

Career Management & Age Management

Anette Scoppetta and Luisa Aparicio Jodar

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Contact:

Dr. Anette Scoppetta

European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research
Berggasse 17, 1090 Vienna, Austria
www.euro.centre.org
scoppetta@euro.centre.org
+43-1-319 4505-49

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Executive Summary

The paper informs on career and age management practices currently implemented by ESF-Managing Authorities and their partner organisations, draws recommendations for future action within the ESF, especially the ESF+ (2020+) and discusses concepts closely linked to career and age management that should be taken into consideration when implementing practices. Whilst some EU Member States are implementing various measures to keep older workers in employment and reintegrate older workers into the labour market and the society, other EU Member States are lacking behind. A need thus is seen for developing comprehensive Career and Age Management Strategies supported by the ESF+ within and across all EU Member States. EU policy systems need to be adjusted to continuous change by following the holistic approach of the sustainable work concept that includes the life course perspective.

1. Introduction

Effective career and age management consists of a systematic review and strategy to keep older workers healthy and employed and assist in the reintegration in case of career breaks (loss of job, caring obligations, etc.). Career and age management policies and practices are of also great importance for enhancing social inclusion. The Thematic Network Employment (ETN) therefore dedicated a two-day lasting meeting on career management and age management. The ETN meeting aimed at reflecting and discussing policies and practices of EU Member States (EU-MSs) with a specific focus put on transition periods in the second half of life.

The key questions discussed at the meeting comprised the following:

- *Which policies favour upskilling and career management?*
- *Does the ESF support specific practices in this field? If yes, which specific challenges do they address (e.g. target groups such as women, etc.)?*
- *What needs to be done in order to enable for enhanced activities regarding career and age management during in the second half of life?*

The paper “Career Management and Age Management” builds on discussions and inputs during the ETN meeting that took place on 8-9 October 2018 in Madrid, Spain. It provides insights on current activities of ESF-Managing Authorities (ESF-MAs) and their partner organisations by presenting practices and by drawing recommendations for future activities within the ESF.

The paper is structured as follows: following the introduction (chapter 1), chapter 2 is setting the scene by discussing major concepts relevant for implementing sound career and age management systems. Chapter 3 informs on ESF policies and practice aiming at career and age management in the countries present at the ETN meeting. Chapter 4 highlights good practices within the EU while chapter 5 summarizes the recommendations developed during the ETN meeting, especially addressed at public administration. Chapter 6, finally, concludes by summarizing key lessons learned.

2. Setting the scene

This chapter aims at presenting and discussing major concepts and terms relevant for career and age management. Before elaborating on the various concepts let us briefly clarify important terms used.

Career management can be defined as process in which informed decisions regarding individual's working life are made. Career management accounts for different dynamics at the individual (private), the organizational (company) and the societal level. Private life events that take place during the life course such as the formation of a family and/or caring obligations for parents influence career management decisions. Moreover, available options regarding VET and job offers play a key role. Finally, organisational as well as societal deterrents influence career management.

Current challenges including population ageing and international migration among others, have an indisputable impact on labour market dynamics, which ultimately results in complex career management processes. These processes move away from the traditional idea of careers as linear, predictable and single lifelong employment within one organisation (De Vos et al., 2016). With rapidly changing labour markets the need for acquiring new and up-to-date skills becomes essential. Furthermore, the set of skills looked-for might change over time, especially in view of the 4th industrial revolution and its automatization and digitalisation processes. Consequently, individuals, companies and policy systems must adapt to continuous changes. Individuals thereby call for different types of measures (De Vos et al., 2016). Career management processes thus are dynamic, forward-looking and target at the individual's needs. Hence, to maintain workability and employability over the life course a preventive approach is required.

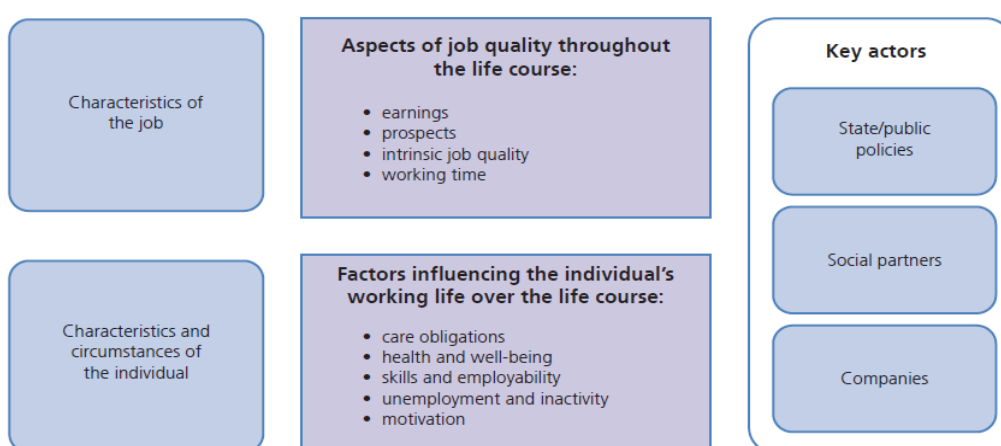
Sustainable career management, a term introduced by De Vos and Van der Heijden in their Handbook of Research on Sustainable Careers (2015), recognises that “careers are ultimately owned by the individual and affected by the total person's life context which is dynamic and not always easy to predict” (De Vos et al. 2016, p. 17). Sustainable careers can be defined as sequences of career experiences reflected through a variety of patterns of continuity over time, thereby crossing several social spaces, characterized by individual agency, herewith providing meaning to the individual (De Vos & Van der Heijden, 2015). According to Prof. Dr. Judith Semeijn, Open University of the Netherlands (2018), indicators for sustainable careers should cover the areas of health (workability related issues), happiness (issues of vitality and energetics) and production. In creating sustainable careers multiple stakeholders have to be served at the same time (persons, employers, etc.).

Companies play a key role in accommodating employee's specificities and thus can assist but also hamper employees in their career management process. Employers thus need to take over responsibility for helping employees to stay employable. This was stressed during the ETN meeting especially by Dr. Chris Ball, Research Associate of the Newcastle University and Centre for Research into the Older Workforce. He observes a lack of dialogue within companies, the need for an analysis of the workforce and workplaces in companies and missing age management strategies (Ball, 2018).

Sustainable career management is strongly related to the concept of *sustainable work*: “Sustainable work means achieving living and working conditions that support people in engaging and remaining in work throughout an extended working life”, informs Eurofound.¹ It is beneficial to individuals, companies and the society as a whole. From the individual perspective, sustainable work allows for better work outcomes, smoother transitions between life stages and longer working lives. At company level this may lead to a better realisation of the creative potential of employees, resulting in improved efficiency or productivity. Eventually, society at large will benefit, not least because of the healthier population, higher employment rates, more inclusive labour markets and lower pressure on public budgets (Eurofound 2015). ESF-policies should build on the concept of sustainable work and promote sustainable careers.

According to Eurofound (2015), the key domains of sustainable work include characteristics of the job and characteristics and circumstances of the individual. Aspects of sustainable work encompass job quality throughout the life course as well as factors influencing the individual's working life over the life course such as care obligations and health and well-being (see figure 1 below).

Figure 1: **Key domains and aspects of sustainable work**



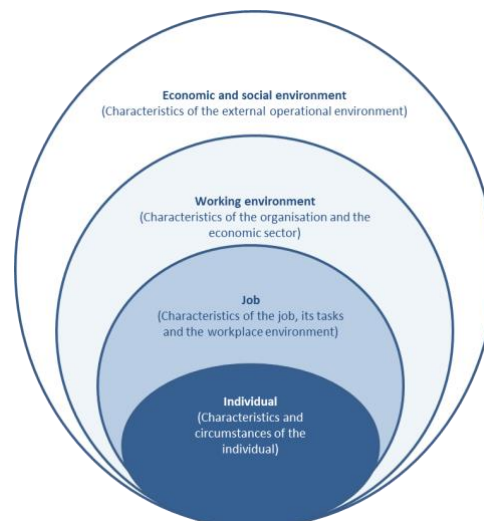
(Source: Eurofound, 2015)

¹ <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/topic/sustainable-work>

“Sustainable work promotes a holistic approach that considers workers’ health, personal characteristics (education, skills and interests), and family and social responsibilities” informs Eurofound (2015, p.6). Although included in the concept, the working environment (the organisational level) and the economic and social environment (e.g. the societal level, policy systems) are not explicitly mentioned as key domains. They however are key domains since changes in these areas strongly affect employees. Just think of new legislation regarding labour laws and/or breakdowns of complete sectors such as experienced in the lignite industry due to the change towards ‘green energy’ (e.g. in Germany). In this line of thought, Nathalie Wuïame, gender expert of the Transnational Platform in the ESF, stressed that career management comprises both individual aspects (such as educational choices, work choices and parenting and caring) as well as working culture and the environment. The latter includes discrimination based on (potential) maternity, leave/flexibility demands, criteria for recruitment, promotion, job classification as well as transparency of promotion procedures like knowledge and networks (Wuïame, 2018). The social environment (e.g. the society) as well as the economic environment, seen as external operational environment, thus must be taken into consideration to an increased extent. Ilmarinen’s model of ‘workability’ which includes the social environment should be followed (Ilmarinen, 2013). An enlargement of the sustainable work concept consequently comprises the following distinct layers (see figure 2):

- the *individual* (characteristics and circumstances of the individual on e.g. educational choices, work choices and parenting and caring);
- the *job* (characteristics of the job, its tasks and the workplace environment);
- the *working environment* (characteristics of the organisation and the economic sector); and
- the *economic and social environment* (characteristics of the external operational environment).

Figure 2: ***Layers of sustainable work***



Let us continue by briefly discussing the life course perspective that is considered in the concept of sustainable work. Do EU Member States incorporate this approach into their policies? While the life-course approach in social research has become a widely accepted and applied field of research, though mainly focusing on the meso- and micro-levels (Kohli, 2007), public policies have seemingly missed out to integrate this perspective and its potentials (Leichsenring, 2018). We will come back to this later and thus continue with the conceptual ideas addressed in this paper.

A specific domain of sustainable career management that has gained special momentum is *age management*. Although several explanations are behind the rise of age management practices within organizations (Walker, 2015), the underlying reason lies in the fact that the workforce is rapidly ageing in most European countries. The ageing working force is a result of increases in life expectancy and declining fertility rates, amongst other factors. Data and practice however suggest that older worker's needs are often not met. 'Push' and 'pull' factors lead to early retirement (e.g. incentives for retirement, loss of motivation due to limited career prospects, etc.) and thus to a loss of productive workforce. Ageing at the workplace is also hindered by the lack or insufficient development of flexible work arrangements that are adapted to age, in particular those supporting caregiving duties, which tend to increase with age. Despite the ageing workforce, people retire earlier which reasserts the need to introduce and consolidate age management practices.

Broadly speaking, age management can be defined as *"the management of organizations' productivity and human resources in a way that acknowledges employees' resources during their individual life course"* (Wallin, 2015, p. 32). Walker (1997) refers to it as the various dimensions by which human resources are managed within organizations with an explicit focus on ageing and, also, more generally, to the overall management of workforce ageing via public policy or collective bargaining. An overview of the different dimensions of age management is provided in table 1. The dimensions are not mutually exclusive and at best are combined to accommodate needs and specificities of older employees.

Table 1: ***Dimensions of age management practices***

Dimension	Description/approaches
Job recruitment	It includes waiving age limits in job advertisements; a selection process focused on skills, competencies and experiences as well as on the individual needs of older applicants; co-operation with local recruitment agencies; wage subsidies or settling-in grants; age-specific advertisement campaigns; explicitly targeting older applicants who are unemployed, threatened by dismissal, or already in involuntary early retirement.
Training and long-life learning	Approaches include the absence of age limits in determining access to in-house learning and training opportunities; linking training schemes to an individual's life course; using older employees and their qualifications both as facilitators of further education for older and younger employees, and as an organisational 'knowledge pool'.

Career development	Older employees are provided with opportunities to progress, maintain and enlarge their skills and knowledge through structuring demands, incentives and stresses in the working life in such a way that their motivation and performance are promoted and applied in the most effective manner.
Flexible working time practices	These practices encompass affording older workers greater flexibility in their hours of work or in the timing and nature of their retirement. Examples include gradual retirement, flexibility over retirement age and the provision of training to older workers in community programmes, and short-term work placements.
Health protection and promotion and workplace design	Studies on health risks in the workplace; organisational health reports and working groups on health; the use of health experts to advise the organisation; employee surveys; employee participation and education; regular health checks; training supervisors and key workers in health management techniques; ergonomic workplace (re)design; preventive redeployment; health-promoting working time arrangements.
Redeployment	Redeployment refers to coordinating the demands of the workplace with the capacity of the (older) employees. Good practice can be assured if redeployment is viewed as part of a preventive age management strategy geared to maintaining employability – particularly in terms of flexibility, qualification and skill enhancement and health protection.
Employment exit and transition to retirement	These approaches include preparatory measures for retirement at the corporate level; counselling facilities; providing assistance in the search for a new position; providing opportunities for retirees to maintain contact with colleagues; flexible forms of transition; flexible forms of retirement that allow for a phased reduction of working hours; sabbaticals that provide time to prepare for retirement.

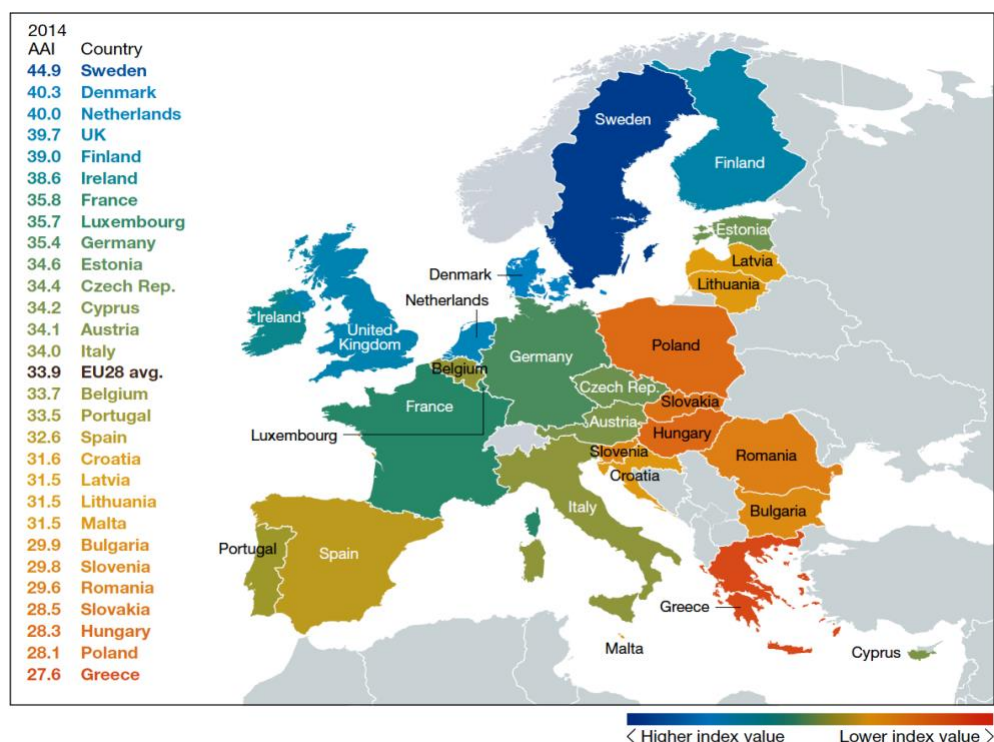
(Source: Naegele and Walker, 2006)

Comprehensive approaches to age management take the above-mentioned dimensions as well as the gender dimension into account. They merge aspects from recruitment to employment in one HR strategy, emphasize prevention of age related problems, focus on the entire working life and all age groups and in the short term, provide remedial provisions for older workers who are already affected by age-specific occupational problems such as skill deficits as a result of deskilling or poor health resulting from heavy workloads (Naegele and Walker, 2006).

Age management is closely linked to the concept of *Active (and Healthy) Ageing*, which is widely discussed in Europe and beyond. UNECE, for instance, developed the Active Ageing Index, in short AAI. With this index the untapped potential of older people for active and healthy ageing are measured across countries. The AAI has four domains (employment; participation in society; independent, healthy and secure living and capacity and enabling environment for active ageing) and includes indicators such as lifelong learning and mental well-being. It calculates the level to which older people live independent lives, participate in paid employment and social activities, and their capacity to age actively.² According to the AAI, the EU countries are ranked as follows:

² <https://www.unece.org/population/aai.html>

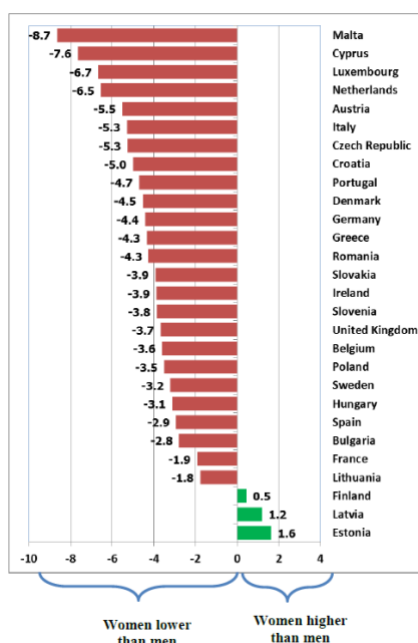
Figure 3: **2014 AAI: Ranking of 28 EU countries**



(Source: UNECE; Most recent data are of 2014: <https://statswiki.unecce.org/display/AAI/II.+Ranking>)

Ageing experiences of women and men are expected to differ considerably. Women fare worse than men in almost all countries (see figure 4). Only three EU Member States have better AAI results for women than for men (United Nations, 2014).

Figure 4: **Differences in the overall AAI between men and women for EU 28 countries**



(Source: United Nations, 2014; Most recent data are of 2014)

Although the AAI (like other indexes) also has its pitfalls, the tool can help ESF-MAS (especially in the Eastern European countries) to convince policy makers in investing in active and healthy ageing especially within the ESF.

In parallel to the development and execution of age management practices, there also have been attempts to capture and assess the capabilities of the workforce. In this regard the Work Ability Index (WAI), developed by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, must be mentioned.³ The WAI aims at assessing the work ability of workers during health examinations and workplace surveys. Its ultimate purpose is to help define necessary actions to maintain and promote workability. This becomes relevant when assessing capabilities of older workers as it can help to prevent early retirement as well as detecting work-related health risks to set up the most appropriate plan for action.

As we have seen so far, career and age management

- include *various phases* (e.g. application recruitment, promotion/job mobility, periods of leave and pre-retirement);
- take place at *various stages in life* (from young age towards pension age);
- are addressed at *various stakeholders* (individuals, employers, policy makers, the economy and the society); and
- require *changes in various policy systems* (e.g. the incorporation of the life course perspective in employment, health, education, social policy, etc.).

Current analysis of age management furthermore show that policies frequently are missing the gender perspective: while working and employment conditions of older workers are increasingly recognised as key issues, gender disparities are under considered. Moreover, health and job satisfaction are often not considered. The decline in participation in labour market is already significant between the age groups of 50-54 and 55-59 and fell sharply after the age of 60. The gender gap thus widens with age (Wuime, 2018; Vendramin & Valenduc, 2014). Gender related age issues at work include the following (exemplified; Wuime, 2018; Eurofound, 2007):

- Women experience problems of credibility in particular when young;
- “Lookism” applies differently (at a later age for women than for men);⁴
- Women face blocked occupational mobility based on discrimination and stereotypes (e.g. married women with children are not suitable to travel abroad);
- Prejudice: men are higher motivated to manage others; criteria used for assessment correspond to ‘male supposed natural qualities’; some

³ <https://healthy-workplaces.eu/previous/all-ages-2016/en/tools-and-publications/practical-tools/work-ability-index>

⁴ “Lookism” is discriminatory treatment toward people considered physically unattractive, mainly in the workplace but also in dating and other social settings.

employees would not want to work for a woman. In fact, few senior managers are firmly committed to career management and train for it.

To sum up, the concepts of career and age management often miss out the gender perspective. The concepts furthermore frequently do not take a holistic approach and miss out the life-course perspective: they do not include various policy fields; practices are rare that aim at sustainable work, etc. Age management thus need to address various dimensions. These include, for instance, the workload, work tasks, flexible working hours, work-life balance, support in the workplace for health issues, risk prevention, and workforce development. Eurofound's concept of sustainable work should take the working environment at company level and the economic and social environment (external conditions; next to the individual and the layer of the work/job) into consideration to an increased extent.

3. Status Quo & Good Practice

3.1 Status quo of activities implemented by ESF-MAs

This chapter informs on implemented ESF-activities that aim at career and age management in place in the countries present at the ETN meeting. Please note that information on activities in this chapter is not exhaustive and builds on the knowledge of attending participants only.

The information shared by the ESF-MAs show an unbalanced approach to career and age management across EU-MSs: whilst some countries implement various ESF measures in career and age management by in parallel also frequently combining different dimensions of age management according to Naegele and Walker (2006; see above), other countries are lacking behind. The ESF-MA of Flanders/Belgium, for instance, shared their expertise on currently three distinct projects and calls during the ETN meeting. Other countries, especially countries of Eastern Europe informed that there are not many policies and practices in place in the area of career and age management.

Some countries implement specific measures to enhance the employability of older people (incentives are provided, for instance, in Spain and Belgium). Also, tutoring and coaching measures are practiced (e.g. Lithuania and Spain) next to mentoring programmes (e.g. Italy). Germany has launched the 'Perspective 50+' initiative already some years ago, which targeted at both employers and employees (especially long-term unemployed) by setting up partnerships at the local and sub-regional

levels. The ESF-MA of Flanders/Belgium shared their experiences gained by the project 'Workable work' (which focusses on talents) and by the calls 'Switch' (aiming at mobility of employees between firms) and 'Scope' (the project analyses future competence needs). In Belgium, the project 'Job Deals' focusses on 50+. Also, outplacement is practiced in this country next to a retraining of older workers. The ESF-MA in Trento presented their 'Teleworking and Smart Working' initiative which supports companies and aims at enhancing career management over the life span.

Participants also reported main challenges for the future implementation of career and age management policies. These comprise:

- ❖ *Age discrimination* persists;
- ❖ A need for a *mindset change at company level* is seen (mentality of companies requires a change) and for *motivating older people* to help resolving the wide-spread believe that older workers minimize the profit making due to less efficiency;
- ❖ *Future of work*: unclearness about competences and skills needed in future are reported. Also, the quality of trainings for new skills is observed to be low; and
- ❖ *Missing* cooperation between governments and enterprises and, linked to that, a *lack of training* for social partners on sustainable careers and work-life balance is mentioned (this was reported from only some countries such as from Italy).

The following section takes a deeper look at practices implemented in EU-MSs. The brief description of cases should assist in enhancing future practices in the ESF.

3.2 Case descriptions

This section demonstrates key features of selected approaches applied in EU countries and includes examples presented by members of the ETN and their partner organisations during the meeting in Madrid. Career and age management practices also included implemented strategies and approaches like "Career Management over the lifespan" presented by the EOI Business School Madrid, Spain. Ms. Eva Curto, Head of International Affairs EOI Business School, informed on Lifelong learning Programmes implemented by the EOI as ESF Intermediary Body and Beneficiary. Practices from other countries also comprise, for instance, the "plan d'action pour les seniors" (agreement and action plan for seniors), which was set up in France.⁵

Since companies are key for enabling for sustainable work, two age management practices are highlighted in this section that are implemented at the organisational

⁵ <https://www.journaldunet.fr/management/guide-du-management/1201229-seniors-accord-et-plan-d-action/>

level (see chapter 2). In case of further interest in age management practices carried out at the company level please consult the Eurofound database⁶. The practices briefly described in the following are the *Vattenfall programme* and the *Road 67 project*. The latter was presented by Nathalie Bekx, CEO Trendhuis. Both projects are targeting at an ageing workforce; thereby including various dimensions of age management at the same time such as flexible working time, employment exit and career development (Vattenfall programme).

Table 2: **Good practice ‘Vattenfall’, Sweden**

Vattenfall: The 80-90-100 Programme	
Country	Sweden
Dimensions*	Flexible working time practices; employment exit and the transition to retirement; training and long-life learning; as well as career development
Rationale	The rationale of the programme was to keep older workforce and promote abilities of older workers. The Vattenfall practice was developed within the company framework and targets at older workers already working for the company. It aimed at enabling for an intergenerational knowledge transfer and increased age pension of individuals.
Specificities of the approach	<p>This practice is rather comprehensive. Special focus is put on flexible working time practices, employment exit and the transition to retirement. The specificities of the approach are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% Time, 90% Salary and 100% Pension • Motivation and inspiration seminars • Development of a Senior Resources Pool for the re-employability of dismissed older workers • Opportunity to try a new position for 6 months and then decide to go back to the old position or continue with the new position.
Impact	The retirement age increased by about three years per participant. All participating individuals were satisfied with the 80/90/100 working scheme. The programme prepares for retirement, practically, socially and emotionally. The programme enhanced a perceived and valued recognition for seniority at the workplace.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers observed difficulties on teams due to reduced manning and increased workload on colleagues • Some instances of unintended use of benefits • Lack of organizational support for replacing the lost man-hours • Some units do not offer the schedule

* According to Naegele and Walker (2006)

Contrary to the Vattenfall programme ‘Road 67’ targets potential workers who are currently unemployed (see table 3).

⁶ https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/observatories/eurwork/case-studies/ageing-workforce?title_field_value=&field_country_case_study_term_tid_selective%5B%5D=13820

Table 3: **Good practice ‘Road 67’, Belgium**

Road 67	
Country	Flanders, Belgium
Dimensions*	Job recruitment and redeployment
Rationale	The initiative was born due to low employment rates of registered persons among 50+ in Flanders/Belgium. A new legislation increasing the retirement age added to the need to create jobs for the target group by developing new forms of work that can accommodate older workers’ needs.
Specificities of the approach	The aim of the initiative is to reactivate unemployed 50+ and to assist them to seek for new job opportunities. This is done by a methodology to create tailor-made jobs known as ‘Jobcarving’. Through jobcarving, tasks not belonging to the core function of a specific position are identified and utilised to create a new position which can be filled by the targeted group, the 50+ unemployed people. The initiative is carried out in the touristic sector.
Impact	Out of 3 jobs the initiative managed to create a 4th job. Companies continued with jobcarving in other areas such as for nurses even when persons left (ETN 2018). The impact for 50+ employees comprises the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A temporary or permanent function adapted to own talents and competences • Insight and trust in own talents and competences • Access to the labour market
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To find companies was reported to be a problem (ETN 2018); • Analysing workplaces in the companies was the most difficult job; • The salary level for the new jobs went down; and • Permanent support is needed for both participants and companies.

* According to Naegele and Walker (2006)

To conclude, practices implemented that target at more than one dimension at the same time are to be favoured because they often tend to follow a holistic approach. In order to enhance future activities within the ESF (and ESF+), the participants at the ETN meeting did not only exchange their practices, they also developed recommendations for public administration (see following chapter).

4. Recommendations of ESF-MAs

The recommendations presented here were developed during the ETN Meeting in Madrid and are addressed at public administration, especially ESF-MAs, other national and regional policy bodies, the European Commission, etc.

The recommendations encompass the need for taking a *proactive approach within the ESF at all geographical levels*: future joint transnational calls on the topic should enable for enhanced learning between ESF-MAs. In addition, the setting up of a

'Thematic Network on Age Management' would increase experience sharing between ESF-MAs. It is recommended that career management and age management should become a (obligatory) priority for the ESF+ and its Operational Programmes by earmarking ESF funds for pilot projects and by including the review of respective policies and progresses made during the European Semester. A special body dedicated to age management should be set up within the ESF+ which guides activities of the ESF-MAs. In addition, the fund should promote the setting up of respective national bodies.

A need is seen for contributions of the ESF to sustainable working careers, bearing in mind the comprehensive changes that take place in the world of work due to digitalisation and automatization processes (4th industrial revolution). Activities of ESF MA in this area should encompass the analysis of future trends and awareness raising on the need for career management and age management (to help change mindsets and combat age discrimination) by social partners, employers as well as workers. Moreover, regional and national career management strategies (including actions plans and equality measures at national/regional levels) could be developed by ESF MA that take diverse territorial contexts into consideration.

Next to activation measures (including outreach to older workers), the establishment of mobility programmes is recommended with the help of which transitions of employees between companies as well as between sectors should be promoted. Furthermore, intergenerational mentorship systems were recognised to be successful by present ESF-MAs. Participants see a need for enhancing intergenerational cooperation in at a general level. Last but not least, they also stressed the need for flexible working arrangements including adequate social protection (especially for informal carers) and for supporting flexible retirements schemes based on workers choices.

The participants prioritised their recommendations as follows:

- ❖ Support *flexible retirement schemes* based on worker's needs and choices (5 points);
- ❖ *Encouraging awareness* of career and age management (4 points);
- ❖ Establish *Transnational ESF Network on Age Management* (4 points);
- ❖ Use *transnationality* to implement pilot projects (4 points);
- ❖ Support *transitions across sectors and companies* (4 points); and
- ❖ Development of *Career Management Strategy* (3 points).

5. Conclusion

While comprehensive career management and age management practices are implemented by ESF-MAs and their partner organisations only in some EU Member States, other countries are lacking behind. The ESF-MAs drew recommendations for future interventions within the ESF, especially the ESF+, which include the establishment of a Transnational ESF Network on Age Management and the use ESF transnationality to implement pilot projects and share experiences regarding career and age management. A need is also seen for developing Career and Age Management Strategies supported by the ESF+ within and across all Member States.

Current career management practices implemented in the EU Member States miss out the gender perspective and frequently do not follow a holistic approach. Public policies often fail to integrate the life course perspective and its potentials.

Career and age management processes are dynamic and need to be adapted to meet the needs of the “new world of work” (digitalisation and automatization; skills update, etc). Following the workability model of Juhani Ilmarinen, the concept of sustainable work should take the working environment and economic and social environment into consideration to an increased extent.

The workforce as well as the policy systems need to be adjusted to continuous changes. In order to maintain workability and employability over the life course a preventive approach is required.

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Technical dossiers online at <https://ec.europa.eu/esf/transnationality/library>:

0. TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION in the ESF 2014-2020 – An introductory guide – November 2015

This guide describes the Common Framework for transnationality in the ESF in the 2014-2020 period, including the common themes, calls for proposals, thematic networks, and how the ESF can contribute to Macro-Regional Strategies. It concludes with a list of National Contact Points.

1. THEMATIC NETWORKING – A guide for participants – April 2016

This user guide to the nine thematic networks that support transnational co-operation in the ESF sets out the stakeholders involved, and suggests principles and tools for animating their interaction.

2. ESF TRANSNATIONAL CALLS – Writing and managing calls for proposals – February 2017

A step-by-step guide to designing transnational calls for proposals in the ESF, from added value, institutional capacity and priorities, through design, partner search and the TCA, to assessment.

3. INTEGRATED SERVICES – Early lessons from transnational work in the European Social Fund – October 2017

Drawing on evidence from the employment, inclusion, youth employment, governance and partnership thematic networks, this dossier presents the theoretical and practical arguments for service integration.

4. CO-PRODUCTION – Enhancing the role of citizens in governance and service delivery – May 2018

This dossier articulates the various 'co-trends' and shows how they are being applied in inclusion, migrant integration, social enterprise, community development and social innovation.

5. SYSTEMS THINKING for European Structural and Investment Funds management – May 2018

This handbook explains how to apply the Vanguard Method to improve service quality in managing European funds.

6. Tackling Long-Term Unemployment through RISK PROFILING AND OUTREACH – May 2018

This discussion paper from the Employment Thematic Network reviews approaches to risk profiling and outreach, summaries their benefits and challenges, and gives case examples.

7. REVIEW OF THE EUROPEAN CODE OF CONDUCT ON PARTNERSHIP (ECCP) – Thematic Network on Partnership – May 2018

The main aims of the review were to assess the usefulness of the ECCP, learn more about the challenges encountered in its implementation, and develop recommendations to embed the partnership principle into the next European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) programming period.

8. FEMALE (UN)EMPLOYMENT AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE – November 2018

This paper examines gender equality issues in employment (including segregation, the pay gap, entrepreneurship and care responsibilities), describes ESF projects which address it, and concludes with the ESF Employment Thematic Network's recommendations.

9. Addressing youth unemployment through outreach, activation and service integration – November 2018

This dossier consolidates the three sharing papers published by the Youth Employment Thematic Network on outreach, activation and service integration. It features studies of Ohjaamo in Helsinki, Rubikon Centrum in Prague, So Stay in Gdańsk and MRC Pathways in Glasgow.

10. Inspirational practices for tomorrow's inclusive digital world – May 2019

Digitalisation is not only transforming the economy; it is transforming our society as a whole. This dossier presents the contribution of the ESF Transnational Platform Thematic Network on Learning and Skills to the ambitious policies developed both at EU and national levels: building an inclusive, knowledge-based digital economy and society in Europe.

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