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Senior Capital – Develop Human Capital of Seniors to Increase their Economic and Social Value in a Knowledge Based and Competitive Economy

Central European Project

Newsletter



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1st-2nd joint edition

Senior Capital NEWSLETTER 07/2013

Welcome

Demographic changes in Central Europe are both a challenge and an opportunity. Ageing may increase pressure on public budgets and pension systems, as well as on staff needed for social and care services for elderly (in Central Europe market demand for care services is typically higher than workforce available). Also, accelerated ageing leads to the older generations becoming too heavy burden on younger, working-age people and that this might result in tensions between the generations. A key opportunity for tackling the challenge of demographic ageing and preserving solidarity between generations therefore consists in ensuring that the elderly stay longer on the labour market and remain competitive, active and autonomous as long as possible. On the other hand, the complexity of the issue necessitates integrated and harmonized actions from all relevant parties and stakeholders.

Question: how to do that? The answer is Senior Capital.

Senior Capital originates from the Q-Ageing project which was initiated by the Municipality of Újbuda (Hungary) in 2008 dealing with social and urban challenges of the ageing problem of cities of Central Europe. The implementation of the project shed light on the importance of another related challenge which is the need for better exploiting the economic potential of this growing but undervalued part of the society.

Senior Capital – as the afterlife of Q-Ageing – consequently wishes to contribute to the economic competitiveness of Central Europe through developing knowledge and enlarging quality workforce with a focus on seniors. Its specific objective is to put transnational strategies into action to better exploit the economic potential of an ageing population while creating opportunities for businesses through

- 1) investing in human capital of 50+ seniors
- 2) promoting their involvement in economic activities and
- 3) creating new and financially sustainable framework catalysed by municipalities.

Senior Capital started in the autumn of 2012. What happened during the first months, how the partnership commenced dealing with senior workers will all clear up from the 1st-2nd joint edition of Senior Capital's Newsletter.



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Enjoy reading it!

Municipality of 11th District of Budapest Újbuda

Lead Partner

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EUROPEAN UNION
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DEVELOPMENT FUND

Introduction

People in Europe may have 2 more healthy years by 2020 Key messages of *the Senior Capital* Opening Conference in Berlin

I. Ageing people – ageing countries

The number of people over 60 years demonstrates a constant growing tendency worldwide. In 1950, 204 million people belonged to this age group, while it is expected to be increased to two billion by 2050 and three billion by 2100.

In 1980, a 17.5% rate of elderly had been observed in Europe. This figure reached 21.4% last year and according to preliminary surveys, foreseen to grow up to 40% in 2050.

Although more than 20% of the population is in the age of over 60, only 16% of them qualify themselves elderly, 43% consider themselves as middle aged and 40% of them defined as young.

II. Dimensions and trends of demographic change:

- Demographic change is on one hand a statistic “matter of fact”, and is a worldwide long term process on the other hand
- “Work longer” mindset - as an impact of the global crisis -: shifting from immigration to activation of older workers?
- Paradoxes of today: “negative reputation” of elderly workers in a performance oriented vision of work process, comes along with attempts to keep them longer at the workplace...
- Elderly workers is not a homogeneous category, their opportunities are strongly linked also to the characteristics of local economies that are certainly higher in an innovative and competitive country

III. Senior employees are:

- experienced
- reliable
- independent decision makers
- solution oriented, bearing problem solving skills



IV. Reasons of preferring older workers by HR managers

- they are reliable and professional,
- have superior writing skills,
- are good listeners,
- bear high level working ethic,
- are independent leaders/managers.

Get the facts right and kill the myths: younger workforce may not create innovative and prosperous economy, older workers' participation frequently does!

- Wider access of older workers to lifelong learning could make the difference
- The growing demand for social / personal skills and competences generates a higher demand for skilled older workers having unique life skills and competences
- Struggle against the stereotype of “older workers being old fashioned and there is not too much to learn from them”
- Senior workers are not only experienced and reliable but mostly digital immigrants... and in the next future they will be digital natives!

V. What senior workers want?

- Viable work options and meaningful employment
- Respect for their abilities and experience
- Equal access to acquire additional skills
- Equality in mobility and promotion
- Flexible work schedules

Conclusion: Older workers might be even more productive than youngsters in a proper working environment that ergonomically and psychologically fits to their needs



First local experience realized from the analysis phase

Results of the local Market research and mapping of the Lead Partner, Municipality of Újbuda (Budapest, Hungary)

I. The aims of the market research of Municipality of Újbuda

- assessment of training and employment needs, market analysis
- size up legal, financial and institutional environment

II. Tasks

1. Implementation of a market research focusing on

- existing training and employment solutions for elderly
- expectations of both supply and demand side
- analysis of employers' needs
- training and employment attitudes of older people
- define recommendations based on the results

2. Mapping out barriers, bottlenecks of the institutional, financial and legal environment

- Involving seniors into education and employment is often impeded by legal, administrative and financial bottlenecks. Consequently it's needed to map out the institutional and financial environment, to find out the existing barriers and to define the key stakeholders (ministries, regional/local institutions, decision-makers).
- Identification and deeper insight into adoptable training and employment models is based on the methodology developed by the National Academy of Medicine (Italy).



III. Methodology

1. A complex methodology tailor-made to the special needs of the different target groups is applied in the market research (Part 1).
 - Group 1 (local companies, authorities, non-profit organizations, education centers, experts):, appr. 50 minutes long expert interviews
 - Group 2 (inhabitants of the district over 50 year): 30-minutes quantitative questionnaire survey, on a sample of 600 people
2. In case of mapping desk research has been implemented to map out training and employment situation of the elderly (Part 2).



Results

In general, results of the interviews made with the qualitative focus group (50-64 years old non-retired people in Újbuda) present a significant pessimistic view on their position on the labor market. Unemployed people considered their opportunities hopeless to find a new job, self-employed emphasized realizing the impact of overall economic difficulties. Currently employed are convinced that there is no need to search for another job before their retirement.

I. Results

1. Majority of the target group (58 %) is employed or is an entrepreneur (14 %)
2. The rate of unemployment is 28 % within the target group
3. Men represent a higher proportion among the entrepreneurs and among the unemployed
4. One and a half times more women than men are employed
5. Unemployed are less educated

II. Problems

1. As for currently employed::

- dissatisfied with the salary, with self-promotion opportunities and with bonus
- foreseen to retire from their current job; however in case of getting fired, facing serious difficulties in finding a new job
- discrimination on age

2. As for self-employment:

- only 6% of the entrepreneurs consider themselves successful, 36 report that their businesses are rather on a downward trend
- Majority of the interviewed is convinced that their current job will be the last one and most of them should work even after reaching the retirement age (81 %)
- 48% is afraid of bankruptcy

3. As for unemployment:

- 71% of the interviewed are permanent unemployed (exceeded 6 months of unemployment)
- quite a high proportion (27%) used to work in the industrial sector and in engineering and 20% represents former workers in catering
- Among unemployed former skilled workers represent 35% and semi-skilled or unskilled laborers represent 24%



- 86% are job seekers, the tools they apply for that are Internet, job centers, newspaper advertisements and personal contacts
- lack of mobility attitude is clearly visible from the fact that 91 % wishes to get employed locally, near to their location
- consider themselves outsiders to find a new job

III. What everyone agrees on is that...

1. on employees' side

- there is no way to get a job without having computer skills
- it is impossible to get employed without personal network
- adaptation of new tasks is more difficult in case of
 - difficulties in their health status,
 - lack of knowledge of foreign language (s),
 - being unemployed permanently
 - low level of motivation
 - lack of knowledge of job seeking techniques.

2. on employers side

- advantages are: considerably high amount of experience, empathy coming from general social sensitivity, higher loyalty and a balanced way of working
- a better position of seniors in the labor market can be reached through implying language courses, job seeking techniques, mental health trainings



The Austrian experience: summary of results of the market research of NOWA Training-counselling-projectmanagement (Graz, Austria)

I. Interviews with companies/public authorities/non-profit organizations

The engineering and building industry hire more men than women, the majority of the staff works full-time and especially in the engineering industry the average age of the work force is relatively low (between 30 and 40). Qualifications are distributed throughout all levels, there are less female technicians; actually women tend to work more in administration or organization.

In trade the percentage of female staff is substantially higher (up to 80%), especially many women work part-time, and here the average age is between 35 and 45. It is worth noting that there are hardly any full-time positions available in trade, however, individual companies would like to hire more full-time staff, which they unfortunately do not get.

In social services the percentage of women is very high (up to 94%), part-time percentage is about 75% and the average age is also slightly higher (between 40 and 45).

In public administration there are also more women employed than men, however, the higher you get in hierarchy the less women you find, and the highest percentage in administration are employees between the age of 45 and 55.

- Older people support businesses to a large extent
- When people tend to work longer they stay fit for a longer time (mentally and physically)
- Companies and organizations have to become more aware of older people
- The legal framework and the retirement system of older employees have to be improved and higher costs reduced, to create incentives for companies and organizations to hire older employees.

II. Interviews with training centers (private and public)

- Older people need individual integration strategies
- have to become aware of individual life plans, have to obtain knowledge and develop alternative employment possibilities and especially adapt individual competencies and qualifications to the requirements of companies and organizations
- Companies and organizations have to become aware of the topic and have to develop and implement in-house programs for older employees. Learning and working across generations is rewarding and useful.



III. Interviews with unemployed

- People have to enjoy work and experience it as a challenge
- attitude has to change: society has to be flexible and open
- Older people should be given the chance to work their way in the job and contribute their experience
- Working age appropriately implies maintaining a good balance between energy and experience – junior and senior partners, flexible work-times and reducing working hours.
- An appropriate working climate is important, as well as possibilities for further education, because older employees want to and have to do further studies.
- Especially older women, in Austria they are considered to be old already at the age of 45, are under pressure, because it is often very difficult for them to find full-time jobs and so to cater for their retirement pension. The advantages women of that age have, are often not seen – they are often more flexible and motivated.
- The problem is that many companies do not seem to be interested in keeping know-how within their company.
- Higher costs of older employees are seen as a disadvantage



Market research results in the Province of Treviso (Treviso, Italy)

- In Treviso 21,000 people are job seekers (10,000 men and 11,000 women), unemployed are 5.2% (4.2% in case of men and 6.6% in case of women). The unemployment rate of 55 years old and over is 3.3%; (3.0% in case of men, 3.5% in case of women).
- Number of the retired in Treviso: 223,662 (107,344 men and 116,318 women)
- Self-employed: 93,285 companies

I. interviews with companies

- over 50, people wish to return to work after two years of inactivity
- at a certain age there is a need for flexible and reduced working hours
- General costs of employment is certainly one of the most important barriers
- 19 companies out of 50 reported serious (more or less) difficulties in finding professionals

II. Interviews with training centres

The main obstacles detected for 50+ workers are: the opportunity to demonstrate their employability (although in reality it is an issue also for young people) but also less flexibility and less speed, lower affordability, cultural factors, the difficulty in the use of technology and the lower productivity.

III. Interviews with unemployed

- The most common channels for job searching are: personal contacts followed by temporary employment agencies and job centres. Personal network is also a frequent way to look for job jointly with sending CVs via e-mail, answering to advertisements of the major online search engines.
- The majority of the unemployed people - 33 out of 45 interviewed - answers that would be available for working in any sector. 9 out of 45 of those looking for job saying they want to work in the field as their last work.



NEWS

International / national events – appearance and promotion of Senior Capital

1. Good practice exchange of transnational cooperation projects funded by the Central Europe and the South-East Europe Programmes: Efficient local partnerships for elderly and vulnerable people – 9 May, Budapest, Hungary

Hosted as a networking event among different transnational cooperation projects, the event was designed to ensure the promotion of efficient and concrete tools directed to efficient local partnerships established for helping elderly and vulnerable people. The event was held in Budapest on the 9th of May 2013.

For more information visit: <http://www.helps-project.eu/press/events/84-good-practice-exchange-of-transnational-cooperation-projects-funded-by-the-central-europe-and-the-south-east-europe-programmes>

2. Central Europe Programme Annual Conference, 2013 15-16 May Padua, Italy

The conference linked the presentation of thematic achievements of the current programme with the collection of feedback for the new programme. It continued capitalisation activities started in 2012 and provide room for discussion on how to sustain and mainstream project results. All Central Europe project partners as well as thematic stakeholders from all governance levels were invited to provide feedback on the intended priorities and actions of the new Central Europe Programme 2014-2020, based on learnings from the current programme.

For more information visit: <http://www.central2013.eu/news-events-publications/events/event-detail/articles//central-europe-programme-annual-event-2013/>

3. Senior Capital 2nd Steering Group and 2nd Thematic Group meeting, Workshop on Successful business cases and Gender mainstream workshop – 27-28-29 May Sopot, Poland

The partnership comes together for the third time. This time the general partner meeting part will be completed with a workshop presenting successful business cases with the participation of companies/enterprises from Hungary, Italy and Poland successfully applying senior employment. A 3 hours workshop is dedicated to discuss gender mainstream issues.



Partners

Lead Partner: Local Government & Municipality of District 11th of Budapest, Újbuda (Hungary)

Project Partner 2: Municipality of Maribor (Slovenia)

Project Partner 3: Nowa-training-counselling-projectmanagement (Austria)

Project Partner 4: PRIZMA Foundation for Improvement of Employment Possibilities, an institution (Slovenia)

Project Partner 5: Province of Treviso (Italy)

Project Partner 6: Municipality of Sopot (Poland)

Project Partner 7: Liguria Region (Italy)

Project Partner 8: National Academy of Medicine (Italy)

Project Partner 9: Centre for Developments in Civil Society (Germany)



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