AGE BAROMETER 2025

Recommendations – Labour Shortages

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Recommendations

Recognise the value and needs of older workers in employment policies

- **Recognise and value the contribution of older workers** in employment policies, highlighting their experience, expertise and role in skills transfer
- **Develop proactive social policies** from the moment workers enter the labour market, to promote sustainable, qualitative and inclusive career paths for workers throughout their lives
- Fully integrate the ageing dimension into the **European Employment Strategy** and in recent or forthcoming initiatives such as the **Quality Jobs Roadmap** and the **new Action Plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights**
- Strengthen the monitoring and revision of the **Employment Equality Directive** to ensure stronger protection against age discrimination in the workplace, thereby enabling older workers to remain active longer if they wish so

Inclusive labour market strategies

- **Adopt a person-centred approach** that recognise the diversity of backgrounds and situations among older workers, considering gender, disability, origin and migration status
- **Train managers** to recognise and tackle ageism and value the richness of generational diversity within teams
- **Revise the Work-Life Balance Directive** to expand the rights of carers (more days off, minimum pay standards, protection against dismissal or forced early retirement), particularly for older women who often take on these responsibilities
- **Create age-friendly work environments** through ergonomics, psychosocial risk prevention and more sustainable career management practices
- **Adapt working conditions** in sectors under pressure, such as health, construction and long-term care to make them more attractive and support the retention of experienced workers

Support for older unemployed

- **Develop integrated reintegration programmes** combining training, personalised support, coaching and job search assistance
- Strengthen the role of the **European network of public employment services** and improve the implementation of **the Recommendation on long-term unemployment** to respond more effectively to the needs of unemployed older people, with a targeted support for older women
- **Create stronger legal mechanisms** to better protect workers against age-related dismissals
- **Develop financial incentives** for hiring older workers, inspired by national examples, while ensuring the sustainability and stability of employment beyond temporary aid
- **Set up vocational rehabilitation programmes** with health services to support a return to work after a period of inactivity due to health reasons
- **Train employers to effectively support a return to work** after illness or accident by adapting jobs and conditions for returning to work

Retention and career development

- **Introduce mid-career reviews and flexible career paths** to anticipate transitions, highlight acquired skills and provide new professional opportunities
- **Promote intergenerational mentoring** and innovative models such as job sharing or skills exchange between generations, to value and build on the experience of older workers and strengthen knowledge transfer
- **Adapt workstations** and improve the prevention of physical and psychosocial risks, with a focus on quality of life at work
- **Develop sector-specific retraining** and skills management schemes to anticipate mass retirements, particularly in sectors under pressure
- **Encourage appropriate forms of flexibility** (voluntary part-time work, teleworking, phased retirement) to facilitate end-of-career arrangements and a smooth transition to retirement

- **Remove financial disincentives** to working beyond the legal age and introduce tax and social incentives to support voluntary continued employment
- **Promote the involvement of pensioners** through forms of professional or volunteering activities in key sectors such as health, education and crafts

Strengthen social dialogue

- **Extend the coverage of collective agreements** to more sectors and include specific provisions for older workers (voluntary part-time work, protection against dismissal, adapted working conditions)
- **Promote the creation of demographic funds and sectoral initiatives** to support training, job adaptation and the continued employment of older workers
- **Develop monitoring tools integrated into collective agreements** to assess the impact of measures on employment, continuing training and satisfaction among the over-55s