



Pan European Older People's Learning and Employment network - PEOPLE network

PEOPLE has been set up to enhance the development of a best practice network, research, education and communications system between EU partner organisations who are combating ageism and promoting the interests of older working age people (50-65+) in relation to education, training and employment



Our work

- This will involve visits, workshops and a conference, with reports, research and building up contacts and information relating to best practice in these fields as developed by members with reports disseminated on-line, on their web sites and in printed form.



Why We Are Needed

- Research shows that older working age people (50 - 65+) suffer from higher levels of unemployment and worklessness than the national average. An AGE report on the impact of the recession on older people "indicated that older workers, in particular older women, will be among those most affected in the deepening economic crisis and the particular difficulties which these workers face in different work sectors and occupations must be given due attention ". This impacts on levels of poverty for themselves and their families which in turn impacts on ill health, compounded by rising levels of 50+ disability.



Our Objectives

- Objectives:
- 1) To develop a pan EU partnership through visits and meetings between partners, 4 workshops and a conference which will develop and disseminate best practice in relation to the issues of vocational training, education and employment for older working age people.
- 2) To establish and present a library of best practice materials and examples relating to recruiting, retaining and developing vocational training and employment for older people



Research and Campaign Objectives

- 3) To develop, present and share research and examples into these issues, at national and EU levels.
- 4) To develop successful educational and information campaigns to raise awareness and effect behavioural change amongst employers, older learners and workers as well as public educational and employment experts and decision makers.



[PEOPLE Partners

Wise Owls - UK

CEOMA - Spain

Gender Studies - Czech Republic

**Forum pre pomoc starším – národná sieť -
Slovakia**

Association Chercheurs d'Emploi - France

Self Funded Partners:

ATDAL Over 40 - Italy



Our Timetable of activities

- **October 2010 Paris, France - Problem identification and methodology approaches: age, diversity and discrimination in education and employment.**
- **Workshop 2, April 2011 - Prague, Czech Republic - Research into age and diversity in education and employment:**
- **Workshop 3, September 2011 Madrid, Spain -**
- **Examples of best practice in recruitment and retention of learners in vocational training related to employment for older**



Timetable continued

- **Workshop 4, March 2012 – Slovakia –**
- **Integrated campaigns and educational program relating to improving the educational and employment situation for older working age people to be used by partners to increase awareness by media and decision makers.**
- **Conference, June 2012 London, United Kingdom**
- **An international conference to present best practices which help to improve the situation of older people in education and employment including research and campaigns**



Report from the First Pan-European Older Person's Learning & Employment Network – Paris October 2010



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Day one - Agenda for the First meeting

- The first meeting held in Paris was to look at problem identification and methodology when approaching matters of age, diversity and discrimination in education and employment.
- The opening introduction was presented by Yves de Tregomain of Association Chercheurs d'Emploi (ACE) our French hosts. Introductions were made, and the discussions began.
- The first presentation was provided by Chris Walsh the director from Wise Owls who offered an overview of the programme, the agenda of the conference and the hopes and desires of what P.E.O.P.L.E. can achieve.
- This uplifting presentation was followed by a series of presentations that covered various topics relating to the vital work each organisation carries out.



Day one Continued

These included:

- Overcoming barriers
- Case Studies on problems faced by older workers
- Case studies education support for older workers
- Case study on Formal education for employed people
- Research
- Informing each other of the legal situation in each country



Day 1 afternoon - Gathering ideas

- Having listened to the specialist knowledge each organisation presented, the discussion moved onto research. It was made clear that the importance of research was to have a final point to it. It was also stated that there is already a lot of existing research that is out there. Therefore a round the table conversation led us to present a series of the idea being that we would gather together and create our own research that would explode certain myths or support the case for older workers in employment and training.



Belief or fact?

- All senior people are more loyal
- Attract older customers by having older staff
- Improve quality of productivity/efficiency
- Improve customer care
- More motivated
- More flexibility
- Less sick days
- A diverse workforce is a more stable workforce
- Life experience self confidence to make more informed decisions
- Bigger network
- Some countries reduced older people in work to open up vacancies for younger people
- In order to gain more youth employment you need reduce the amount of old people in employment.



Day two – Best practice

- Following the success of the first day discussion, we proceeded to have further presentations in the morning. This was given by Bruce Roch of the temporary work firm Adecco, who talked about their practices for the return to employment of unemployed seniors. Then it was the turn of Peter Murphy who presented a series of slides on Best Practice in employment & training from his experiences working in tandem with the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) promoting age diversity to employers.
- Following a debate from Valery Small of Wise Owls on the research into older workers, and the projects she has managed for Wise Owls, we separated into 3 groups to further the discussion and present ideas for Best Practice.



Day 2 Continued

The groups were divided into 3 categories:

- Best Practice in recruitment & client support
 - Best Practice for Employers
 - Best ways to influence the government & media
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- Once the discussion had taken place, a member from each group presented the groups ideas, and thoughts to everyone. These ideas are to be taken forward into the next meeting where they will be formulated further as a process into producing Best Practice publications.



Example of Best Practice for Recruitment

- Equality & Diversity Policy to include age
- Clear Procedures, Job Descriptions, Person Specifications
- Advertise in diverse publications, websites, locations, formats etc
- Remove ageist language from job ads – e.g. “youthful”, “dynamic”, “attractive”
- Application forms – NOT Résumés/CVs
- Separate monitoring sheet for all equalities information including age
- “Blind” short-listing
- Same interview questions for all applicants
- Offer the job to the person who best matches the job description/person specification
- Use monitoring statistics and satisfaction statistics to measure and improve



Website

- To conclude the event there was a round the table discussion on what the website should contain.
- Concern was raised about making sure we had content before production of the website for which we agreed.
- However it was also agreed we would have a holding page that explains:
 - What is P.E.O.P.L.E. ?
 - The purpose of the project
 - The background (including funders)
 - The Partners
 - The planned workshop
- Once we have collated and produced projects. It was agreed we would need a research page, and a page presenting our Best Practice documents including our presentations.



Website Continued

- For the moment Wise Owls is hosting the information relating to the programme, the partners, future workshops and presentations on its website
- In addition it was agreed there would be an online facility to allow for the different groups to discuss their progress together and work on projects collectively.
- This concluded the first conference.



The Next Step

- The end of the conference produced excellent communication for which we established a criteria to move forward.
- The two expert groups that were created to begin with are:
 - Research
 - Website & technical
 - Best practice based on presentations and presented on page 5



The Next Step Continued

- The main function between now and the next conference will be to present an area online to allow the groups to:
- Share materials
- Producing and disseminating collaborative information
- Working from final presentations into Best Practice
- View presentations
- The presentations:
- Best practice employers
- Research
- Best practice in client support
- Best practice in education & training
- Campaigns



AGE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT CAMPAIGN

- This has already started in the UK and Wise Owls is looking for support from other anti ageist organisations in the UK plus hoping that this can be rolled out across the EU.



Aim

- We are contacting all government ministers and Council chiefs to ask them to agree to look at the impact of cut backs and reduced staff numbers on older people (50+) and need everyone's help to make it happen.



Why?

- As the cuts bite in the public and private sectors it looks increasingly hard for the older work force. In the past the public sector has started its redundancy programmes by targeting their older staff and it looks increasingly likely this will be happening again.
- Wise Owls Freedom of Information research showed that local government employs a higher proportion of over 50s than make up the overall UK workforce. When the last major cuts came in the 90s, Local Authorities focused on cutting their over 50s staff members, using voluntary redundancy and early retirement, so things are not looking good for the over 50s in the public sector, including the NHS, who also employ large numbers of older women and ethnic minorities.

- This means that unless an alternative approach is taken, which understands the benefits of an age diverse workforce, there will be hundreds and thousands of older workers in the UK (50 – 65+) being made redundant, adding to the ranks of the current 3.6 million workless over 50s.
- This will mean additional poverty for themselves and their families, as 50% of carers are aged 50 -65, as well as employers losing valuable knowledge, experience and staff best able to relate to their fellow older customers.
- We think it only right that public sector employers at least research and inform the public of the current numbers of staff that are under 25, 25-49, 50 – 64 and 65+, as well as the numbers leaving / being made redundant and the number of new recruits each year by age. Then at least the public knows what the baseline is and can see the impact of the ½ million job cuts in the public sector on older and younger members of staff.

- As it is the government's responsibility to ensure equality of treatment for all in relation to employment and provision of services then if and when institutional ageism is revealed we can demand remedial action.
- The other part of the campaign aimed at govt., the media, the CVS and older people themselves is to ask central and local government to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment to measure the impact of their cuts on the over 50s, focusing on those on or below the average national wage and in particular those below the poverty level.
- We believe this can also be rolled out across Europe and that EU institutions should also be asked to respond