed persons continues to fall).

Evidence shows that for long-term sustainability of the production system, older workers must be encouraged to extend their working life, and postpone retirement. On the contrary, however, despite three great pension reforms in the last decade (Decree law 503/92, Amato Reform, Law 335/95 Dini Reform, and Law 447/97 Prodi Reform), that have targeted long-term sustainability of the system and have therefore, in part, raised retirement age, Italian companies in general still prefer to motivate older workers with early retirement.

To understand the reasons behind this situation, it may be worth mentioning briefly several structural and cultural differences in Italy (and also in some other Mediterranean countries), compared to many central and northern European countries, which affect how the problem is perceived by the social parties involved in the (still marginal) Italian debate on older workers:

- a) there are extremely high levels of unemployment in the young age group;
- b) over-50s tend to show a prevalence of low level of education and qualifications, and an early start of working life (which is the reason why they have many years of employment behind them when they reach 55);
- c) a widespread tendency amongst over-50s today (especially, but not only, amongst women) to look for chances to be able to dedicate themselves to activities supporting the family (i.e. raising grandchildren etc.), which means they are not keen to extend their working life.

In the light of this situation, there are few interventions around that target encouraging employment of an ageing workforce that does not lack pension contributions. One of the most significant provisions in this context was the recent Law 243/2004, which will raise pensionable age from 2008 (currently this varies from 57 to 65 years), to 65 for men and 64 for women. There is also some innovation with regard to what are typical Italian provisions for old-age pensions (linked not only to the number of contributions paid but also to age). Currently employees can retire at 57 if they have been paying contributions for at least 35 years, and although this 35-year requisite has not changed, the age limit for retirement was raised to 60 from 2008, 61 from 2010 and 62 from the 2014. For women, on the other hand, the age limit has not been changed from 57. Even though the law’s greatest impact will not be perceived until 2008, it does mean that from

¹ OECD 2004. Ageing and employment policies: Italy. (page 9) OECD Publications, Paris Cedex

² See also Mara Tagliabue 2005: “Changing Policies towards Employment and Age”, in *The Four Pillars* (Geneva Association), September, n. 37.

now (until 2007) retirement has been postponed for one category of workers, that is to say those employed in the private sector who already have requisites for requesting their pension. Workers who postpone retirement will be granted a tax-free bonus equal to 32.7% of gross wages, in other words the amount they would be paying as a pension contribution, which companies will pay directly to employees. It has not yet been possible to assess the national impact of working bonuses, nevertheless in almost all the companies we visited there have been workers who have taken advantage of the fact that they can continue to work and earn more. Furthermore the law encourages part-time for a more flexible and gradual retirement (both in the two years before reaching normal retirement age as well as afterwards) and tax reductions for the accumulation of pension and work incomes.

The debate regarding the matter of older workers in Italy, therefore, definitely focuses on a pension system reform, and that there is a lack of a more general policy to deal with the subject, take into consideration other important aspects like recruitment, training and career development, economics and job design, health and well-being (issues that were partly dealt with by Law 626/94, called the “workplace safety law”, for all workers regardless of age), etc. For the time being, the only law in the field of employment that explicitly targets older workers is the so-called Biagi Law (Decree Law 276/2003), that in general aims to make the Italian employment market more flexible. This Law (articles 54-60), in “placement contracts” (which are non-renewable employment contracts that last between nine and 36 months, whose aim was to place various categories of persons in the labour market in exchange for economic incentives for employers), explicitly lays out as beneficiaries only unemployed persons aged over 50³.

For the moment there are no other explicit references to older workers in national legislation, although, by extension, Law 223/91 on worker’s “mobility” could be mentioned, a social dumper that allows companies in difficulty to release excess employees. Although, in point of fact, workers of all ages could be released by means of this tool, lists of released workers include mainly older employees, not least of all because they are the highest cost for companies (for their career development). Workers may be released for a period of no longer than 12 months, at 100% of their salary. For older workers this period is further extended for up to 24 months if they are over 40, and to 36 months if they are over 50, but at only 80% of their old salary from the 13th month onwards. Despite the fact that the regulation was implemented to protect older workers (who are at greater risk of long-term unemployment), in point of fact this is also used by companies to achieve early departure for workers have almost reached retirement age. Therefore, if on one hand the Biagi Law seeks to encourage employment of older workers, on the other hand, and in actual fact, with Law 223/91, these are the very people who are affected (or protected, depending on how we look at it) by the worker release law, even if legislation also envisages incentives for companies who recruit workers on employee release lists.

It is important to highlight the existence of a bill⁴ that aims to foster the placement of workers aged over 45, who have been prematurely forced out of the employment market. The bill provides:

- incentives to companies who recruit permanent staff;
- incentives for self-employment;
- that precedence be given to recruitment of older workers;
- that the age limit be abolished for civil service applications (currently in Italy only under-40s can apply) and for job offers in general;
- instruments for continuous training, etc.

³ the others are: subjects aged between 18 and 29, long-term unemployed aged between 29 and 32, workers who wished to return to employment but had been unemployed for more than two years, women of all ages resident in a geographical area with a very low female employment rate, persons with recognised serious physical, mental or psychological handicaps.

⁴ Bill no 1957/2003, [http://www.unicz.it/lavoro/DDL1957\(03\).htm](http://www.unicz.it/lavoro/DDL1957(03).htm)

However, three years have passed since the bill was presented and it still has not been examined. The Senate's Labour Commission, nevertheless, has conducted an investigation into conditions for older workers in Italy, through a number of interviews, including through trade unions, and the conclusive report is about to be published, containing proposals and prospects for the future. Recently (April 2005), associations for unemployed over-45s – Association for Protection of Workers' Acquired Rights (ATDAL) and "Lavoro Over 40" – (who are seeking all opportunities to bring the problem to the public eye, also with publications⁵) delivered a petition to the Presidents of the Chamber and of the Senate, requesting urgent application of new measures to deal with long-term unemployment.

The changes (not many for the time being) in progress in the Italian labour market, in favour of older workers, are also the fruit of European policies, which bring to the limelight a problem that in Italy seems not to have been perceived in all its significance to-date. In 2001, when the Stockholm Council of Europe defined a 50% employment objective to be reached by 2101 for the 55–64 age group, Italy's position was second to last compared to the other member states, with an average of 28% compared to Europe's average of 38.5%⁶, which rose to 28.9% in 2002 (males 41.3%, females 17.3%), against a European average of 15-40. 1% (males 50.1%, females 30.5%)⁷.

II. Relevant actions of social partners and other key actors: Policies and practices

Apart from the above-mentioned pension system reform and Biagi Law, at the moment there are no significant actions under way for improvement of employment and working conditions for older staff. It is significant that neither the large national trade unions (CGIL, CISL and UIL), nor the greatest national employer association (Confindustria), and not even the Ministry of Employment, seem to have made any notable progress in that direction. It is worth pointing out that at the start of our project, we contacted all the social parties at national level in order to identify companies who have already activated initiatives in favour of their older staff, so that we could include them in this research, but not one succeeded in offering any specific indications.

The trade unions who deal with workers still involved in the labour market concentrate on general themes of contractual renewal, management of corporate crisis, working hours etc., whereas they do not appear to have undertaken any specific explicit action to improve working conditions for older employees. In Italy trade unions for pensioners (SPI-CGIL, FNP CISL and UILP) are also quite powerful but, apart from isolated cases⁸, they only deal with ageing issues outside of the labour market, and there is no overlapping of intentions with regard to this matter with trade unions dealing with the active population, which would actually be desirable.

Italy's largest employer association (Confindustria), through its national representatives, declared that it was aware of the need to act in favour of older workers, but for the moment, although it did intervene at a few meetings and conferences on this theme, it had not taken any specific steps for the problem. There is also a complete lack of national coordination of the problem amongst the various regional headquarters of the organisation, who can act independently,

⁵ ATDAL 2003. *Troppo giovani per la pensione, troppo vecchi per lavorare* (Too young for a pension, too old for a job). Tipografica Sociale Spa, Monza

⁶ Ministry of employment (Project Manager: Bruno Contini) 2003. *Scelte lavorative e di pensionamento degli anziani in Italia* (employment and pension choices made by older workers in Italy). Page xi. http://www.labor-torino.it/pdf_doc/RapportoAnziani.pdf

⁷ http://www.governo.it/GovernoInforma/Dossier/Compa2004/progetti/DAE_Politica_economica/LISB/Tavola%203.pdf

⁸ SPI CGIL commissioned a survey (from IRES) on social ageing, which also dealt with the problems of the over-45 employment market, followed by Maria Luisa Mirabile and Francesca Carrera's 2000 publication: *L'invecchiamento sociale* (social ageing), Ediesse, Rome.

in any case. The most active regional offices in this respect of those in the Veneto Region, which is actually taking part in the European Equal “Age Management” project at this moment in time. Confindustria Veneto is tackling the problem on a regional scale by involving local companies; the project envisages some material actions like identification of best practices, opening of provincial help desks for raising social awareness amongst businesses, and will soon be organising meetings with 25 companies to discuss the theme of intergenerational cooperation amongst employees.

Nor does the Ministry of Employment appear to be particularly active in this respect, since it is not treated directly as legislation, or through the General Office for Social Safety Valve and Employment Incentives, nor through the General Employment Market Office. The only relevant initiative seen so far was in 2003, with the Progetto Quadri⁹. This was an experimental project set up in five regions (Abruzzo, Lazio, Lombardy, Sicily and Veneto), promoted with the objective of encouraging replacement of about 1200 managers aged between 40 and 52 (about 20 % were women) who had been forced to leave medium-large companies who opted for restructuring/rationalisation. Thanks to the project, which was open only to unemployed managers aged over 40, about 1000 people have now found new jobs.

Apart from this project, reserved for the over-40s, on the whole there are no ministerial interventions to support employment that address the age of possible beneficiaries. Sometimes the Ministry will limit itself to supplying a conceptual project framework (mainly for placement or replacement) that must then be developed and implemented by each Region, and ministerial managers feel that occasionally the Regions decide to include older unemployed workers as possible beneficiaries.

III. Status of the issue of older workers in current policy and public debates – identification of future issues

The information scenario with regard to older workers in Italy is scant and fragmented. Public and political debate in this sense is almost solely centred around pensions, and raising of retirement age, but for the future on the horizon (with a significant raising of the average workforce age), this is insufficient. To face up to the situation appropriately, other aspects must be considered during contract negotiation. For instance:

- age discrimination must be addressed during recruitment of personnel;
- improvement of working conditions for older workers;
- promotion of job opportunities for unemployed older workers;
- revision of the current wages system which is currently too involved with length of service;
- development of gradual retirement, including part-time employment;
- encouragement to improve the educational standards of older workers through training and lifelong learning.

Only the Biagi Law mentions older workers (50 and over) as possible beneficiaries of “placement contracts”. At the moment the impact of this provision is not known, but the Ministry of Employment has commissioned ISFOL¹⁰ to perform first monitoring of this law, which is about to be made public through a summary expected at the end of 2005,

⁹ <http://quadri.welfare.gov.it/Quadri/home.asp>

¹⁰ Institute for professional training of workers, a research institute supervised by the Ministry of Employment and also funded by ESF.

prior to three publications planned for the end of 2006. Early estimates, however, do not point to any great impact made by placement contracts in general, and consequently even less significant estimates emerge for the over-50s. So at first glance, the placement contract scheme for over-50s does not seem to have improved employment prospects for older workers¹¹.

Currently the older worker issue is driven by the research sector, mainly through European projects, although researchers are encountering a reality (trade unions, employer association, Ministry, companies) that is often unprepared. The various initiatives undertaken in this context include research promoted in 2001 by Eurolink Age: “Ageing in Employment, a proposal for a European Code of Good Practice”. In Italy this initiative, which led to the writing of a code¹², involved trade union organisations, employers and companies (then the salient steps of the Italian research work were published¹³), but none of them appropriated the document during negotiations, since its application was not made compulsory.

In Italy, apart from the present project, and the Confindustria Veneto-coordinated initiative mentioned above, a project is currently in progress financed by the European Commission called “Ageing in Employment: Identification of Good Practices to Increase Job Opportunities and Maintain Older Workers in Employment”, whose objective is to pinpoint eight case studies, and in Italy is being undertaken by the Laboratorio Revelli in Turin. Another EU funded project (Innovative Strategies to Promote Active Ageing, 2004–2006) is carried out by a network of public and private organisations in Lecco (Northern Italy), aiming at developing a process model of alternative working arrangements for older workers, that could be adopted by enterprises to promote active ageing on work, planning also the introduction of a Seniority Social Certification for those companies showing good practices in the improvement of the quality of work for older employees¹⁴.

Other, more independent actors come from the academic world, for instance Milan Bocconi University’s Laboratorio Armonia research “L’età come elemento di discriminazione: culture e stereotipi aziendali”¹⁵ [age as an element of discrimination: corporate culture and stereotypes] (age discrimination is a well-known issue in Italy¹⁶), as well as at Rome La Sapienza University’s Department of Demographic Sciences, with its project “Invecchiamento della popolazione e transizione lavoro-pensionamento: un’analisi tra le imprese, tra lavoratori anziani e tra giovani pensionati”¹⁷, [ageing in the population and work-retirement transition: an analysis of companies, older workers, and young pensioners] and the latter in collaboration with ISFOL, who has also undertaken several other surveys of the

¹¹ See also “Alcune evidenze riguardanti i contratti di Inserimento Lavorativo” (Several testimonies regarding placement contracts), a paragraph to be included in an as-yet unofficial Ministry for Employment labour market monitoring group project on INPS indications (in press).

¹² http://www.age-platform.org/AGE/IMG/pdf/Ageing_in__employment.pdf

¹³ Principi A., Melchiorre M. G., Quattrini S., Lamura G. 2002. Invecchiamento e lavoro: la proposta di un Codice Europeo di Comportamento. *Economia & Lavoro*, XXXVI, no.2 (pages 17-38). Donzelli Editore, Rome

¹⁴ http://www.uta.fi/tyt/kkp/projektit/activeatwork/index.php?s_id=21&t=i

¹⁵ <http://osservatori.sdabocconi.it/armonia/attivita.html>

¹⁶ European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions 2005. Quality of work in Italy survey, 2002: 5. Available in electronic format only (<http://www.eurofound.eu.int>)

¹⁷ <http://w3.uniroma1.it/goliniweb/homepage/invecchiamento/goliniweb.htm>

topic¹⁸, and in general confirms that there is a noticeable lack of incisive policies and lack of policies in general in this respect.

Other bodies that had been active in recent years are:

- ENAIP (Nationale ACLI for Professional training) Friuli Venezia Giulia Region: who conducted the project from 2000–2004, entitled “Over 45: Employment, Valorisation, Empowerment, Replacement of the Unemployed”. This was an Equal project (financed by the European Social Fund, the Ministry of Employment and Social Policies, and Friuli Venezia Giulia Regional Authority- Regional Management for Professional Training), which analysed the problem in the attempt to identify suitable strategies for encouraging: a) placement of unemployed over- 45s; b) social and labour replacement policies for persons aged over 45¹⁹.
- Niederdorf Italia (selection and recruitment, training and development, organisational development company), who conducted research in 2001, in about 15 companies in the provinces of Verona, Mantua and Padua, focusing on understanding whether the companies were recruiting “senior” resources and/or valorising over-50s staff. Results were presented during the January 2004 conference: “Seniority: il mondo delle imprese e la sfida degli over 50”²⁰ [Seniority: the business world and the challenge of the over-50s], hosted by Verona industrialists association.
- Forpin Piacenza (professional training for industry): from 2002 to 2004 conducted an Equal project “Advance: anticipating the future for planning development”²¹, an initiative for ageing human resources, whose mission also included fostering the recovery of professional skills and promoting replacement of the weaker professional profiles.

In conclusion, in Italy, not only is there no policy that deals with the matter over all, there is also an excessive division between the social parts: ministry, trade unions, employer associations, research institutes and companies. We feel that the first step to be taken to avoid that positive actions are the result (as is now the case) of individual company initiatives implemented by the commitment of particularly long-sighted management, is to set up a specific monitoring structure for all initiatives dedicated to older workers. This would be a sort of “permanent observatory for older workers” and with the involvement of all interested parties it would succeed not only in its declared monitoring mission, but would also be able to provide policy indications and promote circulation of principles that foster active ageing in the workplace.

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¹⁸ Riccio G. (edited by) – ISFOL – 2005: Osservatorio sulle politiche regionali di sostegno ai lavoratori adulti. Monografie del mercato del lavoro e le politiche per l'impiego. [Observatory for regional support policies for adult workers. Monographs on the labour market and employment policies] No. 5 (<http://www.isfol.it/>).

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¹⁹ The project (<http://www.over45.org/english/index.htm>) also generated a CD-ROM and four publications: 1) End of project report; 2) Adult and employment: towards an interdisciplinary approach; 3) Looking for a job has become a full-time job; 4) For an economy and experience.

²⁰ http://www.niederdorfitalia.com/eventi/archivio_eventi.html

²¹ <http://www.forpin.it/transnaz2.htm>