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ROPES

Resourcing Older People's
Employment Support

Lobbying and Campaigns: 50+

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Introduction

- ▶ The expertise and experience of older people is widely acknowledged by society, in the UK, Europe and beyond
- ▶ Too often, the media, employers and governments fail to recognise this.
- ▶ We have already looked at the myths and negative stereotypes, and exposed them as false. So how do we move ahead in our lobbying and campaigning activities? What should be our demands?

Age Platform Europe 2012: Active Ageing in Employment - 10 Recommendations

- 1 Promote active ageing
- 2 Ensure adequacy of old-age income
- 3 Combat in-work poverty
- 4 Combat the multiple discrimination faced by older workers
- 5 Encourage employers to retain and hire older workers

Age Platform Europe 2012: Active Ageing in Employment – Recommendations

- 6 Provide opportunities to upgrade professional skills of ageing workers
- 7 Working conditions and workplaces should be adapted to meet the evolving health and ergonomic needs of older workers
- 8 Rejuvenate careers by age-friendly measures
- 9 Implement health promotion programmes
- 10 Support intergenerational cooperation and knowledge transfer in the workplace

Pan European Older People's Learning & Employment (P.E.O.P.L.E) Network 10 - Point Charter

- ▶ This charter was created in order to realise Age Platform Europe's 2012 recommendations.

P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 1: Encourage employers to retain and to hire older workers (1)

- ▶ Employers need to understand the value and expertise of older workers – to achieve this, financial incentives should be made to employers for introducing innovative solutions in this area.
- ▶ Working environments need to be adapted to be fit for purpose for an ageing workforce
- ▶ Employing older workers is financially beneficial to employers, as older workers often accept lower salaries
- ▶ Mentoring and tutoring schemes will give older workers a valuable role in passing on their knowledge and expertise to younger colleagues.

P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 1: Encourage employers to retain and to hire older workers (2)

- ▶ The existing law, which makes age discrimination in recruitment and redundancy, should be more rigorously enforced
- ▶ Greater use needs to be made of arbitration, with legal action as a back-up if necessary.
- ▶ Random checks should be carried out on organisations, to identify whether or not age discrimination has occurred. For example, the use of duplicate CVs with only the age-related information changed, would quickly identify age discrimination at the recruitment stage.

P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 1: Encourage employers to retain and to hire older workers (3)

- ▶ Large employers have already adopted a formal Charter pertaining to the recruitments of seniors, both unemployed and retired. This should be promoted to all larger employers.
- ▶ Having adopted the Charter, organisations should use it to audit and maintain their commitment to age equality.

P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 2: Provide opportunities to upgrade professional skills of ageing workers (1)

- Provide training opportunities to all employees regardless of age.
- Provide older workers with the chance to learn new technologies and skills, and to participate in job-related training.
- Funding for training, and the same levels of support, should be offered to the entire workforce, regardless of age.
- Employers should not receive less subsidy for training older people than they receive for training younger people, where the training programme is the same.

P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 2: Provide opportunities to upgrade professional skills of ageing workers (2)

- Provide and appraisal one year before retirement, where employer and employee discuss future working conditions, changes in employment priorities, salary, hours, etc.
- Employers may for example wish to change the nature of senior employees' work to include training and mentoring of younger staff.
- Shorter hours may be requested by older employees who do not want to work 35+ hours per week any longer, or by employers who cannot afford to continue to pay them full-time.
- Introduce a pan-European training break scheme for all employees regardless of age (along the lines of existing French practice) where the employee takes a break to learn a new subject unpaid, but is then taken back by the same employer, with the same wages and conditions as before, with the employee agreeing to stay with the company for a specified minimum period following the sabbatical.

P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 3: Provide working conditions that adapt to the needs and benefits of seniors

- Connect with Government, Health & Safety bodies and employers to ensure that, where necessary, workplaces and working conditions are adapted to meet the evolving health and ergonomic needs of the older worker.
- Build partnerships with suppliers to develop appropriate ergonomic environments, and support suppliers to make their services and products more senior-friendly.
- Promote the reality that, if the workplace is good and health for seniors to work in, then it is good and healthy for all, and will lead to increased productivity.

P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 4: Implement health promotion programmes for older and all workers.

- ▶ Raise the profile of the European Commission's Healthy Life Years Indicator
- ▶ Encourage longer and healthier working lives in order to raise the national Healthy Life Years Indicator.

P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 5: Rejuvenate careers with age-friendly measures beneficial to employers.

- The transition from full-time working to retirement is a process.
- This process should be introduced gradually, and well in advance of the planned retirement age, using a variety of methods: e.g. flexible working conditions, tailor-made training, lifelong learning, professional conversion programmes.
- Encourage seniors to continue working by enlarging the application of phased retirement.

P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 6: Support intergenerational cooperation and knowledge transfer in the workplace

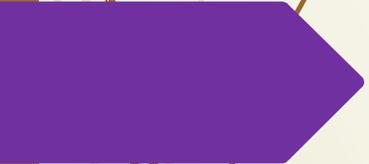
- ▶ Foster mutual learning and skills transfer schemes between age and gender groups (e.g. through mentoring of younger workers by older colleagues, and giving younger workers a role in training older colleagues in ICT.)
- ▶ Facilitate intergenerational entrepreneurships within family-owned businesses.

P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 7: Promote time-sharing expertise between seniors and other workers.

- ▶ The fact is that many smaller companies cannot afford to hire senior executives, or even managers, on a full-time basis.
- ▶ This problem could be alleviated by encouraging the formation of employer groupings, especially with regard to SMEs, with senior executives etc. acting for the group.



P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 8: Promote self-employment to seniors and encourage opportunities for seniors and age-diverse partnerships to buy small companies

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- ▶ Promote self-employment or self-entrepreneurships to seniors who face unemployment or retirement at an age earlier than they had wished.
 - ▶ Facilitate elevation of the status of the auto-entrepreneur towards that of a corporate body, offering practical help towards starting up in business or self-employment.

P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 9: Promote Active Ageing in Employment, flexible retirement

- ▶ Promote this concept across the life cycles
- ▶ Encourage more flexible retirement ages.
- ▶ Enable older workers to remain in the labour market.
- ▶ Help those who have reached pension age to combine their pension with paid work, should they wish or need to do so.

P.E.O.P.L.E Charter Point 10: Support full employment, flexible wage and combat exclusion for seniors and all groups of the workforce

- ▶ Promote employability for people aged 50+
- ▶ Make working longer financially rewarding for older workers without penalising those who have shorter careers (mainly women and disabled people) for valid reasons, e.g. informal carers' breaks.
- ▶ Ensure that all who contribute to society through paid and unpaid work receive an adequate income in old age.
- ▶ Apply decent work principles to ensure quality working conditions and quality jobs – this will help prevent poverty and exclusion, and their consequences.

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