

Thriving at 55+ is a two-year research programme aiming to investigate how to best support workers at the age of 55 years and over in being satisfied and productive at work. Workers aged 55+ are not always utilised or valued as much as they could be in the workplace, yet their contributions are increasingly necessary as the European population ages. In order to achieve our aim, we would like first to identify which organisational strategies and practices can help employees aged 55 years and over to continue to thrive and make a good contribution in late career.

We want to be as objective as possible and are interested in what are the experiences with these strategies and practices and what needs exist in the field of age-diverse management.

We ask questions based on 6 sections:

- Background information
- Recruitment
- Working environment
- Retirement
- Manager training
- Reasons for organisations to not engage in HR practices

Your opinion is very important for us.

Interviewee's name:

Organisation:

Occupation:

Function:

Interview code:

Date of interview:

Interview method: ☐ Phone ☐ Face-to-face

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- **Age?**
- **Gender?**
- **Tenure in the organisation?**
- **Tenure in the job?**
- **Do you think (are you aware of) that your organisation has any diversity/equal opportunities policy in place?**

If yes: Can you, please give more details?

- **Which do you think are the key challenges for people aged 55 years and over in the workplace?**
- **Which do you think are the advantages (if any) for people aged 55 years and over in the workplace?**
- **Do you think that your organisation is aware of the needs of its mature employees?**
- **Do you think that your organisation provides (enough) support for employees aged 55 years and over? Can you please elaborate?**
- **In what particular ways (if any) you think mature employees should be supported by organisations?**

RECRUITMENT

- **Do you think that people aged 55 years and over have a good enough chance to be recruited by your organisation? (Do you know anyone at this age who has been hired in the last two years?)**
- **Are you aware if your organisation uses any specific approaches to encourage applications from older workers?**

If yes: Can you, please give more details?

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Flexible working options

■ **Is there a norm of working long hours?**

Does it differ by occupational/or age group?

■ **Does your organisation provide opportunities for flexible working options** (e.g. flexible working schedules, part-time work, job sharing, work from home, etc.)?

If yes: Can you, please describe what forms of flexible working options are available?

Are there any flexible working options particularly meant for mature workers?

If yes: Which ones?

■ **Have you requested (or been offered) opportunities for flexible working arrangements?**

If yes: Can you, please give more details?

In no: Are you aware of other employees who were given opportunities for flexible working arrangements in your organisation? (Can you please give more details? Were these employees aged 55 years and over?)

■ **Do you think that your organisation should offer flexible working opportunities for mature workers?** (Why?)

Or

Do you feel that you in particular (and/or employees aged 55 years and over) could benefit from flexible working arrangements? In what way? Which forms of flexible working arrangements?

Job design

■ **Are you aware whether your organisation provides opportunities for designing and re-designing jobs/creating roles specifically for mature employees?**

If yes: Can you, please give an example?

■ **Do you feel that the mature employees in your organisation given opportunities to have input in determining their workload and/or job content?**

If yes: Can you, please give more details/an example?

■ **Do you think that mature employees should be given opportunities to contribute to the design/crafting of their own jobs?**

If yes: Why?

Employee training

■ **What kind of training is available for you** (e.g. induction, procedural training, career development, skill up-date, etc.)? **Does it differ by occupational groups?** (If yes: Can you please give more details?)

■ **Do you think that mature workers are given enough training opportunities (or as many as younger workers)?** Can you please elaborate?

■ **Do you feel that organisations (your organisation) should provide specific training opportunities for mature workers?** Can you please elaborate/give an example?

Or

Are mature employees in your organisation offered training to update/acquire new skills? (When and where did you receive your last training?)

Performance evaluation

■ **Do some or all staff receive performance-related pay?**

If yes: Can you, please give more details?

■ **Do employees have input in setting performance standards?**

If yes: Can you, please give more details?

■ **Do you think that employees are provided with (useful and supportive) feedback on their performance?** (Can you please give more details?)

■ **Do you think that performance appraisal in your organisations are conducted in a fair way (e.g. free from age basis)?**

Compensation

■ **Does your organisation offer incentives for continued employment?**

If yes: Can you, please give more details?

■ **What kind of employee benefits do you think are offered for the employees in your organisation?** (Are there any specific types of benefits for mature workers, such as health checks, health insurance, additional leave, etc.?)

Recognition and respect

- Do you feel that your organisation demonstrates its recognition of the (experience, knowledge, skills and expertise) of mature employees? Could you please give an example?
- Do you feel that mature employees in your organisation are treated with respect from others? Could you please give an example?
- Do you think that mature employees should be given opportunities to transfer their experience and knowledge to younger employees (e.g. through mentoring roles)? Are there such practices in your organisation? Could you please give an example?

RETIREMENT

- Do you think that your organisation provides enough information on retirement planning and options? (Where from can you obtain such information?)
- Are you aware of any retirement planning service for mature workers provided by your organisation?
If yes: Can you, please give more details?
- Are you aware if there are any opportunities for reduced responsibility options/schemes, redeployment to other jobs for mature workers or 'phased retirement'?
If yes: Can you, please give more details?
- Do you think that people should be given opportunities to continue working after normal retirement? Would you consider such an opportunity if it is available?
- Which do you think are the key obstacles for people to remain in the workforce after the normal retirement age?

MANAGER TRAINING

- Are you aware if managers in your organisation receive training on age-diverse management?
If yes: Can you please give more details (e.g. what topics, in-door or external training, etc.)?
If no: Do you think that employees (both managers and mature workers) would benefit from manager training on age awareness and age-diverse management?

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE POTENTIAL REASONS FOR ORGANISATIONS TO NOT ENGAGE IN AGE-DIVERSE HR PRACTICES?

These were all of our questions. Would you like to add anything? Do you have any recommendations?

Thank you for your contributions!