Developing Solidarity and Cooperation amongst the various age groups in the workplace for an active and productive ageing and workforce

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Keynote speech A-M. GUILLEMMARD, Eurofound Seminar « Improving working conditions : contribution to active ageing »
Rome 30/05/2012
The need for a life-course perspective

- Ageing and Longevity raises questions about the distribution of work and welfare over the life-course and across generations.

- Comprehensive policy responses must address both labour market issues and welfare issues.

- Addressing the issue of an ageing labour force calls for an integrated preventive strategy for maintaining fitness to work throughout careers.

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Les défis du vieillissement: Âge, emploi, retraite : perspectives internationales

Octobre 2010
Employment rates of 55-64 year-olds in European Union (1996-2010)
(source Eurostat-EFT)
How to explain these contrasted trends in older workers employment rates among countries confronted to similar demographic context

- There have been divergent political strategies in terms of employment and welfare policies to cope with the ageing issue.

- Cognitive and normative impacts of public policies have produced different “age culture”

**Age Culture:** A set of shared values and norms about how to formulate the question of growing old and about the rights and obligations attached to age.

A-M. GUILLEMA: Older Workers and Work Ability, Monash University, Melbourne, 12-13/12/2011
What we learn from crossnational comparisons? Levers of action for active ageing

Boosting active ageing: An Issue with a variable scope

This depends on policy decisions about training, employment and welfare and on the resulting “age culture”
not one size fits all solution to increase the employment rate and prolong the worklife

- **For Scandinavia and Japan:**
  - Marginal reorganisation:
    - Continue efforts toward activation: convince older employees to work longer and their employers to keep them on board and motivate more women to enter the labour force.
    - Reorganize careers to maintain occupational prospects after the age of 50.
      - Promoting a new age management.

- **For continental Europe with its early-exit culture:**
  - A genuine “cultural revolution”.
    - Break with the previous “inactivation” of older workers.
    - An unprecedented mobilization on behalf of the ageing work force
    - The need for a preventive, multilevel strategy.
    - Long-term planning, **coordination and social dialogue.**

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Put an end to the early exit culture: The case of Finland

1 - 1998-2002: A national five-year plan for the employment of people over 45

“Experience is a national asset”

• A dynamic life-course perspective instead of a static age-group perspective.

• Switch from a management based on “age-related measures” to managing “age diversity” at the national and company levels.

• A social investment and activation perspective

2 - 2003-2007 The Veto Programme for Improving the quality and attractiveness of work for all age-groups

• Invest in human capital throughout the worklife

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Changing course: Levers of action

GUIDELINES FOR INCREASING LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN AN AGEING SOCIETY

• A multidimensional preventive strategy for maintaining the working capacity of employees of all ages

• Act both on the demand side for senior labour from firms and on the supply side of senior labour

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GUIDELINES FOR INCREASING LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN AN AGEING SOCIETY (2)

6 age neutral measures:

- **Offer occupational prospects** and mobility to all age-groups in particular more opportunities for horizontal mobility. Invent a new age management.

- **Develop training programmes** in relation to career paths, in particular for wage-earners over 40 (see table Eurostat). *Long life learning must become a reality.*

- **Improve working conditions, and workplace health and safety** in order to promote *well-being at work and a sustainable longer work life.*

- **Recognize the value of experience and the importance of human capital as an asset for firms.**

- **Rethink the organization of the workforce** so as to *boost cooperation* and favour the transfer of skills *between generations at the workplace.*

- **Experimentation and Assessment of implemented Programmes**
TRAINING BY AGE

A-M. GUILLEMARD, Older Workers and Work Ability, Monash University, Melbourne, 12-13/12/2011
From an age-based management to a management based on age diversity

Demographic ageing and longevity provide an opportunity for developing alternative ways of managing age that are more in line with the requirements of a knowledge-based society

- Mobility
- Autonomy
- Life-long learning

→ Toward building a Society for all ages

*Age-segmented management, which has massively pushed older wage-earners out of the labour market, has reached its limits in continental Europe (For instance France: “A Welfare State without work” Esping-Andersen)

✓ Massive use of age-related measures led to undervaluing and externalisation of older workers and systematic age discrimination in employment.

*The change should be made to an integrated management of the diversity and synergy of all age groups. The focus should be on the organisation of career paths and with more horizontal occupational mobility. Diversity is an asset.

A-M. GUILLEMARD, Older Workers and Work Ability, Monash University, Melbourne, 12-13/12/201111
• Cooperation between generations at the workplace is a main challenge for firm’s and countries competitiveness

• A key challenge is to rebuild the social pact between generations for employment and pensions

• Since the post-world-war’s social pact for generational solidarity new social risks have developed:
  - Rapid obsolescence of knowledge
  - New risks profile over the life course
  - Precarious jobs
  - Young people with problems of finding jobs

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Transferts de compétences et d’expériences entre générations

- Expérience : largement liée au parcours professionnel, faite de savoirs tacites

- Expérience et Age

- Expérience contribue au maintien d’une activité efficiente des salariés âgés

- Expérience offre des moyens de compensation (cf graphique) à la condition que procédures de réalisation de la tâche le permettent

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