

READY FOR OUR LIVES

**International Erasmus Plus
Project
2015-2018**

Age Discrimination in Italy



**Project Meeting in Porto -17th -
24th February 2016**

The purpose of this research has been to explore how age discrimination express itself in the Italian labour market even if our legislation should avoid that.

One important consideration is that age discrimination does not concern only people above a particular age but it affects many age groups in different ways, with the strongest implications for the youngest and oldest individuals.



LEGISLATION

Article 3 of the Italian Constitution introduces a general principle of equality, which prohibits all forms of discrimination.

Article. 15 of the Workers' Statute, dated 1970, states that any act directed to discriminate in the assignment of jobs or levels of employment for reasons related to age is null.

The EU Directive of 2002 was implemented by Law of 2003 and introduced further protections against discrimination. In particular, according to this Statute, direct discrimination is committed when a person is, has been or would be treated less favourably for reasons that include age.

In Italy age discrimination in the labour market presents itself in various ways. Some are explicit, such as the exclusion of older workers from training or the inclusion of age-limits in recruitment advertisements. Other ways are more subtle, such as dealing with job redundancies by means of early retirement. In Italy, young people also experience serious difficulties entering the labour market and obtaining stable employment. This has an impact on important choices such as starting a family or finding better employment.





The problem of an aging population and age discrimination has become a problem in every part of the world.

Historically elderly people were respected as wise custodians of history and traditions.

In fact, in the past, a very low life expectancy was the rule and not the exception.

Increased life expectancy and the industrial revolution contributed to this shift in attitudes towards the aging population as a burden for society rather than a valuable resource.

The effects of an ageing population are more pronounced in Italy than in most other European countries.

Age gaps in employment rates are much wider than in other EU countries, with employment rates ranging from 70.2% in the 25-54 age bracket, to 16.6% for young people (15-24 years old) and 43.0% for the 55-64;

□ North-South territorial gaps are also the widest in Europe: employment rates in Southern Italy are at a low 42% versus an average of 64.2% in the Northern regions.

Another distinctive feature of the Italian labour market is the high level of taxation on labour.



Discrimination in advertising for jobs

There is great variation in the EU states on this issue.

For example, in Italy between 60 and 70% of public recruitment ads for jobs contain an upper age limit of 35-40 years. This is true also of recruitment ads for public administration, including the Italian Parliament - despite the fact that it is against the law.

In other European countries, when an ad discriminates on the age ground the Equality Authority asks to publish a non discriminatory version of the ad. So the company re-advertises the position removing the adjective for example 'young'.

In Italy this does not happen.



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**:

- The Italian Ministry for Communitarian policies has recently published illegal advertisement for "Financial and business analysts" (<http://www.simest.it>) which discriminates against older workers;
- The Italian "Regione Autonoma della Sardegna" discriminates on the ground of age in the case of training "Master and back"
- The advertising for "Funzionari consiliari" discriminates against older workers (<http://consiglio.regione.sardegna.it/sito/Bandi.Concorsi/Bandi/Band01.asp>)
- The latest recruitment drive for "Uditori giudiziari" (i.e. judges) discriminates against older people
- "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!

Society ageing and attitudes to elderly

There are four negative stereotypes about older workers:

- older workers do not want to learn;
- these people are more demanding for better work environment and ask for higher salaries;
- they have difficulty by assimilating new technology;
- investments in older workers training bring a low return;
- They do not adapt to change.

In this case, it is often forgotten elderly strengths, such as the available expertise, professional and social competence.

Young Workers

"(...) Italy has a very low share of young people studying and working at the same time. The transition from education to work is particularly difficult for young graduates. The employment rate of young tertiary graduates (aged 25-29) is well below the EU average and that of young people with upper secondary education."

Very common stereotypes for young workers:

- Inexperience causes immaturity
- Unreliable
- Abused
 - a. ask no questions
 - b. have no demands
 - c. desire no insurance



Everyone's Future

Think Differently About Age

Since ageism persists in Europe despite the existing legislation we need to use any instruments we can to change those attitudes that allow age discrimination in our societies.

To combat stereotypes about younger and older workers especially those which claim older workers prevent their younger colleagues from entering the labour market and promote age diversity and quality in employment towards all population groups have to be fought.

We think that a way to instill a positive image for an aging workforce is to remove any stereotypical views and notions, through **education.**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!