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1. Demographic trends

The number of people aged 60 and over is growing faster than other age groups. In the UNECE region between 1950 and 2050 it is expected to increase from 92 to 390 million. Ageing trends vary between countries within the region. Table 1 shows that the more developed economies of Western Europe are the oldest in the region while the countries in Eastern Europe and Western Asia are the youngest followed by countries in the South-Eastern Mediterranean and Central and Eastern Europe. However, as shown in table 2, the speed at which populations in these last three subregions are ageing is faster than in the more industrialized ones.

Table 1: Rate of demographic ageing (population aged 60 or over and aged 80 and over as a percentage of total population)

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Population aged 60 and over											
North America	11.9	12.0	12.7	14.5	16.1	16.4	19.2	24.0	27.5	28.2	28.7
Western Europe	13.5	15.1	17.0	17.7	19.4	20.4	23.5	27.5	32.2	34.5	35.3
Central and Eastern Europe	11.0	11.0	13.5	13.5	15.4	17.7	19.6	23.8	27.4	31.6	35.6
Eastern Europe and Western Asia	10.9	9.3	9.4	8.9	10.2	12.0	11.9	15.7	19.8	23.6	29.1
South-Eastern Mediterranean	7.6	8.7	11.3	11.5	12.2	13.6	16.3	19.8	22.4	25.3	27.8
UNECE	11.7	12.0	13.8	14.0	15.6	17.2	19.3	23.3	27.3	30.5	33.4
Population aged 80 and over											
North America	1.1	1.3	1.7	2.1	2.6	3.1	3.7	4.0	5.4	7.5	8.2
Western Europe	1.3	1.6	1.9	2.5	3.3	3.6	4.6	5.4	7.0	8.8	11.0
Central and Eastern Europe	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.5	2.0	1.9	3.0	3.8	4.6	6.5	7.6
Eastern Europe and Western Asia	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.9	2.5	2.4	4.3	5.5
South-Eastern Mediterranean	0.4	0.6	1.1	1.3	1.7	2.0	2.6	3.2	4.5	5.9	6.5
UNECE	1.1	1.2	1.5	1.8	2.3	2.5	3.4	4.1	5.1	6.9	8.4

Source: UN World Population Prospects, 2000 Revision, own calculations. Medium variant projections. For the definition of UNECE subregions see annex table.

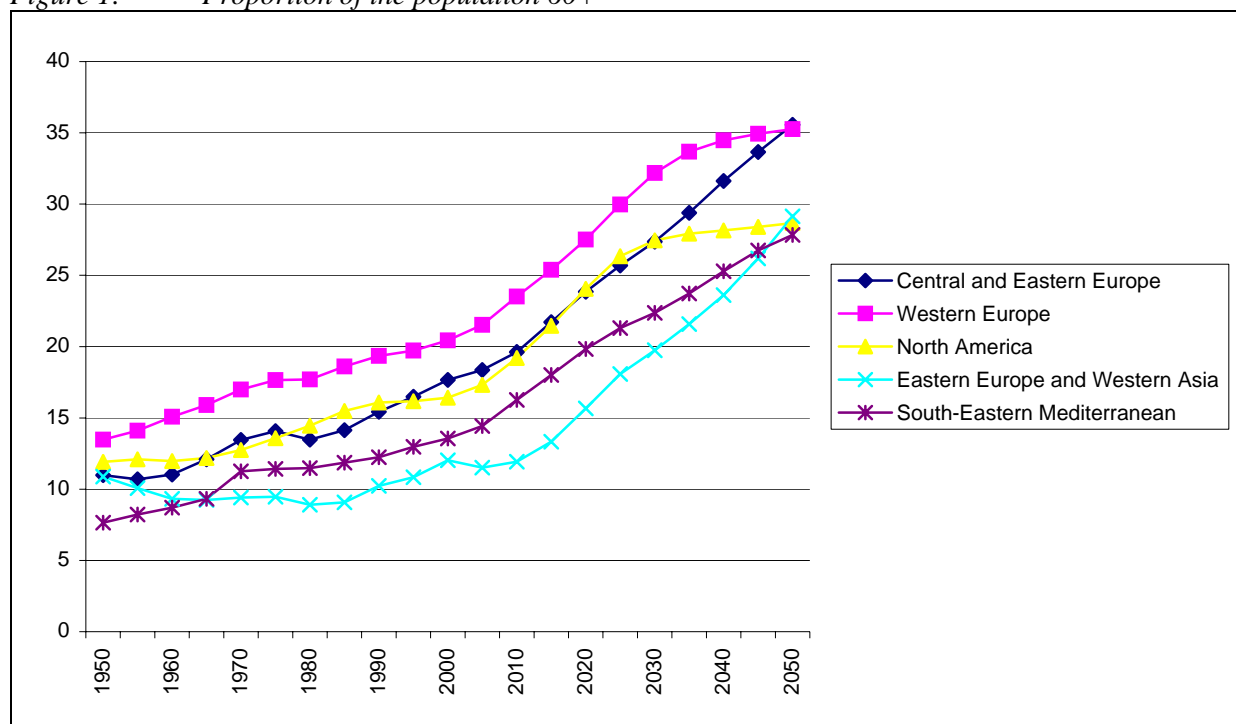
Table 2: Velocity of Ageing: Increase of population share of people above age 60 and 80 (per cent) 1950-2000 and 2000-2050

	60+		80+	
	1950-2000	2000-2050	1950-2000	2000-2050
North America	38	75	179	165
Western Europe	52	73	183	202
Central and Eastern Europe	61	101	79	296
Eastern Europe and Western Asia	11	142	32	366
South-Eastern Mediterranean	77	105	339	233
UNECE	48	94	129	241

Source: UN World Population Prospects, 2000 Revision, own calculations. Medium variant projections. For the definition of UNECE subregions, see annex table.

This demographic shift, depicted in figures 1 and 2, is attributed mainly to the general decline in fertility rates and to improved health, which has lengthened life expectancy. Moreover, according to the 2002 Report on the Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic¹, HIV/AIDS is spreading rapidly through countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia which continues to experience the fastest growing epidemic in the world. In 2001, there were an estimated 250,000 new infections bringing to 1 million the number of people living with HIV/AIDS in these countries. The Russian Federation remains at the forefront of the epidemic but many other countries are now experiencing rapidly emerging epidemics such as Estonia and Latvia. HIV/AIDS is therefore damaging the population structure and the implicit meaning is that a huge number of families will lose their prime-age breadwinners before the pandemic can be halted.

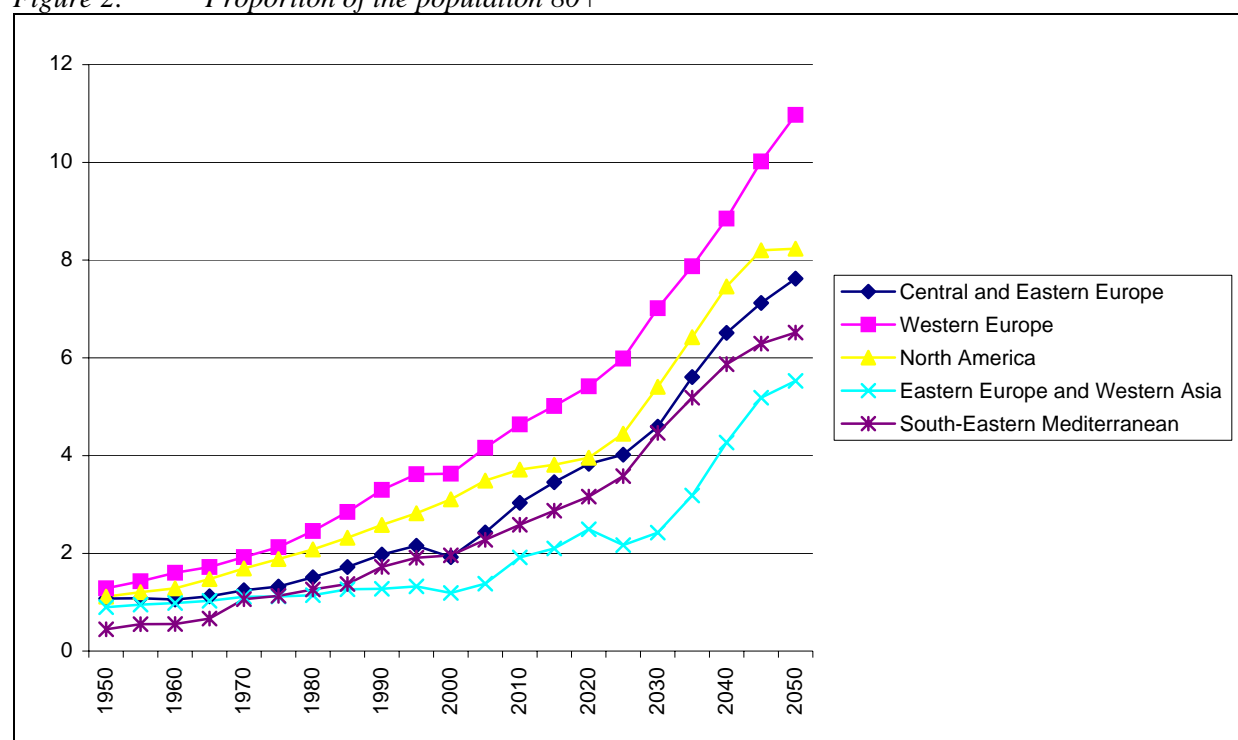
Figure 1: *Proportion of the population 60+*



Source: UN World Population Prospects, 2000 Revision, own calculations. Medium variant projections. For the definition of UNECE subregions, see annex table.

¹ UNAIDS, 2002

Figure 2: Proportion of the population 80+



Source: UN World Population Prospects, 2000 Revision, own calculations. Medium variant projections. For the definition of UNECE subregions, see annex table.

2. The challenges and opportunities of ageing

Over the past several decades, UNECE countries have experienced a substantial drop in the average age at which individuals retire from the labour market. Longer life expectancy and better health have not been accompanied by longer working lives, as illustrated in table 3.

Table 3. Retirement age and expected duration of retirement in OECD countries

	Males		Females	
	1950	1990	1950	1990
Retirement age	68.5	62.2	66.0	60.0
Expected duration of retirement	10.8	16.8	14.1	22.6

Source: D. Latulippe: *Effective retirement age and duration of retirement in the industrial countries between 1950 and 1990*. Issues in social protection, Discussion Paper No. 2, Geneva, ILO, Social Security Department, 1996.

As a consequence, these countries are facing serious concerns about the viability of social security systems. Especially the rising old age dependency ratios, indicating the number of older people (65+) per 100 persons in working age (15-64), have been a source of major concern. As we can see in table 4, the old age dependency ratio in the UNECE region is expected to increase about 27 percentage points between 2000 and 2050.

Table 4: Old age dependency ratios in the UNECE region (number of people aged 65 and older as a percentage of people aged 15-64)

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
North America	12.5	14.0	14.3	15.4	17.7	18.5	19.7	26.3	35.2	37.4	37.9
Western Europe	14.1	16.1	18.7	20.7	21.4	23.1	25.7	32.0	41.1	49.1	51.4
Central and Eastern Europe	11.9	11.3	13.7	16.0	15.6	18.4	20.1	25.2	31.9	38.5	48.0
Eastern Europe and Western Asia	11.4	11.1	11.4	11.0	10.1	12.4	12.2	14.6	21.7	26.7	34.9
South-Eastern Mediterranean	7.9	9.5	12.6	13.4	13.8	15.2	16.9	22.4	27.5	30.8	36.3
UNECE	12.3	13.0	15.0	16.5	16.6	18.7	20.4	25.4	33.1	39.5	45.4

Source: UN World Population Prospects, 2000 Revision, own calculations. Medium variant projections. For the definition of UNECE subregions, see annex table.

However, national social transfer systems are not affected by the above demographic shifts alone, but rather by the actual relationship between the size of active and non-active groups of the population, often described as system dependency ratios. It is decisive for the viability of a pension system how many pensioners have to be maintained by every single active person. The labour market thus plays a crucial role for meeting the ageing challenge.

2.1 Meeting the challenge: employment creation in decent conditions

Many of the concerns raised over the financing of social security systems tend to be made from a static view of the development of the economy. They are based on the assumption that growth will not create enough jobs for everybody and that, consequently, there will be fewer and fewer people contributing to the social security system, and an increasing number seeking to benefit from its services, for a longer period of time.

However, greater emphasis should be placed on dynamic policies of economic growth designed to provide a positive response, focusing on the creation of enterprises and decent work. Therefore, we should not be thinking in terms of distributing the jobs currently available in a world of growing unemployment, but of creating more and better jobs. The promotion of full employment is the best way to ensure such welfare provision and to afford people the guarantee of a pension when the time comes to leave active employment behind.

Employment promotion is a powerful lever to mitigate the effects of population ageing on social protection schemes. ILO model calculations show that the projected increase in dependency ratios can be effectively contained if labour force participation rates were increased and actual retirement ages raised. For a typical rapidly ageing country with effective retirement ages of 60 and a moderate female employment rate like that of the Netherlands, this could be done by increasing female labour market participation to the present highest levels in Europe (the Swedish levels) and raising de facto retirement ages to 67 by the year 2030. By this token, the combined unemployment and old age dependency rate, that is the number of older persons and unemployed per 100 employed persons, would only increase

from 62 in 1995 to 68 in 2030, compared to 80 under status quo conditions.² The projected pressures on the financing of social security could thus be largely offset by higher rates of activity.

Employment promotion thus is not only the key to preserving the stability of pension schemes, but is also, in a more general sense, crucial for improving economic performance and to generate sustainable economic growth.

A genuine solution to the challenges created by ageing populations is thus to be sought by increasing participation in the labour force – notably among women, youth, people with disabilities and older workers – and thus through job creation. As Commitment 5 of the draft Regional Implementation Strategy notes,

“Unemployment is an obvious waste of productive resources (no tot mention a burden on the social security system) and creating a situation of full employment will help to raise the total resources available in any given economy”

2.2 Promoting labour force growth and combating unemployment

Women labour force participation is lower than for men especially at older ages. Table 5 shows that for the group 65+ women participation rates are twice or three times lower than for men.

At all ages, women participation is an important source of labour force growth in many countries. Supporting policy measures, such as child care facilities and flexible working arrangements, are of crucial importance to open access to the labour market and to facilitate the combination of work and family responsibilities for caregivers, men and women alike.

² Cf. ILO (2001): Social security: Issues, challenges and prospects, p. 83; ILO (2000): World Labour Report 2000. Similar results for a larger number of countries have been reported by Peter McDonald und Rebecca Kippen (2001): "Labour supply prospects in 16 developed countries, 2000-2050", in *Population and Development Review* 27 (1), S. 1-32.

Table 5: Labour force participation rates by age and sex (latest year)

	<i>Age</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Latest year</i>
North America				
Canada	25-54	91.1	78.6	2000
	55-64	61.0	41.6	
	65+	9.5	3.3	
Western Europe				
Belgium	25-54	91.8	72.9	1999
	55-64	36.8	16.1	
	65+	3.4	0.9	
Denmark	25-54	92.7	83.5	1999
	55-64	61.9	50.6	
	65+	2.9	1.3	
Spain	25-54	92.7	60.2	1999
	55-64	57.8	21.5	
	65+	2.5	1.0	
United Kingdom	25-54	91.6	75.9	1999
	55-64	63.5	41.1	
	65+	8.0	3.5	
Central and Eastern Europe				
Czech Republic	25-54	94.9	81.8	2000
	55-64	54.5	23.7	
	65+	6.8	2.4	
Hungary	25-54	84.8	70.0	1999
	55-64	30.8	11.4	
	65+	3.8	1.6	
Slovakia	25-54	93.8	82.2	1999
	55-64	41.1	10.6	
	65+	2.1	0.7	
Central Europe and Western Asia				
Azerbaijan	25-54	94.2	72.1	1995
	55-64	66.2	24.8	
	65+	19.5	6.5	
Belarus	25-54	96.7	94.0	1995
	55-64	64.2	27.7	
	65+	12.2	4.6	
Kazakhstan	25-54	96.8	88.0	1995
	55-64	61.3	21.0	
	65+	8.5	3.10	
South-Eastern Mediterranean				
Turkey	25-54	91.2	32.9	1999
	55-64	57.4	29.2	
	65+	34.9	16.5	

Source: KILM, 2001-02

Young people have high participation rates however, they suffer from high unemployment, exceeding adult unemployment rates. Youth unemployment rates are especially high in Central and Eastern European Countries and they are higher for young women than for young men. Experiencing unemployment early in life may permanently hamper young people's productive potential and future employment opportunities. It generates disappointment, undermines social cohesion and becomes an important burden for the public sector budgets.

Table 6: Youth unemployment rates (1999 or latest year)

<i>Central and Eastern Europe</i>	
Bulgaria	32.6
Croatia*	29.8
Czech Republic	17.0
Hungary	12.4
Poland	30.0
Romania	19.5
Slovakia	32.2
Slovenia	18.2
The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**	49.3
Estonia*	16.1
Latvia	23.1
Lithuania	24.9
Ukraine*	22.5

Note: * latest year available 1998, ** latest year available 1996

Source: KILM, 2001-02

People with disabilities experience low participation and employment rates and high unemployment. Their unemployment rate varies with their specific disability, but is significantly higher than that of the workforce as a whole, usually double, but often higher, with some countries reporting an unemployment rate as high as 80 per cent. For instance, only 18 per cent of disabled people are employed in Estonia. As table 7 shows, governments spend considerable amounts on disability benefits. The financial cost of having so many people out of employment is very substantial. The human cost of so many without work cannot be quantified, but the outcomes are isolation and marginalization of a significant proportion of the population.

Table 7: Disability Cash Benefits As a percentage of GDP

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
<i>Western Europe</i>									
Austria	1.43	1.42	1.43	1.52	1.63	1.78	1.87	1.90	1.95
Czech Republic	1.30	1.32	1.35	1.32	1.32	1.45	1.52	1.64	1.68
Denmark	1.68	1.68	1.65	1.70	1.92	1.95	1.91	1.83	1.81
Finland	3.01	3.54	3.95	3.98	3.78	3.60	3.47	3.18	2.81
The Netherlands	4.63	4.66	4.65	4.53	4.09	3.89	3.23	3.07	2.39
Norway	2.75	2.85	2.89	2.83	2.73	2.67	2.59	2.57	2.81
Portugal	1.88	1.95	2.01	2.13	2.09	1.69	1.80	1.85	1.87
Spain	1.27	1.34	1.33	1.39	1.39	1.34	1.31	1.30	1.34
Sweden	2.04	2.13	2.33	2.48	2.48	2.33	2.24	2.18	2.10
Switzerland	1.26	1.36	1.49	1.62	1.76	1.88	1.98	2.10	2.16
United Kingdom	1.58	1.87	2.23	2.55	2.65	2.75	2.68	2.69	2.64
<i>Central and Eastern Europe</i>									
Czech Republic	1.30	1.32	1.35	1.32	1.32	1.45	1.52	1.64	1.68
Poland	2.30	3.17	3.92	4.01	4.03	4.14	4.01	4.04	3.98
Slovak Republic	-	-	-	-	-	1.98	1.97	1.94	1.97

Source: OECD Social Expenditure Database: 1980/1998, 2001 Edition

The international migration needed to overcome labour and skill shortages has become an issue of major debate. A United Nations study ³ has calculated that the immigration required between 2000 and 2050 in the European Union would be 47 million to maintain the size of total population and 674 million to maintain the ratio of the working-age population (15-64 years) to the old-age population (65 years or older). From these figures it appears that immigration may not be a universal solution to ageing. However, it is an element to be taken into account when it comes to designing strategies for full employment.

Increasing the labour force participation of older people is becoming a policy objective for a growing number of countries. Older people in our countries have nowadays good reasons for wanting to remain in active employment beyond the legal retirement age. Furthermore, older people represent an enormous potential and our countries need their support.

2.3 Extending working lives: the employability challenge

The extension of working life demands complementary measures such as those related to the updating of skills of older people in a lifelong learning framework, to the improvement of conditions of work, hygiene, health and safety, to new ways of work organization and to a new attitude among employers, colleagues and the older workers themselves.

The importance of education and skill development

Many employment problems of older workers are rooted in their low levels of education and skills. A disproportionate share of older people with disabilities have less education and lower skills than the workforce at large. Empirical research foresees that future older workers will be better educated than today, as shown in table 8.

³ *Replacement Migration: Is it a Solution to Declining and Ageing Populations?*, United Nations Population Division, 2000.

Table 8: *Distribution of educational attainment of the labour force aged 45 to 64 years, 1995 and 2015 (per cent)*

	1995				2015 (1)			
	less than upper secondary	upper secondary	non university tertiary	university	less than upper secondary	upper secondary	non university tertiary	university
<i>North America</i>								
Canada	27.7	24.8	29.3	18.2	14.1	30.1	33.8	21.9
United States	12.4	51.0	7.6	29.0	9.2	51.7	9.5	29.6
<i>Western Europe</i>								
Austria	33	58.7	1.5	6.8	17.5	69.8	2.8	9.8
Belgium	46.2	27.0	13.3	13.5	25.7	35.6	19.1	19.6
Denmark	35.5	42.4	6.1	15.9	23.5	49.6	8.3	18.6
Finland	43.4	36.0	8.6	12.0	17.9	56.2	10.5	15.4
France	38.4	44.0	6.5	11.1	15.4	57.8	11.0	15.8
Germany	15.4	58.1	11.7	14.8	8.6	63.5	10.8	17.1
Greece	71.4	14.4	3.6	10.6	41.5	29.6	9.9	19.1
Ireland	61.3	18.9	8.5	11.3	36.4	31.4	15.1	17.1
Norway	20.6	51.2	11.2	16.9	9.4	53.2	13.1	24.2
Spain	78.8	7.1	2.7	11.5	49.5	20.1	8.4	22.0
<i>Central and Eastern Europe</i>								
Czech Republic (2)	15.2	72.4	..	12.4	7.1	78.3	..	14.6
Poland	34.5	49.6	2.4	13.5	12.7	69.9	4.8	12.6

(1) The distribution of the labour force in 2015 is based on applying education specific participating rates for individuals aged 45-64 years in 1995 to the population age 25-44 years in 1995

(2) Data for non university tertiary education are included in university education.

Source: OECD Employment Outlook, OECD 1998

The demand for new skills places many older workers at a disadvantage, as their training earlier in life is likely to be obsolete. Older people with disabilities face additional barriers in accessing training opportunities. Participation in training declines in general with age. Research undertaken in 11 developed countries shows that young adults in the 25-34 age group are almost twice as likely to undergo training as older people aged 55-64⁴. Older workers do not represent a significant proportion of the recipients of public employment and training programmes, but they are an increasingly important target group. In Western Europe, one of the more integrated policy programmes to promote the employability of older workers is the Finnish National Programme for Ageing Workers (FNPAW).

⁴ *Lifelong learning in the twenty-first century: The changing roles of education personnel*, April 2000, ILO, Geneva, www.ilo.org/public/English/dialogue/sector/techmeet/jmep2000/jmep1.htm

The Finnish National Programme for Ageing Workers, 1998-2002

- The main goal of the FNPAW is to promote the employability of the over 45s, to reduce their exclusion and premature retirement.
- FNPAW is led and run in an integrated way. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education, in cooperation with major labour market organizations, are responsible for its implementation.
- Regional training pilot projects are organized, embracing the need to update skills due to information technology progress as well as to discover innovative methods for training older workers.
- Specific measures to prevent discrimination of older workers are promoted.

Source: Ageing workers and changing working life, Ministry of Labour & Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki, 1999.

In recent years there has been a growing interest in and recognition of the problems of older workers in Central and Eastern European Countries. For instance, the Slovak Republic with the new Employment Act effective since January 1997⁵, is paying more attention to older workers.

The Slovak Republic: 2001 Programme of individualised employment services

This programme's objective is to make more effective work with the registered unemployed belonging to specific groups of jobless persons difficult to place in the labour market such as older workers. Some individual pilot schemes involving older workers are:

Programme supporting employment of citizens over 50 years of age

The project's purpose is to enable senior citizens to re-orientate and assert themselves in the labour market. It concerns a group of registered jobless 50+ with preference given to those registered as unemployed for longer than 6 months who have lost their jobs for organisational reasons. The project focuses on removing psychological barriers with the aim to specify inborn talents and practical skills by means of active cooperation with potential employers and/or individually directed retraining. A total of 906 registered unemployed persons will be involved in the project.

Home-care social service in communities

The project aim is to increase the employability of the risk group of registered unemployed women 40+, improve social and health care and prepare qualified home-care workers for communities from the ranks of women 40+ with suitable personal properties and attitudes to older and sick people. The project aims at providing full-time jobs for women 40+ and at the same time improving care for old people and people with long-term illness and/or lonely community inhabitants. A total of 140 unemployed persons will be involved in the project.

Source: www.ell.ee/osi/02%20Slovak%20employment.html

The ILO's resolution concerning human resources training and development, adopted at the 88th International Labour Conference in June 2000, noted the crucial role of high-quality education and training to prevent and combat social exclusion and discrimination, particularly in employment and that, in order to be effective they must cover everyone, including older workers. The Resolution also stresses the importance of training as one of the instruments that, together with other measures, can address the challenge of the informal sector where, in the less developed countries of the UNECE region, an important number of older workers are concentrated.

⁵ Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 387:1996 Coll. on employment. www.employment.gov.sk/en/employment/act_on_employment.html

The role of lifelong learning

Lifelong learning is a long-term preventive strategy far broader than just providing second-chance education for those adults who did not receive quality education and training earlier in life. For those adults lifelong learning is about delivering job-relevant learning and building the foundation for further learning.

Implicit in the concept of lifelong learning is the rejection of a society structured on the basis of age in which education and training are one-off undertakings experienced early in life. At the level of the individual, as well as the organization, an attitudinal shift toward the expectation of lifelong learning could in itself be a powerful tool in propagating the fact that lifelong learning applies to all workers of all ages. Only in a learning society will all workers, women and men, be able to continually upgrade their skills and knowledge needed to maintain employability.

Information and communication technologies (ICT)

The overall importance of investment in education and skills is underscored by the structural changes economies are undergoing. Rapid technological developments call for a continuous renewal and updating of skills. At the same time, new technologies can contribute to extend working lives, allowing older workers to maintain their ties to the labour market. ICT is also helping to open employment possibilities for older people with disabilities at all skill levels.

Combating stereotypes and age discrimination

Attitudes towards older people are the principal obstacle to opening up employment opportunities. The stereotypes are numerous such as, older workers are less productive, physical capacities decline with age, older workers are slow to learn etc. Much of them are myths and even those that have some foundations are often irrelevant to job requirements. The key to progress in this field is in the hands of employers. A good example is the Employers Forum on Age from the UK whose purpose is to provide employers with information and services aimed at promoting age diversity and overcoming age related stereotypes and age discrimination.

The ILO Older Workers Recommendation, 1980 (No. 162) calls on all member States to adopt a national policy to promote equality of opportunity and treatment for workers of all ages and take measures to prevent discrimination against older workers. Legislation to prohibit age discrimination is crucial to building equality of opportunity especially for women as they to experience double discrimination in the form of sexist and ageist stereotypes.

Promoting “workability”

The ability and willingness of older workers to continue working depend also on their personal state of health, conditions of work and motivation. Employability of older workers is strongly influenced by individual and occupational factors which are essential to a person's ability to cope throughout their working life. That is the individual's workability. Promotion and maintenance of workability have to be regarded as an active strategy for coping with the challenge of demographic change in the labour market, particularly with the rising age-related

health risks. Improving workability is also a tool to prevent both a premature loss of functional capacities and disability.⁶

⁶ *Active Strategies for an Ageing Workforce*, Conference report, Turku, 12-13 August 1999, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, <http://www.eurofound.ie/publications/EF9962.htm>

3. Concluding remarks and policy considerations

The vitality of our societies increasingly depends on active participation by older people. Therefore, a central challenge is to promote a culture that values the experience and knowledge that come with age. We must foster economic and social conditions that allow people of all ages to remain fully integrated into the economy and society, to enjoy freedom in deciding how to relate and contribute to society, and to find fulfilment in doing so.

The chance to prolong one's working life is a promising alternative for society and deserves to be an option for older persons who wish to do so. Retirement should not be brought forward artificially without taking individual circumstances into account. It is important to ensure that older people have the opportunity to pursue productive activities, whether paid or unpaid, which keep them connected and provide them with a sense of usefulness to society.

To this end, the ILO believes that the following challenges need to be addressed in the development of ageing policies:

- gradual and flexible transition from active working life to retirement as a means to give older workers the opportunity to remain active longer should they wish;
- development of necessary measures to prevent discrimination in employment and occupation with special attention to older women workers;
- implementation of policies to train and retrain older workers in order to help them adapt to new demands and opportunities using the guiding principle of lifelong learning as a long-term preventive strategy;
- the potential of ICT to open up employment and training possibilities for older people, including those with disabilities, as well as the realization of this potential for the majority of the world's older people;
- development of measures appropriate to national conditions and practice to enable older workers to stay longer in employment and to make it attractive for them to do so;
- the social security challenge to respond to changing family structures and lifestyles by guaranteeing equality of treatment between men and women.
- development of mechanisms that keep social transfer systems in financial equilibrium by sharing the financial burden of ageing fairly between the active and inactive populations;
- the scope and limitations of migration replacement as a solution to population ageing;
- the development of work and the working environment as key issues to reduce long-term invalidity and to ensure decent retirement and health in old age;
- ways to prevent HIV/AIDS as well as to mitigate its negative effects.

At the ILO, we are firmly committed to the success of the Berlin Ministerial Conference on Ageing. This event provides an extraordinary opportunity to define major problems and

opportunities related to ageing in the UNECE region, and to agree on policies to address them properly.

The ILO also fully supports the adoption of the Regional Implementation Strategy. Its set of interrelated commitments provide a useful tool to assist member states in focusing on the main policy priorities related to population ageing. Commitment 1 of the Strategy notes that:

"We want to ensure the full integration and participation of older persons in society and implement the strategy in the closest possible partnership with the civil society, particularly older persons, organisations and the private sector".

We are also aware that the ageing of the population requires a broad adjustment process that affects not only older people, but the society as a whole. Employment promotion is the key to coping with the challenge of ageing populations, and there are good reasons to believe that our societies are capable of adapting to these changing circumstances, as they have done many times before. At the ILO we are looking forward to meeting this challenge.

Annex

Table: Definition of subregions within the UNECE used here

North America	Western Europe	Central and Eastern Europe	Central Europe and Western Asia	South-Eastern Mediterranean
Canada	Austria	Albania	Armenia	Cyprus
United States of America	Belgium	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Azerbaijan	Israel
	Channel Islands	Bulgaria	Belarus	Malta
	Denmark	Croatia	Georgia	Turkey
	Finland	Czech Republic	Kazakhstan	
	France	Estonia	Kyrgyzstan	
	Germany	Hungary	Russian Federation	
	Greece	Latvia	Tajikistan	
	Iceland	Lithuania	Turkmenistan	
	Ireland	Poland	Uzbekistan	
	Italy	Republic of Moldova		
	Luxembourg	Romania		
	Netherlands	Slovakia		
	Norway	Slovenia		
	Portugal	TFYR Macedonia		
	Spain	Ukraine		
	Sweden	Yugoslavia		
	Switzerland			
	United Kingdom			

Note: The classification of subregions largely follows the ILO administrative division of regional offices.

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