



Associazione Lavoro Over 40
Professionalism to compete in changing world
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Session 12:

“How does older workers’ employment work”?

“Too old to work, too young to retire!” In practice the only thing “working” is the unemployment of people over 40!

In Italy this problem concerns about 700,000 people and their families, according to our evaluations. The numbers given by the Italian Senate are the same. The work department of the Italian Senate unanimously identifies older workers’ unemployment as the third largest national problem.

The worst aspect of this situation is the total absence of re-employment policies and strategies to help workers who are over 40. This is the reason for our fight for this fundamental right provided by Articles 1 and 4 of the Italian constitution: the right to work!

A recent study of IREF (the Research Institute of the Italian Catholic Liberal Associations) examined Italian enterprises and found that none of them has any structural policy for the employment of people over 40. There are only sporadic policies in place, for instance those supported by the program EQUAL safe-guarding jobs for workers over 40 (Age management, Investing in People, 50+ work, Chance Over 40, Filo 40).



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What problems do workers over 40 face in **looking for employment?**

Unemployment of workers over 40 is a very difficult problem to solve, because most public and private sector employers still have prejudices based on age, in spite of the fact that such discrimination is forbidden by EU law. This is made clear in Article 13 of the EC Treaty and 2007 was declared as the “European Year of Equal Opportunities For All!” in order to promote just that.

Older workers face age-based prejudices when looking for employment because most Italians aren't aware of European legislation against age discrimination.



What are the problems that a worker over 40 faces in Italy when trying to remain in the labour market?

Italy still discriminates against older workers when recruiting for training purposes. Here there are some examples of bad practice:

- 1) The Italian Ministry for Communitarian policies has recently published an illegal advertisement for “Financial and business analysts” (<http://www.simest.it>) which discriminates against older workers;
- 2) The Italian “Regione Autonoma della Sardegna” discriminates on the ground of age in the case of training “Master and back”
- 3) The advertising for “Funzionari consiliari” discriminates against older workers (http://consiglio.regione.sardegna.it/sito/Bandi_Concorsi/Bandi/Bando1.asp)
- 4) The latest recruitment drive for “Uditori giudiziari” (i.e. judges) discriminates against older people
- 5) “Sviluppo Italia”, a legal entity which give public grants for self-employment maintains age discrimination.

The reality is that Italian workers who are over 40 still face prejudices which are forbidden by law!



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‘Associazione LAVORO OVER 40’ was founded in September 2003 by a group of people over 40 years of age who found themselves excluded from the labour market.

It has the following aims:

- to help workers over 40 workers who are unemployed or without a permanent job to re-enter the labour market by using their experience and professional skills;
- to help these workers share their experiences and to encourage the creation of new enterprises among them;
- to cooperate with any bodies which share our aims;
- to promote links between enterprises, associations and professionals, trade unions or any other body who wants to help the re-employment of older workers;
- to participate or organise meetings, conferences, conventions, study days and public debates about the above mentioned topics.



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The legal prohibition of discrimination based on age is in the Italian legislative decree 216/03, implementing EC Directive 2000/78 on the right to equality of treatment: “the principle of equal treatment without discrimination based on... age, ... concerns everyone in public and private sector... the following aspect() (is) address(ed) a) access to employment or help with self-employment, considering **recruitment or selection criteria**...” including specific sectors..



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One of the our main aims is:

the inclusion of unemployed workers over 40 among disadvantaged categories to enjoy legal advantages for social cooperatives in Italy (national law 381 of 1991).

Social cooperatives could be a real tool towards self-employment because these:

- enjoy special rights in terms of taxation;
- are in a preferential position to get agreements.

Workers over 40 are often excluded from the labour market as they are considered by employers to be less valuable than their younger counterparts.

The experience of older workers could be used to help younger employees to acquire essential knowledge and skills. Older workers should represent a strenght for enterprises or indeed any employer!



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- the European Union should refer to people facing discrimination on the ground of age as a vulnerable group!
- all public and private bodies to stop age discrimination!

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