



# MoPAct

Mobilising the Potential of  
Active Ageing in Europe

## MoPAct – Mobilising the Potential of Active Ageing in Europe Extending Working Lives and Lifelong Learning Final Country Report: Baltic Countries

Based on (in chronological order):

- **Bauknecht, Jürgen and Naegele, Gerd (2015):** Report on Case Studies. MoPAct WP3. Based on contributions by Mikkel Barslund, Carina Bössing, Andreas Cebulla, Katrin Gasior, Nathan Hudson-Sharp, Veronika Khýrová, Katja Linnenschmidt, Elisa Martellucci, Julija Moskvina, Liina Osila, Ana Rincon-Aznar, Agnès Romanini, Marco Socci, Izabela Styczyńska, Lucie Vidovičová, David Wilkinson, Eszter Zolyomi
- **Kirsti Nurmela; Liina Osila and Reelika Leetmaa (2015):** National Policy Report Baltic Countries. In: Naegele, G./Bauknecht, J. (eds., 2015): National Policy Report. MoPAct, WP3, Task 2.
- **Liina Osila; Ingel Kadarik; Marija Krumina and Julija Moskvina (2015):** Baltic Countries. In: Barslund, Mikkel/Bauknecht, Jürgen/Cebulla, Andreas/Gasior, Katrin/Kadarik, Ingel/Khyrova, Veronika/Krumina, Marija/Linnenschmidt, Katja/Martellucci, Elisa/Moskvina, Julija/Naegele, Gerd/Osila, Liina/Principi, Andrea/Rincon-Aznar, Ana/Socci, Marco/Styczyńska, Izabela/ Vido- vičová, Lucie/Wilkinson, David/ Zólyomi, Eszter (2015): Best Practice Cases. MoPAct project, WP 3, Task 2
- **Kirsti Nurmela (2016):** Identifying and assessing structural drivers of and barriers to innovative, sustainable strategies for extending working lives and lifelong learning on the demand and supply side. National Report Baltic Countries. MoPAct, WP3, Task

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## **Reading Guidance**

This final country report on the case of the Baltic States is a composition of several documents that were written in the context of the EU-project for MoPACT – Mobilising the Potential of Active Ageing in Europe. MoPACT is a four years project funded by the European Commission under the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Program. More specifically, the different chapters of this report are based on a series of papers as well as on additional research.

### **1. Basic Demographic and Labour Information**

The following sections are an extract of the “National Policy Report” written by Kirsti Nurmela; Liina Osila and Reelika Leetmaa in February 2015 (as a result of Work Package 3 Task 2).

### **2. Extending Working Lives and Lifelong Learning: National Policies**

The following sections are also an extract of the “National Policy Report” written by Kirsti Nurmela; Liina Osila and Reelika Leetmaa in February 2015 (as a result of Work Package 3 Task 2).

### **3. Extending Working Lives and Lifelong Learning: Selected Innovative and Sustainable Approaches**

The models of good practice have been identified by Liina Osila; Ingel Kadarik; Marija Krumina and Julija Moskvina and comprise good practice examples both on the sides of labour supply and labour demand. The text stems from the “National Policy Report” written by Jürgen Bauknecht in February 2015 (as a result of Work Package 3 Task 2).

The models of good practice themselves are drawn from the report of Mikkel Barslund et al. written in February 2015, entitled “Extended Working Lives - Good Practice Cases”, MOPACT project, Work Package 3 Task 2.

### **4. Extending Working Lives and Lifelong Learning: Drivers and Barriers**

This chapter is based on the “National Report Baltic Countries” written by Kirsti Nurmela identifying and assessing structural drivers of and barriers to innovative, sustainable strategies for extending working lives and lifelong learning on the demand and supply side as a result of Work Package 3 Task 4.

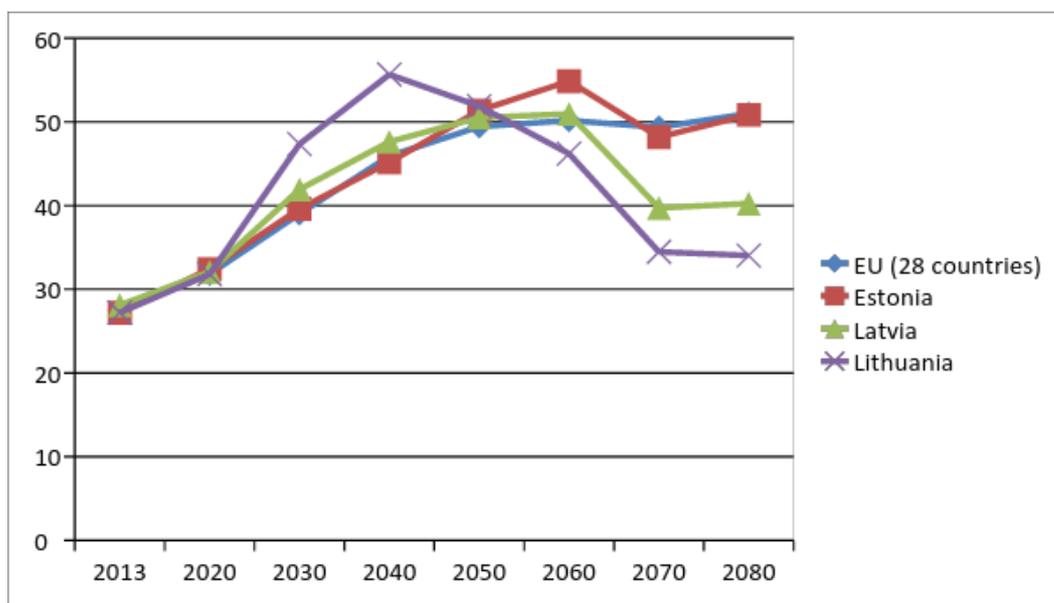
## 1. Basic Demographic and Labour Information

### 1.1 Demographic Development

In 2011, Eurostat reported that the Baltic states are among the eight Member States where population has declined during 2011 (Robustillo et al. 2013). In 2011, population decline in Estonia was solely due to negative natural change, which offset positive net migration, while in Latvia and Lithuania, population declined mostly due to negative net migration supplemented by negative natural change (Robustillo et al. 2013).

Population ageing is a general process across the EU Member States and is expected to continue in the coming decades (Robustillo et al. 2013). The Baltic countries are no exception in this respect. Old-age dependency ratio is an indicator reflecting the relative size of the older population (aged 65 and over) expressed as a percentage of the working-age population (aged 15-64). According to Eurostat on-line database, in 2013 the old-age dependency ratio in the EU-28 was 27% (i.e. there is almost four persons aged 15-64 per one person aged over 65). All three Baltic States have a starting point indistinguishable from the EU average (27-28% in all three countries) (see also Figure 1). All three countries are expected to go through a decline in old-age dependency ratio which is followed by stabilisation period, although the decline will start earlier in Lithuania than in other countries. These trends can at least partly be explained by increasing fertility rates and an expected shift from population outflow due to migration into population inflow (see further below). By the end of the forecast period (2080), Lithuanian population is projected to be the most youthful out of the three Baltic countries while Estonia shows highest share of old-age population relative to working-age population.

FIGURE 1. OLD AGE DEPENDENCY RATIO



Source: EuroPop2010, Eurostat.

The trends described above can be explained by the following main indicators which are forming the basis for population projections (EuroPop2013 projections by Eurostat<sup>1</sup>): fertility rates, life expectancy at birth and net migration. Increasing fertility rates are expected in most EU countries during the projection period, including the Baltic countries.

Among the three Baltic countries, a convergence in life expectancy is projected by 2080. Out of the three countries, life expectancy at birth is expected to increase the most among Lithuanian men, who have the lowest starting point as at 2013 (68.7 years). Among the EU countries, Lithuania and Latvia stand out with the lowest male life expectancy at 2013 (68.7 and 69.1 years respectively). Estonia has fifth lowest life expectancy for males (71.6 years). By 2080 this will not change, although differences between EU countries are expected to diminish. Also, these are the countries which are expected to make through the highest increase in male life expectancy over the projection period. The trends in female life expectancy are rather similar to that of males, although female life expectancy is considerably higher than that of men. Women can expect to live between 9.7 and 10.9 years longer than men in 2013 in the Baltic countries while the differences are expected to diminish to 5.1-5.3 years by 2080.

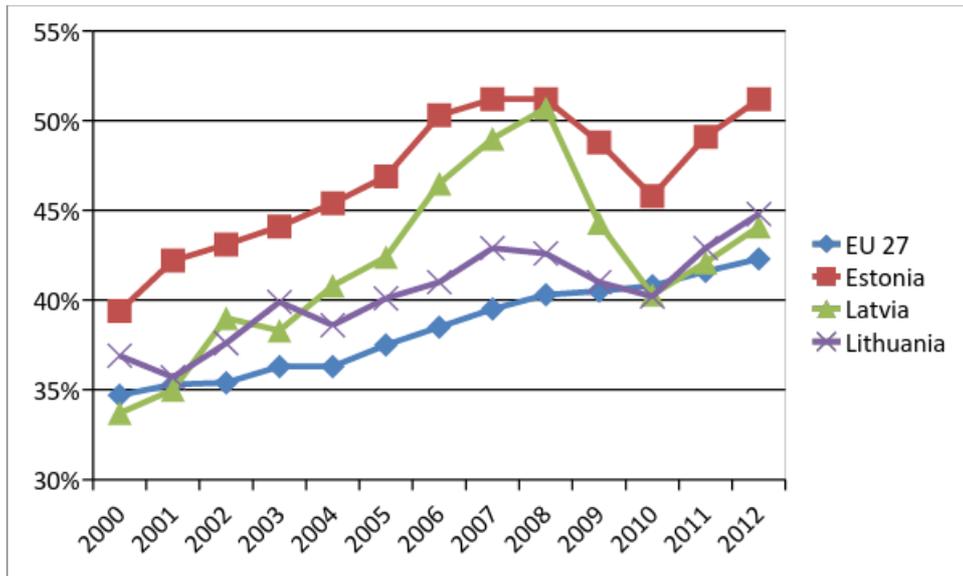
According to the EuroPop2013 projections, all of the Baltic countries are expected to go through a steep increase in population outflow due to migration in 2020-2030 which is expected to turn into a small population inflow by 2040 in all three countries. Population outflow is projected to be the steepest in Lithuania.

## **1.2 Older Worker Employment / Unemployment**

Employment of older age groups in the Baltic countries has been above the EU average for most years since 2000. Employment rates in Baltic countries for people aged 50 – 74 have been growing and have maintained their relative position above the EU average. As seen from Figure 2, during the boom years employment rates in Latvia and Estonia were climbing more rapidly but the ensuing crisis also had a stronger effect on the employment rates of older people. Starting from 2010, all three Baltic states are showing accelerated growth in their employment rates and are every year getting further away from the EU average. In 2012, employment rate of 50-74 year olds in Estonia (51.2%) was recorded the second highest among EU countries, after Sweden. Latvia and Lithuania were also among the ten countries with highest old-age employment rates in EU, rising above the EU average.

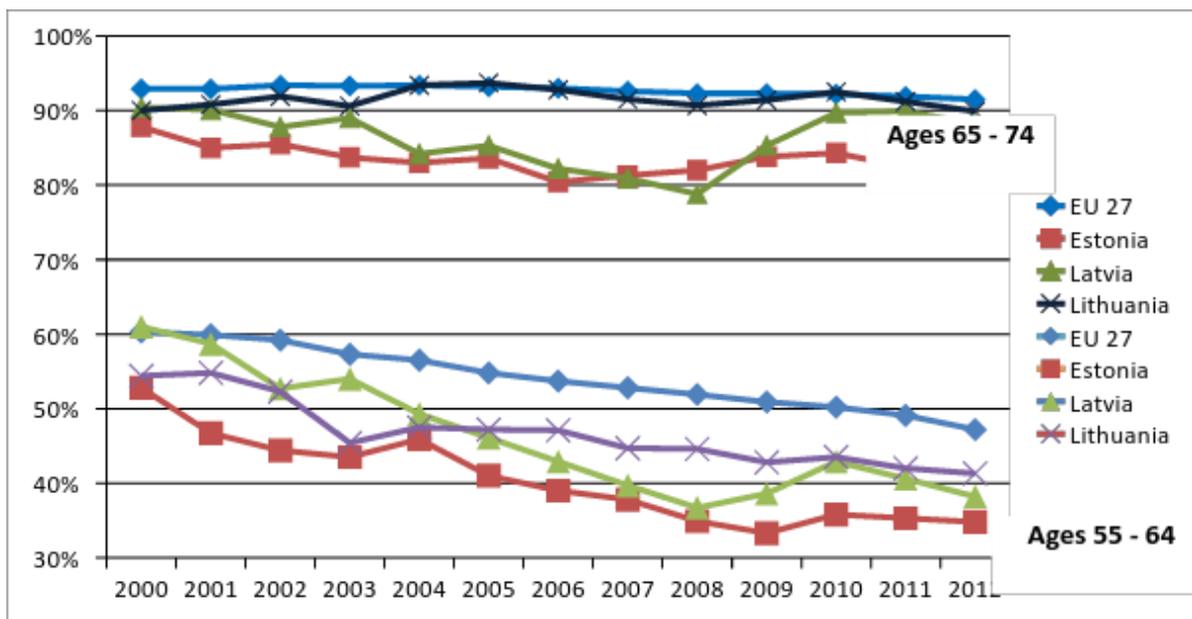
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<sup>1</sup> For more details on EuroPop population projections, see [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_SDDS/en/proj\\_13n\\_esms.htm](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_SDDS/en/proj_13n_esms.htm)

**FIGURE 2. EMPLOYMENT RATE, AGE GROUP 50 - 74**

Source: Eurostat

Another important measure to express the labour market situation for the elderly is inactivity rate, showing the amount of people who have left the labour market altogether. As seen on Figure 3, the total inactivity rates for age groups 55 to 64 and 65 to 74 have been declining in Baltic States and in the EU as a whole. Trends show that inactivity after the economic crisis show a noticeable increase only in Latvia, indicating that older age groups started to move more often from employment to inactivity after losing their jobs.

**FIGURE 3. SHARE OF INACTIVE POPULATION BY AGE GROUP (AGES 55 TO 64 AND 65 TO 74), 2000-2012**

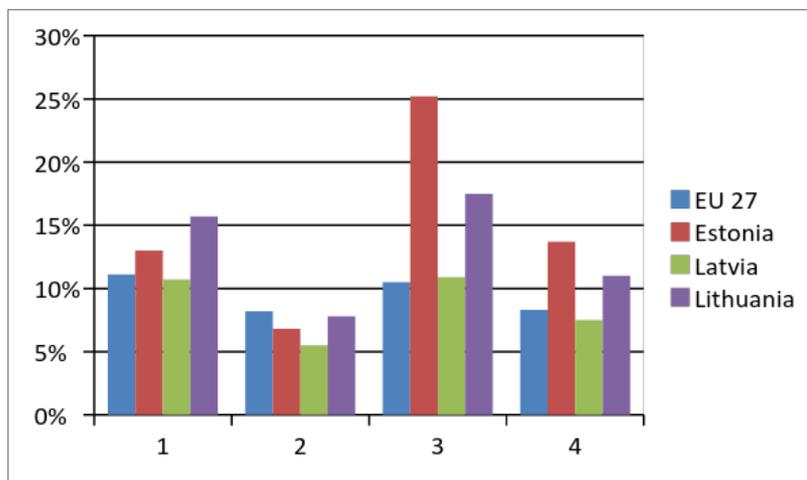
Source: Eurostat

Over time there has also been significant decrease in gender differences. For example in the case of Latvia in the 55-64 age group the inactivity rate in 2000 was 72% for females and 46% for males. By year 2012 the inactivity rate was 39% for females and 37% for males. There was also a trend of similar strength in Estonia and Lithuania but in the case of the latter there is still a gap between the female-male inactivity rates (45% and 35% respectively).

Being retired is the main reason for inactivity for people aged 55 to 74. In 2000 in Latvia almost every inactive person was retired (98%). In Estonia and Lithuania the figure was 86% and 91% respectively. Those figures were significantly higher than the EU average of 67%. While the EU average has risen, the share of people in the Baltic States, whose main reason for not seeking employment is retirement, has been decreasing. Latvia has seen the biggest decrease by 15 percentage points.

The second most common reason for being out of the labour market is presented on Figure 4. The figure identifies a cause for concern for Estonia and Lithuania where respectively 25% and 17% of males were inactive in 2012 due to an illness or disability. In the case of Estonia the figure has almost doubled in ten years. Situation for women is better compared to men, although the share of inactive women who are not seeking employment due to health problems has also increased over time in the mentioned countries.

**FIGURE 4. SHARE OF INACTIVE POPULATION AGED 55 – 74 WHO ARE NOT SEEKING EMPLOYMENT DUE TO OWN ILLNESS OR DISABILITY BY GENDER (2002 AND 2012)**



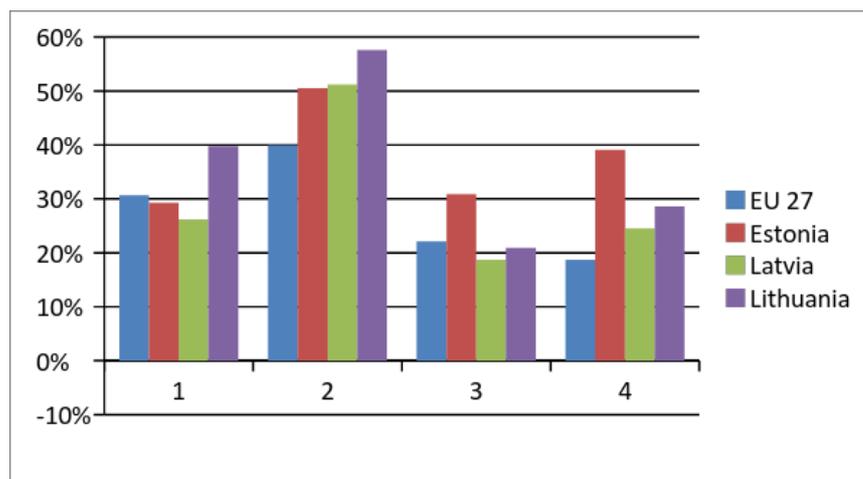
Source: Eurostat

Against this background, an issue of concern is the number of expected healthy life years. Expected healthy life years at birth are over 61 years for both men and women in the EU on average and the changes over time have been minimal. The women in Baltic States are closer to the EU average than men. The worst situation is in Estonia where the women are four years and men 8 years below the EU average. In Latvia the figures are 3 and 7 and in Lithuania men are 5 years below the EU average and women have managed to caught up to the average woman in the EU. The situation for Baltic States has improved since 2004 but the growth of healthy life years has stopped and regressed a little for Estonia and Lithuania.

The current report is also concerned with the **lifelong learning** trends among older age groups. In general, older age groups in Baltic States have considerably higher education than in the EU on average. In age groups of 25 to 34 and 35 to 54 the share of people in Baltic States who only have education corresponding to ISCED levels 0-2 is roughly three times lower than the EU average for those age groups. Attainment of tertiary education (ISCED levels 5-6) in Lithuania and Latvia is slightly above the EU average while Estonia has considerably higher figures.

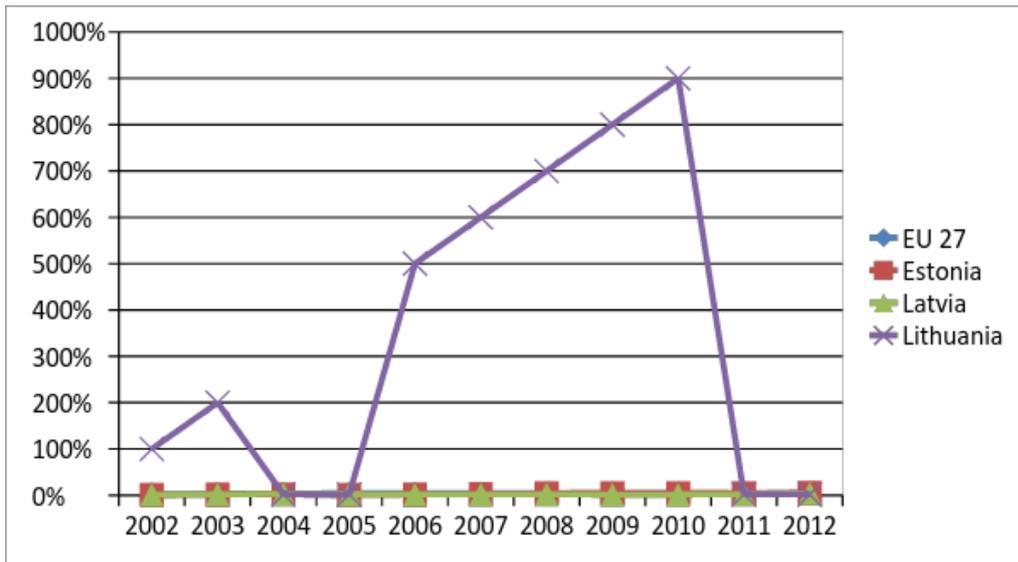
Figure 5 shows the attainment of tertiary education by age groups in 2012 and highlights a worrisome educational gap between the sexes. In the older age group the EU wide average difference between men and women is 3.4% points. In Latvia and Lithuania the gap is 6% and 7% points and in Estonia the difference is nearing to 10% points. But gender differences in attainment of tertiary education are even bigger for the younger age group. EU average is 30% for men and 40% for women while in Baltic States the gap varies from 17 to 25% points meaning that future older generations can expect even bigger gender differences in their education levels than they experience now.

**FIGURE 5. ATTAINMENT OF TERTIARY EDUCATION IN 2012, BY AGE GROUP AND SEX**



Source: Eurostat data, author

Figure 6 presents the participation rate in education and training for people aged 55 to 64. Baltic states all started from a lower level compared to the EU average but by 2012 both Estonia and Latvia reached participation levels close or above the EU average. Participation rate for Lithuania has not changed over the years but not much should be read into it due to the fact that Lithuania has missing data points and the validity of the data comes into question. In 2012 in Lithuania there were no gender differences in the rate of lifelong learning participation among people aged 25 to 34 and only slight advantage towards women in Estonia and Latvia. For the older age groups women have noticeably greater participation rates than men in all three Baltic States.

**FIGURE 6. PARTICIPATION RATE IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING (LAST 4 WEEKS), 55 TO 64-YEAR-OLDS**

Source: Eurostat

## 2. Extending Working Lives and Lifelong Learning: National Policies

### 2.1. Introduction

#### Classification as “Early” or “Late Mover”

When compared with other European countries, the Baltic countries are “late movers” in terms of willingness and ability to manage the older workforce both at the macro and the meso levels, and of promoting age management policies, employability and workability of older workers.

#### Predominant Concept of “Active Ageing”

Out of all the three countries, **Estonia** is the only one which has introduced a strategic document guiding the implementation of active ageing policies on national level. In Estonia, there have been two strategic documents that have been the basis for implementing active ageing on national level. The first document was introduced in 1999 – “Principles of Elderly Policy” (Ministry of Social Affairs 1999) and its implementation plans for the years 2002-2005 (Ministry of Social Affairs 2002) and for the years 2007-2009 (Ministry of Social Affairs 2008).

In year 2012, that in Europe was dedicated to promote active ageing and solidarity between generations, the Ministry of Social Affairs started to develop a national Development Plan of Active Ageing for the years 2013-2020 (Ministry of Social Affairs 2013). The aim was to elaborate a policy framework for older persons aged 50 and older that associates the issues of four different policy fields – health care, life-long learning, civil society and labour market. Both, the policy paper made in 1999 and the new Development plan for 2013-2020 stem from holistic approach meaning that to change the situation, actions in different areas of life need to be carried out. While the Implementation plans for the new Development Plan for 2013-2020 have not yet been published, the representative of the Ministry of Social Affairs expressed opinion that overall the two strategic documents (the one from 1999 and from 2013) differ quite extensively. Also, the role of the Ministry of Social Affairs has increased being the main lead and the role of Elderly Policy Committee that is an advisory body for the Ministry of Social Affairs has decreased compared to earlier period.

The Development Plan for 2013-2020 was finished early 2013 and around 60 different stakeholders were involved in the process, including representatives from different institutions (e.g. Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund), universities, NGOs, think-tanks, local governments, ministries, social partners. The Ministry of Social Affairs is planning to draw up four Implementation Plans all made for two year periods to carry out the Development Plan. However, the process of elaborating the first Implementation Plan for the years 2013-2015 has been suspended. Mainly because it was not the priority for the previous government as several other extensive reforms were on the table and because the new government that took the office in the end of March 2014 has not yet had the chance to focus on the issue. Still, the representative of the Ministry of Social Affairs remained positive as the current Minister for Social Welfare is also the member of the Elderly Policy Committee and therefore well informed of the whole issue and development plan. The representative of the Ministry also argued that although there currently are no confirmed implementation plans, it does not mean that no actions have been taken. She brought out as an example that thanks to the existence of the new Active Ageing

Development Plan for 2013-2020, different measures directed to older people were included in the new Lifelong learning strategy 2014-2020 to support the implementation of the aims set in the development plan.

In **Latvia**, *Comprehensive Active Ageing Strategy for Longer and Better Working Lives* - the first single policy document in the field of active aging and extending working – is in preparation, to be ready by the end of 2015. The Ministry of Welfare with a financial support from the EU PROGRESS 2007-2013 programme started to work on the development of the strategy in March 2014. The project has two main activities: the first one is to evaluate the main challenges for active aging and possible policy changes (main areas analysed: employment, health, social security); and the second - to develop active aging strategy based on the evaluation made during the first stage of the project<sup>2</sup>.

In **Lithuania**, there is currently no strategy specifically focused on active ageing issues. The first strategic document - National Strategy on Overcoming the Consequences of Ageing (“The National Strategy on Overcoming the Consequences of Ageing” 2004) (“the Strategy”) – was approved in 2004. The Strategy aims at providing, in compliance with the principles of active ageing, older people with conditions for a full life, seeking for their experience to be valued, and making them certain of their future. The content of the Strategy was approved as fully meeting all the criteria of active ageing laid down by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (Adomaitienė et al. 2007).

In 2005, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (GRL) approved the 2005-2013 Action Plan for the Strategy (“The 2005-2013 Action Plan for the Strategy” 2005). This document covered such measures as income guarantees, employment, health and social services, full life opportunities, participation in society, and creation of the image of older people. The Ministry of Social Security and Labour (MSSL) and institutions subordinate to it were in charge for the most of the measures. Following the provisions of the Action Plan, the Lithuanian Pensioner Affairs Council<sup>3</sup> was established at the MSSL. Although the MSSL is assigned a greater degree of responsibility for coordination and implementation of national goals and objectives contributing to the goals of active ageing policy, there is the lack of inter-institutional coordination. Therefore, establishing a common strategy or a responsible function on Government’s level would probably contribute to the more effective management of active ageing on national level.

Even though introducing a national level strategy for active ageing has succeeded to a different extent in the three countries, all of the countries report that active ageing is at least partly included in various other national level strategies. For instance, in **Estonia** the necessity of prolonging working lives was also stated as an overall principle in strategic documents, for example, the strategy of “Estonia 2020” highlighted that in the future it is getting more and more important to provide measures to older persons in order to prolong their working life or getting them back in the labour market (State Chancellery 2013). However, there are no specific activities introduced to reach this aim.

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<sup>2</sup> Direct communication, Ministry of Welfare, 2014.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.socmin.lt/lt/veikla/tarybos/lietuvos-pensininku-reikalavimai.html>

In **Latvia**, almost all of the current main strategic national documents recognise the importance of active aging policies, and include at least some measures aiming at increasing employability of older people.

- *Latvia's Sustainable Development Strategy 2030*<sup>4</sup> includes programmes for prevention of age discrimination, the development and inclusion of a programme in social responsibility assessments and enterprise audits, long-term investments in human capital to increase its productivity, training and socialisation programmes for people in retirement and pre-retirement age.

Latvia's Sustainable Development strategy 2030 is highly evaluated by the Trade Union Confederation and considered to be the only document that explicitly emphasizes involvement of old-age people in the labour market.

- *Latvian National Development Plan 2007-2013; Latvian National Development Plan 2014-2020* also include aging related measures such as promotion of lifelong learning, access to education, training and skills development, unemployment preventive measures for pre-retirement age workers, sustainability of the state social security system, the provision of health care services, flexible working time arrangements.

- *National Reform Programme of Latvia for the Implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy*<sup>5</sup> have measures on ensuring the sustainability of the pension system and integration of pre-retirement age population into the labour market using special public work programme, subsidised employment and training (ICT skills and foreign language skills), reducing discrimination and promoting investments in research.

- In 2008, the importance of the labour market participation of older individuals was emphasized by the Latvian government and included as a horizontal priority '*equal opportunities for everyone independent of age*' in the Ministry of Welfare guidelines to an application for joint funding from the European Social Fund and Latvian government. The main aim of the guidelines is to ensure that all members of society, regardless of gender, age and disability can have equal opportunities to participate in ESF projects and to benefit from their implementation. The guidelines are not binding and their application has to be assessed individually. However, they have a crucial role while deciding on possible financing and choosing from similar projects. Projects addressing issues of equal opportunities are prioritised for getting funding over otherwise similar projects not addressing the issue.

These guidelines were very positively evaluated by the Trade Union Confederation and Latvian Pensioner's Federation. Yet the post-assessment of the measure acknowledged that only small share (6%) of all projects' beneficiaries in the structural funds were older workers. Majority of the projects with horizontal impact have been in the areas of education and employment. (SIA "Corporate Consulting" 2013)

In **Lithuania**, the issues of population ageing and the measures to tackle these issues within a period from 2004 to 2013 were reflected in the Governmental Programme ("The Programme of the GRL" 2008). In order to tackle issues related to demographic ageing, the programme

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<sup>4</sup> Adopted by the Parliament of Latvia in June 2010.

<sup>5</sup> Approved in 2011.

provided for improving the social insurance system, fostering a relative increase in the size of the old-age pension, establishing a more effective system for the provision of social support, enhancing the provision of social care and social protection, and strengthening the community spirit and solidarity between generations. Furthermore, the “The National Demographic (Population) Policy Strategy” 2004 (adopted in 2004) provided, *inter alia*, for measures related to the tackling of population ageing problems, i.e., improve the quality of life of Lithuania’s population, reduce morbidity, mortality and inequality in order to increase life expectancy. The non-discrimination action plan (2012-14) (“The Interinstitutional Action Plan for Promoting Non-Discrimination” 2011) also helps encourage the elderly to lead active lives and fosters their dignity. The measures by which this plan is implemented cover various educational events and support for the activities of non-governmental organisations aimed at reducing discrimination on various grounds, including those related to age. Implementation of “The National Program on European Active Aging and Intergenerational Solidarity” 2012 was aimed at bringing the problems associated with demographic ageing and intergenerational solidarity to the attention of the public, raising the awareness of the activities being undertaken in this area, and providing new opportunities for synergies and collaboration.

The review of the relevant documents defining employment and social policy development shows that the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (MSSL) continues to play the key role in this area. There are two main documents defining Lithuania’s tasks in pursuance of active ageing provisions for a period from 2014 to 2020, namely, “The 2014-20 Programme for Employment Increase” (2013) and “The Action Plan for Enhancing Social Inclusion in 2014–20” (2013). The Programme sets a strategic objective to raise employment levels as much as possible so that every person would be able to find a job that meets his or her qualifications and to secure an adequate standard of living. This objective is based on three tasks: (1) to promote creation of jobs and labour demand; (2) to improve the match between labour skills and market needs; (3) to integrate and retain free labour resources in the labour market. Although all the objectives and tasks indirectly contribute to the implementation of active ageing objectives, inclusion of older people in the labour market is specifically identified only in the third objective of the Programme which reads “to encourage older employees to stay in the labour market longer”. This objective is to be achieved by creating favourable conditions to work at retirement age, promoting training of older employees by means of application of flexible training forms for adults, providing older unemployed persons with skills refreshment and reskilling opportunities, applying target incentives to admitting older persons to work, supporting the transfer of work experience of older people to youth by various means of experience transfer. Responsibility for achievement of the qualitative targets of the Programme (increase of the employment rate up to 53.5% in people aged 55–64 and extension of the average age to exit the labour market up to 64) is vested upon the MSSL, too. Preparation of specific measures to promote active ageing is also envisaged within the framework of Programme implementation.

The Action Plan for Enhancing Social Inclusion provides for obligations of the MSSL to develop timely and effective health services in the area of *healthy ageing* in order to keep elderly people in the labour market as long as possible and to reduce their social exclusion risks. The Plan also provides for the improvement of coordination, management and monitoring of preventive

health services with a view to ensuring better effectiveness thereof in territories with the poorest health indicators, reducing health inequalities among various social groups, and ensuring possibly *longer healthy ageing*, as well as supporting projects in the area of healthy ageing. In addition, the Plan provides for the reduction of health inequalities by improving the quality of and access to health services, including ensuring opportunities for the elderly to stay active in the labour market and in their usual social life.

In addition, **Latvia** has reported an example of an advisory council to the issues of active ageing. In 2013 the Ministry of Welfare initiated the creation of Seniors Advisory Council. The Council consists of the representatives of the main Latvian pensioners' organisations (Latvian Pensioner Federation, Latvian Senior Alliance, regional pensioner organisations), as well as representatives from the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Health and State Social Security Agency. The main task of the Council is social dialogue between the parties involved, discussion of the planned reforms, strategies and policies in the field of health care, employment, lifelong learning and financial position of the aged people. The assessments of these activities by different stakeholders are rather controversial<sup>6</sup>; still the council increases the opportunity for social dialogue and chances of the pensioners' opinion to be heard by policy makers.

Starting from its creation in 2013 the Council have had 8 meetings. The main topic covered has been mostly devoted to the issue of pension indexation. Several indexation scenarios have been discussed and the one selected for implementation, i.e. indexation of small pensions (took place in autumn 2013).

On the contrary, **Lithuania** has reported that parties other than state/government agencies lack recognition as that of independent participants in the planning and implementation of active ageing policy in the country. The role of the social partners or older people themselves is rarely defined in strategic or accompanying documents. Sometimes these documents provide for state support for certain NGOs (usually of older people) implementing provisions of strategic documents in the area of population ageing. However, the social partners as a rule are not identified in such documents as strategy/programme implementing institutions.

## 2.2 Public Pension and Retirement Policies

As a measure to prolong working lives, all Baltic countries have reported an increase in pension age. All three countries have set their aim to equalise retirement age for men and women (Latvia already has equal retirement age for both genders) and reach the retirement age of 65 by 2025-2026 for both men and women. In **Lithuania**, increase in pension age was considered as one of the measures to ensure the continuity and financial sustainability of the state social insurance system (Lazutka 2013).

In parallel, **Latvia** has also reported an increase in the minimum number of qualification years for a pension from 10 to 15 years in 2014, and will be further increased to 20 years by 2025. A longer insurance period and a later retirement age will ensure a higher old-age pension than under the existing regime.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.la.lv/senioru-padomes-darbs-tuvplana/>

### 2.3 Partial Retirement / Partial Pension Policies

An option to leave the labour market prematurely is offered by early retirement options. However, the popularity of these options tend to vary across the three countries. For instance, in **Lithuania** and **Latvia**, early old-age pensions are subject to relatively strict regulations (see also below). At the same time, their popularity increased in the economic crisis – according to the Eurostat ad-hoc module on transition from work to retirement in the Labour Force Survey, the share of early retirement among people who receive an old-age pension is 10.9% in Estonia, 19.1% in Lithuania and 35.1% in Latvia in 2012 compared to 39.1% in the EU28 on average. Also, early old-age pensions are lower than regular old-age pensions and it also has a negative impact on the old-age pensions. For instance, in **Latvia**, starting from 2009, the early retirement pension is 50% of the value of a person's old-age pension (till 2009 – 80%). In **Lithuania**, early old-age pension was LTL 618 or EUR 179 in 2013, by 27% lower than regular old-age pension<sup>7</sup>. This makes a strong financial incentive to continue working and not to use the option of early retirement when possible.

In order to further discourage the use of early old-age pensions, in 2009 the early retirement pension was cut from 80% to 50% of the value of a person's old-age pension. However, the share of early retirees in those retiring in 2009 and 2010 actually increased as compared with earlier. This affect was partially explained by the further even more unfavourable changes in the pension system, thus the early-retirement by many individuals was considered to be the best option.

Furthermore, **Lithuania** reports a further decreasing trend in early old-age pensions. In 2013, there were 11,599 recipients of early old-age pensions in Lithuania compared to 598,700 recipients of old-age pensions. Although access to early old-age pensions was improved in 2012 (the requirements to have a 12 months' period of registered unemployment prior to applying for the payment of early old-age pension was abolished ("The Law on State Social Insurance Old Age Pension Prepayment" 2012)), the number of recipients of such pensions keeps decreasing in the country.

At the same time, in **Estonia**, use of early retirement options is quite common - 19% of all people who entered old-age pension scheme used early retirement in 2011 and 2012.<sup>8</sup> As the duration of unemployment benefit is short in Estonia and work-incapacity pensions are low (about 60% of old-age pensions), people choose early retirement scheme as only available way to leave the labour force. The entry rate was higher during the recent crisis when unemployment increased– 25% in 2009, 24% in 2010. Leetmaa et al (2004a) show that majority of people who enter early retirement scheme come from unemployment or inactivity – about 80% of those have not had employment income before entering the early retirement scheme. More recent studies have shown the continuation of the same patter – during 2005-2012 about 75% of people in early retirement did not have an official employment income before entering the scheme (National Audit Office of Estonia 2014).

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.sodra.lt/index.php?cid=283>

<sup>8</sup> Authors' calculations based on annual reports „Pensioners“ by Estonian National Social Insurance Board

**Table Baltics 1: Main conditions for early old-age pensions**

	Lithuania	Latvia	Estonia
Maximum time before retirement age to collect early old-age pensions*	5 years	2 years	3 years
Minimum social security contribution history	At least 30 years	At least 30 years	At least 15 years
Employment	A person should not be employed under any form of contract or self-employed	Should not be employed, although a person can receive the status of early retirement and continue to work**	Simultaneous labour earnings are not allowed until reaching statutory pensions age
Relations with old-age pensions	The amount of old-age pension to persons awarded early old-age pensions are reduced for the whole period of retirement.	Early retirement reduces the amount of the full state pension received by individual (the level of a state pension depends on the age when the person retires as one of the factors).	For each month of early old-age pensions, old-age pension is reduced by 0.4%.

\*The age of early old-age pensions increases with general retirement age.

\*\* This is because of the fact that early retirement was designed as a supportive mechanism for people who have lost their job shortly (2 years) before the official retirement.

Source: national reports of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania

Withdrawal from the labour force early is also influenced by the legislation that grants many people right to retire before the general retirement age via special pension schemes. In such cases the retirement serves a somewhat different objective than the ordinary old-age pension: it recognizes the work done on certain positions and services before the society, puts value on raising children, compensates working in difficult conditions or in conditions harmful to health, redresses repression, social or other injustice. In **Estonia**, according to the National Pension Insurance Act the following people are entitled to receive an old-age pension up to five years before the official retirement age: a parent of at least three children or parent of a disabled child; unlawfully repressed people who have been in penal establishments or in exilement; people who worked in liquidating the consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear power station. In addition, there are special old-age pension systems in **Estonia** for people who have worked in difficult conditions or in conditions harmful to health, and for representatives of certain professions (ballet dancers, aviation and marine workers, children's home teachers, textile workers), where it is assumed that their professional work ability reduces with age or disappears altogether, and prevents them from continuing in the same field or position. People who have worked in harmful or difficult working conditions or on certain professions are entitled to retire up to 10 years earlier than other workers, whereas this right is acquired regardless of their

actual state of health or working ability<sup>9</sup>.

Research has shown that people who entered these pension schemes (pensions under favourable conditions and superannuated pensions) during 2010-2012 in Estonia did not have poorer health compared to the average in the same age group (National Audit Office of Estonia 2014). For instance, in 2012 there were 14-25% of people (depending on the age group) permanently incapacitated for work among those who received pensions under favourable conditions and 10-24% among those receiving superannuated pensions compared to 17-31% among the respective age groups in general (National Audit Office of Estonia 2014). It was also shown that the share of people with disability is lower among people in the respective pension schemes compared to the general population (National Audit Office of Estonia 2014).

There is, however, one prerequisite for receiving the pension – such persons should not continue working in harmful or difficult conditions or in the field that entitled him or her to the right to receive superannuated pension. They have to leave the labour market or find a new job. Such special laws are also in force for various persons in civil service, providing them with early retirement options. Police officers, for example, have a right to early retirement at the age of 50 (Leetmaa, Võrk, and Kallaste 2004a). It has been criticised that people who have worked in the respective conditions often find it difficult to enter labour market again due to their very specific skills composition (National Audit Office of Estonia 2014). Thus, there is a need for a system of additional and retraining for these people (National Audit Office of Estonia 2014). The described pensions are in essence early retirement pensions, which allow people to withdraw from the labour market before the general retirement age. Unlike formal early-retirement pension, the described pensions include also other benefits, such as more generous calculation of pension qualification period or linking the amount of pension to an earlier wage. All these benefits may motivate persons to change profession or a job, or withdraw from the labour market. Even though the rules of pension under favourable conditions do not force anybody to leave the labour market, there is still the risk of inactivity evident in it. The pension is granted only if the person has stopped working in the industry, profession or position that entitled him or her to this pension. (Leetmaa, Võrk, and Kallaste 2004a)

## 2.4 Promoting Work after Retirement

In **Estonia**, it is reported, that it is also possible to defer retirement and for each month the pension is then increased by 0.9%, which is higher rate than actuarially fair. Despite a high bonus (0.9% per month) for delaying retirement, it is used rarely. In 2012, 2.0% of pensioners who entered into the old-age pension scheme, had used the option to delay retirement. The share has been low also in previous years, but one can see a small trend of increase – 0.95% in 2009, 1.0% in 2010, 1.4% in 2011, 2.0% in 2012.<sup>10</sup> There have been no studies on the reasons why the use of this option has been so low, and how this could influence the labour market participation.

Higher employment in older age is also motivated by relatively low size of old-age pensions

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<sup>9</sup> Regulated by Pension under Favourable Conditions Act and Superannuated Pension Act.

<sup>10</sup> Authors' own calculations based on annual reports „Pensioners“ by Estonian National Social Insurance Board

and possibility to receive simultaneous income from work in the Baltic countries. For instance, the at-risk-of-poverty rate among people aged 65 and over is relatively high in Lithuania (18.7%) and Estonia (17.2%) while it is lower than EU-28 average in Latvia (13.9%) in 2012 (Eurostat data). Also, Baltic states stand out with relatively high gender differences in this regard – female at-risk-of-poverty rate is higher in all countries. Gender differences are highest in Estonia with 8.9% points, while it is 7.4 and 7.9% points in Lithuania and Latvia respectively. The EU average gender differences are 4.3% points. At the same time, despite the motivation to remain in employment, it is also noted in the example of **Estonia**, that some people with a very low pension insurance component may lose motivation to do additional work, as they do not see any opportunities to receive higher old-age pension than the national pension (i.e. the minimum guaranteed pension level). The fixed level minimum income (at the rate of national pension) is guaranteed to those older people in Estonia, whose pensionable service period is very short or whose earnings levied with social tax have been very low throughout their career.

The need to provide sufficient household income is the main reason in all three Baltic countries for continued employment among people who receive pensions – 78% of people aged 50-69 in Estonia, 58% in Latvia and 47% in Lithuania keep working after retirement for this aim (based on 2012 ad-hoc module “Transition from work to retirement” for the Labour Force Survey, Eurostat). In Latvia and Lithuania, it is also more often shared with the aim to establish/increase future retirement pension entitlements (for 20% and 32% of respondents respectively). These are considerably above the EU average of 37%. All three Baltic countries report the lowest shares in the EU of non-financial reasons to continue employment (after Romania and Slovakia) with 8-9%. In the EU on average, almost a third of people who continue employment in retirement age, do so due to non-financial reasons.

As a crisis measure, in 2009 it was decided in **Lithuania** to reduce social insurance pensions (Lazutka 2013) in order to balance the budget of the SSIF. The reduction was entrenched in the Provisional Law on Recalculation and Payment of Social Benefits (“The Provisional Law on Recalculation and Payment of Social Benefits” 2009) effective in Lithuania during 2010-2011 (i.e. the initial level of pensions was restored since January 2012). The provisions of this law did not apply to persons receiving social insurance pensions below LTL 650. By virtue of this law, pensions to not employed retired persons were cut by 7.88% on average, whereas the employed persons at the retirement age received a pension that was cut by 24.58% on average (Ministry of Social Security and Labour 2011). In fiscal terms, it was one of budget-balancing measures, but it was stricter than in Europe on average (Aidukaite, Moskvina, and Skučienė 2014). Statistical data suggests that this approach had implications, although minor, for employment indicators of persons aged 65 and over.

Similar decisions were made in **Latvia** during the economic crisis. Old-age pensions were reduced by 10% and pensions of working pensioners by 70% (the amendments to the 2009 budget). The changes were introduced with a short notice and forced many retirement-age employees, who otherwise would continue working, out of their jobs, causing an extremely negative effect on the labour force participation of older people (immediate implications for the participation rate of older workers with a 42% reduction in the number of working pensioners from June 2009, being 60.8 thousand to July 2009 - 35 thousand) (Ministry of Welfare 2009).

In December 2009 the Constitutional Court acknowledged that the government's action was unconstitutional and that the reduction in benefits should be reversed. Following this judgment, pension deductions were cancelled from 1st February 2010 and the deductions made for the period from 1 July 2009 to 1 February 2010 were reimbursed in April 2010 (Vanags and Krumina 2012). But it was impossible for many pensioners to go back to their former employers or to find another job<sup>11</sup>.

In **Estonia**, in addition to the possibility to receive simultaneous income from work and pensions, working after pension age also ensures a higher pension in the future (even for a person who already receives pensions). The monetary effect depends on the relative monetary values of the insurance component and the base component. For example, each year of working with average wage (assuming that there are no contributions to the compulsory funded pension scheme) added 4.7 EUR to the monthly pension in 2013. As the base amount is indexed at more rapid pace, additional year of working contributes relatively less to pensions over time. Additional working year with average wage would add 1.5% to the average pension in 2013 and 1.4% in 2030.

## 2.5 Unemployment Policies and Employment Protection

### Labour market measures

There are mostly no special targeted active labour market measures to older workers in any of the Baltic countries. Instead, older workers are offered labour market measures within the general package of activation measures.

**Latvian** report brings out three active measures that were popular among older workers.

The '*work experience with a stipend*' programme (in place until the end of 2011) has been particularly popular among older individuals. The measure aimed to provide work and income support for those unemployed who no longer receive unemployment benefits, but are willing to engage in community jobs in municipalities, performing low-skilled non-commercial work such as cleaning, development and maintenance of public infrastructure and local social services. Within this programme, local authorities created new (mainly unskilled) jobs for unemployed people where they could work for up to six months and receive a stipend of LVL 100 (EUR 142) (Latvijas Lauksaimniecības and Meža Zinātņu Akadēmija 2011). In 2011 the amount of allowance was reduced to LVL 80 (EUR 114).

According to SEA data, 36% (19052 individuals) of all participants (total number of participants – 52821) of the programme in 2010 were individuals 50+, and 41% (20507 individuals) respectively in 2011 (the total number of participants being equal to 50628).

Despite high participation rates and overall very positive evaluation (Latvijas Lauksaimniecības and Meža Zinātņu Akadēmija 2011), the programme was also criticised in the media for bringing only short-term benefits, as it does not create permanent working places and programme participants are not socially insured.

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<sup>11</sup> Direct communication, Ministry of Welfare, 2014.

*The subsidised workplace programme* is another initiative provided by the SEA for older individuals. This initiative is considered to be particularly efficient in promoting older people employment as well as continued employment (after the end of the subsidy period). “The aim of the measure is to facilitate the development of sustainable and long-term working places for unemployed with lower productivity level and preserve their skills and competencies” (LR Labklajības Ministrija 2012). In this programme, private employers provide jobs subsidised by the SEA and offer them to unemployed people for a period up to 12 months. Those over 50 years of age were 31%, 32% and 36% of all beneficiaries of the programme in 2010 (the total number of participants - 2131), 2011 (the total number of participants - 1577) and 2012 respectively. The programme had a positive impact on continued employment, according to SEA data; around 26% of individuals of pre-retirement age after their participation in the programme were able to find a permanent job in 2011 (LR Labklajības Ministrija 2012). Around 74% of individuals of pre-retirement age who took part in this programme found a job within three months of it ending<sup>12</sup>.

‘*Training with employer*’ was also rather popular (LR Labklajības Ministrija 2012) – almost 20% of all participants of the measure both in 2010 (the total number of participants - 1129) and in 2011 (total number of participants - 1094 individuals) were people in the age group 50 and over. This measure provided the updating of professional skills and competences, while attending SEA provided training on the basis of employers’ pre-orders. The measure was offered starting from 2009 and is still in place up to the middle of 2015. There are no evaluation studies on the impact of this measure available.

Prior research in **Lithuania** has also identified more successful measures for older workers. According to Peer PES Paper (“Peer Review ‘PES and Older Workers.’” 2012), 13,600 individuals over 50 years of age participated in active labour market policy measures in 2011 (25.4% of total participants). In 2011, the monitoring of active measures for older workers showed that 6 months after the measure: 70% of them were employed after participation in subsidised employment, 47% - after vocational training, 20% - after public jobs (community work). Likewise, persons over 50 account for quite a big share of those starting activities under a business certificate: in 2013, they accounted for 22%<sup>13</sup> of the total number of unemployed persons who started employment under business certificates. It can be therefore concluded that more active participation of persons in this age group in the above-mentioned active measures could significantly improve their employability.

**Lithuania** has also provided some interesting examples of special activities/programmes aimed at activation of older age groups. A cooperation agreement was signed by the Lithuanian Labour Exchange (LLE) and Lithuanian Pensioner Affairs Council back in 2005. One of the results of this agreement is LLE’s initiative called the ‘Bank of Seniors’, which aims to provide information on potential employees to employers willing to hire older workers. Jobseekers at the retirement age can directly log in to the ‘Bank of Seniors’ database on the LLE’s

<sup>12</sup> Projektu un kvalitātes vadība, *NVA nodarbinātības pasākumu novērtējums* (Evaluation of SEA employment measures), Rīga, 2013; *NVA pakalpojumu darba devējiem novērtējums* (Evaluation of SEA services for employers), Rīga, 2012

<sup>13</sup> Lithuanian labour market 2012/02. 2014. LLE. <http://www.ldb.lt/Informacija/DarboRinka/Publikacijos/Attachments/2953/LIETUVOS%20DARBO%20RINKA%202014-02.pdf>

website. Employers have a direct access to the database. However, this CV base has not earned much attractiveness yet: from 2007- to 2012, about 4,000 pensioners were registered in the Bank of Seniors. In 2013, approximately 1,000 older jobseekers were registered at the Bank of Seniors (of whom nearly every fifth was over 60 years of age) (Mrazauskaitė 2013). For comparison, in 2013, there were 34,408 unemployed persons aged 55-64 registered with the LLE (“Lithuanian Labour Market in Figures 2013” 2013). Persons looking for low-skilled jobs (blue-collar worker, cleaner, auxiliary worker) appear to be dominant in the Bank of Seniors. According to employer surveys carried out by the LLE, 90% of employers cooperating with the LLE do not use the Bank of Seniors (“The Results from the Evaluation of the Services for the Employers. 2012 Survey Data”). Therefore, this measure can be said to be a low contribution to increasing employment of older persons.

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (MSSL)<sup>14</sup>, collaboration at regional level is being developed with Lithuanian Pensioners Union ‘Bočiai’ in the area of information, knowledge and experience exchange. In order to help older workers to maintain their jobs, to allow them to use LLE’s information technologies, consulting services and the labour market measures, in 2012 a cooperation agreement was signed between the LLE and the Lithuanian Association of the Elderly People (“Peer Review ‘PES and Older Workers’.” 2012). In implementing this agreement the LLE organises meeting with the heads of organisations, presents them services provided by the LLE (including “Bank of Seniors”)<sup>15</sup>.

The role of the European Social Fund should also be acknowledged in supporting various active labour market measures/programmes for older age groups. For example, in **Lithuania**, on 2 January 2014 the LLE started ESF-funded project ‘Stay in the labour market’ intended for the working-age population aged 50 and over and integration of long-term unemployed persons into the labour market. It is expected that almost 15,000 unemployed persons (more than 8,300 long-term unemployed persons and 6,300 persons aged 50+) will participate in project activities. Most of older project participants will be included in the measure of subsidised employment<sup>16</sup>. While implementing the project unemployed also participate in subsidised employment, support for acquisition of skills and job rotation measures.

In **Estonia**, ESF financing for labour market measures is implemented through the measure “Increasing the Availability of Qualified Labour Force”. ESF support under this measure is implemented through national level programmes and projects funded through calls of proposals that support return to the labour market of different labour market groups. During the EU financing period of 2007-2013, five rounds of calls for proposals have been held under the measures of “Increasing the Availability of Qualified Labour Force”. Three rounds have focused among other target groups also on supporting projects targeted specifically at older workers. Altogether 52 projects across Estonia have identified older people aged 50-74 as the (or one

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<sup>14</sup> Lietuvos Respublikos Socialinės apsaugos ir darbo ministerija. Nacionalinės gyventojų senėjimo pasekmių įveikimo 2005-2013 metų strategijos priemonių įgyvendinimo 2009-2010 metais ataskaita. 2011-04-15. Nr. (26.4 -35) – SD.) [http://www.lrv.lt/Posed\\_medz/2011/110427/12.pdf](http://www.lrv.lt/Posed_medz/2011/110427/12.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.ldb.lt/Informacija/Veikla/Naujienos/UserDisplayForm.aspx?ID=6884>

<sup>16</sup> [www.ldb.lt](http://www.ldb.lt)

of the) target group of their project<sup>17</sup>.

ESF support is also implemented through national level labour market programmes. For instance, the programme “Development of Labour Market Policy 2009-2013” (Ministry of Social Affairs 2009a) in Estonia foresees special activities targeted at supporting labour market entry and competitiveness for older age groups. The activities include research on older age groups in the labour market as well as attitudes of employers towards older workers, knowledge campaigns targeted to older age groups as well as employers to support active ageing and continuous policy development in the area.

### **Employment protection legislation**

In general, older workers seem to be covered by more strict rules in Latvia and Lithuania while Estonia has moved towards a more flexible model. Older workers have higher employment protection compared to younger people based on two main principles: higher employment protection to people who are in pre-retirement age (or reached retirement age) and higher employment protection to people with longer job tenure (based on the assumption that older people have more often longer job tenure). Though there is no evidence from research allowing to judge on the impact of this additional protection on employment opportunities of older workers, we may presume that this could act as disincentive for employers for hiring older workers.

**Estonia** does not have any special conditions for people in pre-retirement age. At the same time, **Lithuanian** employment legislation includes several special clauses, including the following:

- According to the Art. 130 of the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania (LC), employer is entitled to terminate an employment contract by giving a written notice to the employee against signature 2 months in advance (employees who will be entitled to the *full old-age pension in not more than 5 years*, persons under 18 years of age, disabled persons and employees raising children under 14 years of age *must be given a notice of dismissal from work at least 4 months in advance*);
- According to the Art. 129 of the LC, an employment contract with employees who will be entitled to the *full old-age pension in not more than 5 years*, persons under 18 years of age, disabled persons and employees raising children under 14 years of age *may be terminated only in exclusive cases* where the retention of an employee would substantially violate the interests of the employer;
- Article 135 of the LC enshrines the right of *priority to retain the job in case of redundancy*. According to this Article, in the event of reduction in the number of employees on economic or technological grounds or due to the restructuring of the workplace, the right of priority to retain the job shall be enjoyed *inter alia* by employees who will be *entitled to the old age pension in not more than three years*;
- According to the Art. 127 and 140 of the LC upon the termination of an employment contract without any fault on the part of the employee concerned, *in any case he shall be paid*

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<sup>17</sup> For further information, these projects are listed in: [http://esf2007.sm.ee/index.php?id=186&theme\\_id=14&county\\_id=0&target\\_id=12](http://esf2007.sm.ee/index.php?id=186&theme_id=14&county_id=0&target_id=12)

*a severance pay in the amount of his two monthly average wages if employee became entitled to the full old-age pension working in that enterprise, establishment or organisation.*

In **Latvia**, in case of a formal lay-off procedure, preference to continue in employment is given to those employees who have higher performance results and qualifications. If performance does not substantially differ, the Labour Law determines priority groups of employees to be kept in work in case of redundancies. Older employees for whom less than five years remains to retirement age are one of this predefined priority groups (along with nine other categories of employees).

In all three countries, job tenure provides additional protection in cases of layoffs and termination of employment contract. In the example of **Estonia**, Labour Force Survey indicates that in the age group of 50-74, almost half of people (49%) have a job tenure of 10 or more years compared to 24% among people aged 25-49. Thus, older workers have more often longer job tenure and special conditions based on job tenure also increase labour market protection for older age groups.

With the labour law reform in 2009 in **Estonia**, the protection of workers in the labour market moved towards more flexibility. The EPL in general took a considerable leap towards the high-flexibility model. According to its most recent calculations, OECD considers Estonia among the countries with highly flexible EPL (after New Zealand, United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Chile and Australia) (OECD 2013).

Against this background, the protection of workers in the labour market based on their job tenure has moved towards more flexibility as well. For instance, length of notice periods has been reduced by one month in case of individual dismissals (1.5 months for people with job tenure of up to 1 year). Since 2009, severance pay for employers is no longer dependent on job tenure, meaning that the expenses for dismissal of employees with longer job tenure has become cheaper for employers reducing by 1 – 3 month average salary, depending on the length of job tenure. Also, until 2008, people with longer job tenure had a preferential right to keep a job during layoffs in certain cases. These preferential rights have not been included in the new Employment Contracts Act.

As at March 2014, people with longer job tenure hold slightly higher protection in the labour market regarding advance notice periods in cases of dismissals. Different levels of employment protection can be brought out for people with up to 1 year (advance notice period at least 15 calendar days), 1-5 years (notice period of at least 30 calendar days), 5-10 years (at least 60 calendar days), and 10 or more years (at least 90 calendar days). In addition, severance pay varies according to job tenure, although this variation is covered by Unemployment Insurance Fund, not the employers.

In **Lithuania** and **Latvia**, longer job tenure ensures mostly higher redundancy benefits. According to the Art. 140 of the LC in **Lithuania**, upon the termination of the employment contract on the initiative of an employer without any fault on the part of an employee, the dismissed employee shall be paid a severance pay in the amount of his average monthly wage *taking into account the continuous length of service of the employee concerned* at that workplace. Severance pay vary from 1 average monthly wage in case the length of service is less than 1

year up to 6 average monthly wages in case the length of service is more than 20 years. In **Latvia**, Labour Law determines that the amount of redundancy compensation increases with the length of tenure (redundancy compensation is equal to one month average earnings if the employee has been employed by the relevant employer for less than five years; two months average earnings - for five to 10 years; three months average earnings - for 10 to 20 years; four months average earnings - for more than 20 years)<sup>18</sup>.

In order to increase labour market protection even further, **Latvia** has reported cases when retirement age employees volunteer to be part of collective redundancies if they are trade union members, as they tend to receive higher redundancy settlements as part of their collective agreement<sup>19</sup>.

On the contrary, labour market protection was reduced slightly for older workers temporarily in **Lithuania** during the economic recession. Temporary changes of the LC were applied in Lithuania during the crisis – during August 2009-December 2010 shorter periods of notice (accordingly – 1 and 2 month instead of above mentioned 2 and 4) were allowed in case it was agreed in collective agreement. Moreover during this period collective agreement might stipulate restriction to terminate employment contract (except exclusive cases) with employees who will be entitled to the full old-age pension in not more than 3 years (instead of 5 years).

Both **Latvia** and **Lithuania** report that despite the relative strict regulations, employers try to avoid these conditions in practice. As social dialogue is underdeveloped in Lithuania, employees are often unable to defend their rights or, what is even worse, they do not know their rights. The fact that people often do not know their rights and thus labour law requirements are not followed, has been confirmed in a research on the implementation of Employment Contracts Act in **Estonia** (Masso et al. 2013). Both Latvia and Lithuania have reported cases where employment contracts were terminated “by agreement between the parties” or people left the job “voluntarily”, i.e. without the aforementioned notice periods and/or severance pays, see for instance Gruzevskis and Blaziene (2013), Kamerade (2012).

**Latvia** still reports laws that limit the opportunities available to older employees, setting the legal age limits for individuals working in specific sectors or professions i.e. civil servants, as well as judges, prosecutors, police officers, border guards (The Civil Service Law, the Office of the Prosecutor Law and the Military Service Law). Civil servant after reaching the retirement age loses the status of civil servant, and his/her work unless there is a special permission (issued by the director of the organisation or the ministry) for them to continue work. Age limits have been also applied to<sup>20</sup> the Law on Institutions of Higher Education until 2003 when the Constitutional Court has recognized these restrictions illegitimate (Kamerade 2012). Similar provisions were declared invalid in **Estonia** in 2007. In 2007 the Estonian Supreme Court declared invalid the articles of the Public Service Act that legally permitted the dismissal of public sector employees aged over 65 years, merely on the basis of their age. Moreover, if the

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<sup>18</sup> These compensations are paid by the employer.

<sup>19</sup> Direct communication, Free Trade Union Confederation, 2014.

<sup>20</sup> The age limits (up to 65 years old) were applied to administrative positions and academic positions in the state research institutions and organisations, as well as positions in elected collegiate scientific institutions, to university professors, assistant professors and administrative positions (rector, vice-rector, dean)

dismissed employee had an employment history of more than five years, the compensation for dismissal based on the employee's age was smaller than that of regular redundancies. Similar articles of the Employment Contracts Act affecting private sector employees were changed a year earlier, in 2006 (see also Nurmela and Karu (2007)).

## 2.6 Health Protection and Promotion, Prevention of Disability

In **Estonia**, an important role in the move from labour market to retirement is played by work incapacity pensions. To illustrate, in the beginning of 2013, about 16% of men aged 55 to official retirement age received various types of old-age pensions, and 26% received work-incapacity pensions. Among women, the share of old-age pensioners is slightly higher (22%) and share of work-incapacity pensions lower (24%). In the last decade the inflow into the pension system through work-incapacity pension scheme was influenced by the recent economic crisis. In the structure of new pensioners the share of people retiring via work-incapacity pensioners peaked in 2011-2012, when it reached 50% of total new pensioners.

Incapacity for work pension (or shortly incapacity pension or invalidity pension), either on the grounds of an illness or injury, is one of the major reasons for inactivity in Estonia among people aged 45 to pension age. Since the beginning of the 1990s the number of persons receiving a disability pension (until 2000) and that of persons receiving pension for incapacity for work (since 2001) has grown rapidly both in absolute figures and as a share from the population.<sup>21</sup>

The growing number of persons receiving a disability pension (incapacity pension) could have many explanations: general deterioration of health in the population, increased awareness of impairments among employees and medical staff, larger share of people applying for disability pension because of increased unemployment.

The attractiveness of the disability pension has been also large, because it is bigger than unemployment assistance benefits.

In Estonia, receiving an incapacity pension does not exclude working at the same time. On the one hand, this kind of situation promotes employment; on the other hand, it motivates some people to apply for incapacity pension even without any prerequisite health conditions.

The government is preparing an incapacity for work reform that should be implemented from July 2015. Compared to current system, the plan is to move away from evaluation of incapacity, and instead assess an individual's capacity to work on the basis of not only health, but also taking into account suitable conditions of employment and a reasonable job. According to the new system, benefit eligibility rules will be changed so that people with a partial capacity for work will be eligible for benefit, only if they are employed, unemployed and actively seeking a suitable job or participating in active employment services, or take part in formal education. The aim is to support employment among people with partial incapacity for work and reduce

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<sup>21</sup> Various legislative changes from 1991, 1993 and 2000 do not allow the values to be compared directly. The main change in 2000 was that the incapacity pension may be granted only to people in their working age. For a more detailed overview on the legislative changes see the overview in Leppik 2003.

the share of people receiving disability pensions.

The reform also foresees changes in the social and vocational rehabilitation services to provide further help and assistance to employers in improving and adapting the work environment and working conditions. It is hoped these measures will support reactivation and employment opportunities. The Ministry of Social Affairs foresees that the reform should take the number of people on disability pensions down to 80,000 by 2020. In 2012 the number stood around 95,000 and it has increased continuously (National Audit Office of Estonia 2014). Whether these aims will be filled, remains to be seen in the future.

In the current situation, there are some preconditions created by the Estonian labour policy and social policy for increasing the employment of disabled people. Firstly, people receiving an incapacity pension can also receive employment services and, for example, be employed with the help of the subsidy to employer for employing a less competitive person. Secondly, the state alleviates the tax burden of those incapacity pensioners who work, by paying the social tax on an annually specified amount.

In addition, disabled people can receive special social benefits (in addition to incapacity pension), the aim of which is to help them cover the extra expenses arising from their special needs. Such extra expenses are primarily expenses related to education, going to work, rehabilitation, care, use of special aids, transport, and other services. Some social benefits, such as education allowance, rehabilitation allowance, and further training allowance, are more specifically aimed at promoting the integration of disabled persons into the labour market. According to the Social Welfare Act, the local governments offer disabled people counselling, rehabilitation, housing services; personal assistant, welfare and other social services, which support independent living, improve the quality of life and support social integration. In addition, state aid includes among other things the funding for the rehabilitation of people with mental disorders, support to services connected with living and working, and to providing technical aids, which are all indirect measures facilitating employment. However, it is important to note that the choice and availability of services depends greatly on the priorities and means of a specific local government, and can therefore vary. (Leetmaa, Vörk, and Kallaste 2004a)

Also, the current reform plan has received criticism from various parties. For instance, representative organisations of people with disabilities held a picket in front of the parliament building on 17 June 2014 criticising the poor employment opportunities available for them – these are not ensured by the current reform (ERR 2014). In addition, experts have criticised the lack of a comprehensive approach to the reform and lack of coordination between various public bodies involved in the process, lack of measures to prevent job loss for people with health problems and reduction in employability (Veldre 2014).

### **Occupational health in the labour market**

Occupational health and safety are subject to different regulations and restrictions in all Baltic countries. The following chapter aims to bring out some examples of activities that have a potentially positive impact on older workers in the labour market.

One of the activities of the State Labour Inspectorate (SLI) in **Lithuania** is the initiative to develop economic means to encourage employers seek a reduction in the number of accidents

at work and occupational diseases. Amendments to the Law on Social Insurance for Occupational Accidents and Diseases were introduced in 2008. Amendments provided for the differentiation of the amount of insurance contributions paid by the insurer, depending on the number of accidents at work. Furthermore, it refers to the methodology of ascribing insurers to the groups of rates of social insurance contributions of accidents at work and occupational diseases, adopted by the GRL<sup>22</sup>. Seeking to reduce the number of accidents at work caused by inebriated workers, it has been laid down that a person representing an employer in an undertaking might permanently dismiss from work a worker who fails to comply with occupational safety and health requirements.<sup>23</sup>

In **Estonia**, the planned occupational accidents and illness insurance scheme could potentially support healthy ageing at the workplace. A tripartite agreement between the government, employers and trade unions that foresaw the creation of occupational accidents and illness insurance scheme was concluded already in 1993, but since the parties have not been able to reach an agreement, it is still up in the air (for previous debates see Karu and Nurmela 2009; Osila 2011). Employers have pointed out that they will not agree to the scheme due to already high tax burden and because it would increase their expenses even further (Karu and Nurmela 2009). They have however brought out that they would consider the scheme in case social tax is reduced to an equal extent so that employers would not face an increase in their expenses (Karu and Nurmela 2009).

For several years, fringe benefit tax on employers' expenses to improve employees' health has been the subject of heated discussions in **Estonia**. While both, employers and trade union representatives have supported the abolishment of the tax (Kallaste 2007; Osila and Turk 2011), the state has opposed it (Tamm 2010). The state argues that the abolishment of the tax is not in accordance with its expected effect as it would decrease social tax revenues and thereby have a negative effect on the health and pension insurance financing (Tamm 2010).

**Estonian** employer representatives have also brought out the need to review the sickness cash benefit system that was implemented in July 2009. At the time, the aim was to improve Estonia's budgetary position by reducing public spending in order to fulfil the Maastricht criteria and adopt euro (Osila and Nurmela 2010). The new system increased the number of days not covered by the sickness benefit from two to three days, the rate of the benefit was reduced from 80% to 70% of the average wage of the employee and first five paid days of the illness will be financed by the employer (after that by the Health Insurance Fund). The government has argued that one of the aims of the new system was to motivate employees to more seriously take care of their health and employers to improve their work environment so that employees fall ill less frequently (Osila and Nurmela 2010). However, the new system has been criticised by employers who found that this will shift the responsibility and expenses from the state to employees and employers (Osila and Nurmela 2010). Other organisations have also criticised the benefit system - the Estonian Patient Advocacy Association expressed their fear

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<sup>22</sup> Resolution No 1368 (20 12 2005)

<sup>23</sup> Sixth report on implementation of the European Social Charter (Revised) (2008). Reporting Period: From 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2007. Council of Europe. 22/12/08 RAP/RCha/. LI/VI(2008)  
[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/reporting/statereports/Lithuania6\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/socialcharter/reporting/statereports/Lithuania6_en.pdf)

that under the new system, persons, especially with low income would not stay sick at home, but would still work in order to not suffer any loss in pay (Osila and Nurmela 2010). According to available statistics, the number of sick leaves has dramatically decreased after the system was changed from 283,000 in the first half-year of 2007 to 146,000 in the first half-year of 2011 (Niitra 2011). However, the available statistics does not include information on all sick leaves as many employers do not send the information on sick leaves that last up to 8 days and are now financed by employers to Estonian Health Insurance Fund. According to a poll conducted by Estonian recruitment service provider CV Keskus in January 2013, 86% of employees go to work while ill because they do not want to lose in pay (Velsker 2013).

As a positive development that could encourage working in older age in **Estonia**, a Supreme Court decision reduced discrimination faced by older workers based on their health in the labour market. In 2011 the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional provisions of the Health Insurance Act according to which persons older than 65 years had the right to shorter sickness benefit compared to younger persons (250 days compared to 90 days) and lower limit on consecutive days of sickness leave (182 days compared to 60 consecutive calendar days) (see also Leetmaa and Nurmela 2012).

ESF financing also has an important role to play in supporting active ageing, healthy workplaces and increasing healthy life years in the society. In Estonia, during 2007-2013, two ESF measures supported these aims: measure 1.3.2 “Improving the Quality of Working Life” and measure 1.3.4 “Health awareness”. Below, some of the highlights of these measures are outlined regarding supporting healthy working environment.

Under the measure “Improving the Quality of Working Life” activities are implemented as a national measure and as projects funded through calls of proposals. The activities focus on health of workers, but also employment relationships, flexible working opportunities etc. The projects funded under this measure have mainly focused on assessing and improving the working environment in individual companies. Under the national programme, more widespread activities are implemented. For instance, several knowledge campaigns have been conducted regarding health risks at work, including prevention of falls (2009), guidance and training of employees regarding occupational safety (2009), raising awareness among employers and employees regarding their rights, healthy and safe working conditions (2012), working environment management in companies (2012), campaign on psychosocial risks at workplace (2012) (see also Ministry of Social Affairs 2010; Ministry of Social Affairs 2009b).

An interesting example implemented under the ESF financed national programme is also collection and dissemination of best practices regarding the work environment. With the financial support of ESF, Labour Inspectorate collects descriptions of good and innovative examples from Estonian enterprises regarding their measures of work environment and work organisation. The examples represent cases where companies have contributed more to their employees' welfare than is required by legislation. During the ESF financing period, Labour Inspectorate has developed a template for the collection of good practice and has created a database

of best practice<sup>24</sup> which have been subject for continuous development. According to the Labour Inspectorate, they have received feedback that people active in work environment topics regularly follow the database and have found several interesting ideas. Also, the visiting statistics of the web site of Labour Inspectorate confirms that the database is among the highest visited sites on their page. In 2013 the aim was to reach 185 good examples in the database (by the end of 2012 the database included 165 examples). In addition to the database, since 2010 three best practices are chosen annually to provide special recognition. (see also Ministry of Social Affairs 2009b; Ministry of Social Affairs 2010)

The ESF financed measure “Health Awareness” focuses on reducing inactivity in the labour market due to health reasons and prevention of health problems in the society. The activities under this measure are also implemented as a national measure and as projects funded through calls of proposals. The projects are mostly initiatives of different local governments to assess the health situation at the local level and plan measures accordingly (mostly financing different sporting events for the local community). Some of the examples implemented under the national programme include management and development of the Network for Workplace Health Promotion<sup>25</sup>. The network was started already in 2005, since 2006 its activities are coordinated by the National Institute for Health Development. With the ESF support, the network is widened with new members. Also, members receive opportunities to participate in training and receive counselling regarding workplace health promotion. As at 4 June 2014, the network had 222 members (different enterprises, organisations).

## 2.7 Other Policy Approaches

### Lifelong learning measures

In **Estonia**, a new lifelong learning strategy has been introduced recently, which turns attention to both economic gains and personal development through participation in lifelong learning. The general aim of the strategy is to “provide learning opportunities that are in accordance of the needs and abilities of all Estonian people during their whole life course and to ensure possibilities for self-realisation in the society and in family and personal life” (Ministry of Education and Research 2014). Thus, at least in rhetoric, there has been a shift towards acknowledging the life-course perspective and the need to address all age groups in the society. It has been stressed that “learning should become an integral part of an active way of life, including among older age groups” (Ministry of Education and Research 2014). The aim is to ensure flexible opportunities and versatile choice in learning, i.e. provide conditions that support participation in learning for those groups who have not been participating in learning so far (Ministry of Education and Research 2014). Also, career counselling should support making informed decisions in learning, avoiding usual gender and age stereotypes (Ministry of Education and Research 2014). However, as at April 2014, the action plan for implementing the strategy has not yet been introduced so specific activities to achieve the above mentioned

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<sup>24</sup> As at June 2014, best practice database is available on the website of Labour Inspectorate: <http://www.ti.ee/index.php?page=1128&>

<sup>25</sup> Web-site of the Network is available at: <http://www.terviseinfo.ee/et/tervise-edendamine/tookohal/tervist-edendavate-tookohtade-tet-vorgustik>

goals have not been introduced yet.

In addition, “Active ageing strategy 2013-2020” was introduced in 2013 in **Estonia**, which also addresses participation in lifelong learning among older age groups. According to the strategy, the aim is to address attitudes towards learning among older age groups and their knowledge on available learning opportunities (Ministry of Social Affairs 2013). Also, the strategy takes the aim to improve opportunities for learning among older age groups, including providing innovative solutions to support learning, raise awareness among teachers and trainers on the specific needs of the older age groups, improve cooperation between different parties to create suitable opportunities for learning among older age groups, widening the lifelong learning target group to older age groups and providing learning opportunities related to social welfare and activeness in the community (rather than only labour market related training) (Ministry of Social Affairs 2013). However, again there is no clear action plan or timetable introduced to reach the aims introduced in the strategy.

At the same time, the impact of the **Lithuanian** lifelong learning strategy on older age groups is assessed relatively low. Implemented since 2004, the *Strategy for Ensuring Lifelong Learning (2004)* seems to have had no influence on the participation of this age group in LLL (“Applied Research on Adult Education” 2011). This opinion is supported by the president of Lithuanian Adult Education Association, Vilija Lukošūnienė<sup>26</sup>, who notes that the objectives addressing integration of older people into lifelong learning activities that are set in strategic documents (*Strategy for Combating the Consequences of the Population Ageing 2005-13; Programme for Employment Increase 2014–20*) are rather declarative in general and often not supported by any financial mechanisms. In addition, from the point of view of the experts (Lukošūnienė, Totoraitis<sup>27</sup>), the group of older people is not strictly defined in the context of lifelong learning policy.

A national audit of 2013 (National Audit Office of Lithuania 2013) in **Lithuania** revealed that financial injections to non-formal adult education increases the supply of this type of education but does not ensure inclusion of the groups of the population for whom such education brings most benefits (including older people (55-74)), whereas the share of adult learners remains to be relatively small in Lithuania (about 5% in 2007–12). Currently, non-formal adult education is organised and coordinated without having priority trends setting out main guidelines, financing priorities and principles, while funding is allocated without having identified the training needs<sup>28</sup>. About 96% of non-formal adult education funds are allocated for non-formal vocational training of adults (National Audit Office of Lithuania 2013).

A good example of targeting older age groups is highlighted in **Latvia**. Evaluating measures that specifically target older age group or target this group among other vulnerable groups, *Lifelong learning measure for employed persons* (a preventive measure) was the one to be

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<sup>26</sup> Interview with Mrs. Vilija Lukošūnienė, President of Lithuanian Adult Education Association, performed on 15 04 2014.

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Mr. Ričardas Totoraitis, the head of the Academic Mobility and Continuing Education Division of the Department of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Education and Science, conducted on 24 04 2014

<sup>28</sup> Giedrė Švedienė (Auditor General) Press release. Jul 9, 2013; <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OI3vTajDO6k>

definitely mentioned (in place from 2010 till the end of 2013). The purpose of this measure is to ensure the opportunity for employed persons to supplement and develop knowledge and skills necessary for work, by acquiring vocational in-service training and informal educational programmes related to working life<sup>29</sup>. This measure can be considered to be extremely important, raising the competitiveness and productivity of the employed individuals. Persons that have less than 5 years left till the retirement age were within privileged groups, receiving 100% SEA financial support for the training (max 355 EUR). Other groups had to make co-financing of 30% of the training costs. In the beginning of 2012 – 10% of all LLP participants were individuals 55 and over.

A good practice implemented in the area of non-formal education has been identified in **Lithuania**. The National program on European active aging and intergenerational solidarity 2012 (Ministry of Labour and Social Research 2012) stated that non-formal adult education institutions are considerably contributing to the education of the elderly; the potential of Universities of the Third Age (UTA) are to be strengthened. UTA activities have been identified in the national audit report of 2013 as a good practice of including older people into non-formal adult education (National Audit Office of Lithuania 2013). At the end of 2012, the total number of UTA students was around 6,000 in Lithuania (almost double the number in 2008). Women aged 60-75 with at least vocational education attained account for most of UTA students (“Social Information and Training Agency. Analysis on the Third Age Universities System’s Performance.” 2012). On national adult education policy level, UTA activities are considered to be the main education and training measure for older people. Development of non-formal education services and creating new learning opportunities to third-age learners is foreseen within the framework of the currently implemented national project “Development of the adult education system by providing generic competences to learners”<sup>30</sup> (carried out by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Education Development Centre). The projected and implemented activities for older people are also mainly related to UTA<sup>31</sup>.

It is interesting that the growing number of UTA students is in part inconsistent with statistics on the motivation of older people to participate in learning: according to the Eurostat’s data, 95.2% of non-participants in lifelong learning in age group 55-64 indicated that they do not want to participate in education and training. Lukosuniene explains this contrast by assuming that when asked about their willingness to participate in education and training older people tend to answer negatively because they often identify this with returning back to the formal education system, whilst motivation of UTA students is usually based on the willingness to improve, broaden their horizons and have pleasant communication with new people, i.e., reasons not related to the participation in the labour market (“Social Information and Training Agency. Analysis on the Third Age Universities System’s Performance.” 2012). This leads to the conclusion that older people are more willing to participate in non-formal training sessions focused on personal development rather than in education and training related to improvement

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<sup>29</sup> The participants can choose their own field of training from predefined ones. In reality the choice is almost unrestricted (very broad categories).

<sup>30</sup> Project webpage: <http://www.suaugusiujusvietimas.lt/lt/apie-projekta/apie-projekta/>

<sup>31</sup> Interview with Ms. Jūratė Tamošaitytė, Project manager at Education Development Centre, conducted on 16 04 2014.

of professional competencies. And UTA activities contribute to older people's learning longer, not to working longer.

Various financing programmes play an important role in financing lifelong learning opportunities for older adults.

The assessment of EU structural funding in 2007-13 in the area of lifelong learning in **Lithuania**, carried out in 2014 (PPMI Group 2014), has shown that the majority funds were allocated for the training of high-skilled employees, unemployed persons and those facing redundancy in the area of public services. Quite significant support was allocated for companies to promote their investment into employee training. However, companies also invested most into the continued training of highly skilled employees. Training of unskilled and low-skilled workers who represent more than half of total labour force in the country has been insufficiently emphasised so far. Therefore, in the period between 2014 and 2020 such workers are to be offered financial incentives to assess their competencies and complete general education or vocational training programmes. In addition, it is planned to provide opportunities for older people to attain the first higher education and for seniors – to study at universities of the third age.

For instance, the Nordplus programme – the Nordic Council of Ministers' programme in the area of lifelong learning provide financing for institutions involved in lifelong learning and folk high schools through their Nordplus Adult programme. The project database<sup>32</sup> brings out some interesting examples of projects targeted at older age groups in the Baltic countries.

Project: Late Life Learning - Discovering the Pathways for Cooperative Partnerships. The project is implemented during June 2015 – May 2015. Partners include Utena Third Age University (Lithuania), Utena A. and M. Miskiniai Public Library (Lithuania), Pärnu Central Library (Estonia), Campus Lidköping Adult Education School (Sweden), Riga Central Library (Latvia), Public Library of Lidköping (Sweden) and Lidköping Municipality, Community Care Services Department, Senior Center (Sweden). This project will unite trainers from 4 Nordic/Baltic countries around a common idea of late life learning, accelerate their learning, cooperation and experience exchange. The aim of the project is to improve project partner institutions' potential in the older adults training through strengthening inter-institutional partnerships, sharing experiences, and exchanging ideas. In order to fulfil this goal, partner institutions will offer exchange opportunities for groups of seniors' trainers. They will have an opportunity to get acquainted with different approaches applied in partner countries.

Project: Libraries for Information access for elder people. The project is implemented during September 2012 – May 2014. Partners include Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania (Lithuania), Tallinn University (Estonia), Latvian Adult Education Association (LAEA) (Latvia), Kobenhavns Universitet Institut for Engelsk, Germansk og Romansk (Denmark), UAB LearnKey (Latvia). The goal of the project is to create online interactive, multimedia based training module for elder people to improve their ICT skills for better usage of e-services that are provided by the libraries. This training module with specific topics for elder people will be

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<sup>32</sup> Project database available at: <http://www.nordplusonline.org/eng/Projects2/Project-database>

accessible on the internet platform, integrated into public libraries web pages, and disseminated via public libraries.

Also, the Grundtvig programme finances the voluntary service for people aged 50+ to support citizen activity in the age group (Grundtvig Initiative on Volunteering in Europe for Seniors).

During 2010 – 2013 8 projects for senior volunteering exchange have been financed in **Estonia**. In **Lithuania**, the programme has been implemented since 2009. Within the framework of these projects in Lithuania, seniors have volunteered in ten countries: Bulgaria, the United Kingdom, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania, Turkey and Germany. The majority of the Grundtvig projects have been implemented in the area of social support for people and societies. There have been training and cultural events held in this context<sup>33</sup>.

Activities of **Lithuanian** Caritas are also focused on senior volunteering in the social sphere (training and seminars on opportunities for volunteers: trainings have been attended by more than 300 persons learning the principles of social work and sharing their volunteering experience).<sup>34</sup>

In **Latvia**, a project “Get Connected, Latvia” (introduced in 2008) has been outlined. This is a unique project to reduce the digital divide implemented in cooperation between the Latvian government and Lattelecom (Internet service provider and Telecommunications Company in Latvia). The initiative provided free computer courses available for anyone interested aged 50 and over. According to Lattelecom data, 1500 individuals aged 50+ participated in the activity in 2008. During the next year participation number increased more than four times, being 6680 participants in 2009.

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<sup>33</sup> <http://www.paf.lt/main.php/id/281/lang/1>

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.caritas.lt/index.php?id=new&new=21>

### 3. Extending Working Lives and Lifelong Learning: Selected Innovative and Sustainable Approaches

To find best examples of practices that are aimed at extending working lives in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, different sources of information were examined such as different survey data (e.g. employer surveys, population surveys providing insights to age management at company level, data on collective agreements if available and relevant). Also such qualitative data sources as (available, published) company case studies, qualitative research results, examples from media reports, collective agreements etc were reviewed.

#### Supply side of labour

##### Health promotion

To support employees health and guide employees to healthier lifestyle **Skype in Estonia** offers (free meals; services of massage therapists; financial support to promote regular exercising and physical activity; life, accident and illness insurance; the companys office is located near health trails and is equipped with washing facilities; its office is equipped with different games, TV, magazines and books to ease work-related stress; employees can bring their kids and dogs to the workplace. **Deloitte in Estonia** offers similar package (with some variations e.g. in addition to some of the mentioned measures, free vaccination against flu; active participation of different sports events; longer vacation for employees with longer tenure. While **Komas Estonia OÜ; Sillamäe Sadam AS; Eesti Energia Tehnoloogiatööstus** have created health cabinets in their premises providing employees with necessary health assistance at workplace to save their and companys' time and financial resources. Some Estonian companies **OÜ MISS-L** and **PVMP-EX OÜ** are specifically focused on providing exercising during breaks. Similar measures have been implemented in Lithuania, **Lithuanian Railways** „Lietuvos geležinkeliai“ implemented health programme for office staff including physical exercise breaks together with consultation opportunities with sport and nutrition specialists. Also, **NGO "Positive health team"** in Lithuania, has implemented a project to promote physical activity in the workplace in different enterprises. Another company in Estonia **Viiratsi Saeveski AS** covered the floors with rubber mats to reduce vibration, which is one known work environment hazard that could lead to occupational illness.

##### Training

**University of the Third Age (Väärikate Ülikool)** in Estonia provides lectures and seminars to persons aged 50+ where different educative practical and theoretical issues are studied. Different enterprises and NGOs in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania such as **NGO Second Chance (MTÜ Teine Võimalus); NGO Support and Schooling Center Trust (MTÜ Tugi- ja Koolituskeskus Usaldus)** in Estonia; **Lattelecom** in Latvia and **Lithuanian Union of the Pensioners' Bociai** ", **NGO Volunteer nature of work and Baltic Education Technology Institute / BETI** in Lithuania also offer or have offered different trainings to older people (employed, unemployed) to improve their skills and increase their competitiveness. In some companies (**Eesti Energia** in Estonia; **Elis Electric** in Lithuania) provide in-house training where young and unexperienced workers will have on-site work training under older and much experienced workers.

## Intergenerational Solidarity

**Best Agers Lighthouses project** in Lithuania brought together different generations with initiatives to promote employees health in all age groups as well as discussions regarding the prospects of older workers. In Latvia **Best Agers project** organised seminars for seniors (aged 55+) to provide older people with pedagogical skills and methods of cooperation in order to promote mutual understanding between generations and transfer of relevant knowledge to students and young entrepreneurs. Also, in Latvia — **Connect Latvia** is developing a senior advisor network, consisting of approximately 30 (50+) experts, who voluntarily provide counselling sessions (up to three) for the interested companies, organizations, start-up companies and inventors. **Eesti Energia** in Estonia offers mentorship programme wherein older and experienced workers are mentors for their younger colleagues who have moved up in their career ladder (this helps to keep and share the valuable knowledge in the enterprise).

## Motivation

**Viking Window AS** in Estonia offers seniority premium which is paid to employee whose length of service is at least 5 years. Similar practice can be found in Latvia, where retail company **RIMI** offers financial benefits for longer tenure. In addition to standard package of the medical insurance, employees with long tenure receive supplementary dentist insurance and medication allowance.

## Flexible working time arrangements

As older workers capacity to work decreases with age, several companies have offered them flexible working- time arrangements. **Eesti Energia** in Estonia uses shared jobs principle by offering shorter flexible (part-time) work to older workers and recruiting trainees. This enabled to utilise older workers work experience and help trainees to settle in better. In Latvia, retail giant **RIMI** allows its employees to choose the intensity of their work (how many hours to work per week) themselves. Similarly, in Lithuania, **Elis Electric** offers flexible work organisation to its (pre) retirement age employees (mostly flexible working time arrangements).

## General employability

In Lithuania, **Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund (Verslumo skatinimo fondas)** offers credit combined with the start-up business training and counseling, as well as assistance in the development and implementation of business plans to different labour market risk groups (including people older than 50).

## Employment protection

**Eesti Energia** in Estonia provides a small income to those who have or are facing redundancy and who have 5 or less years until retirement and who do not find new jobs until their retirement age.

## Demand side of labour

### Recruitment

In Latvia several initiatives aiming to improve older people employment can be witnessed. The **Ministry of Welfare** organized an event-competition where senior-friendly companies were

awarded. Companies were evaluated on following criteria: suitable working environment for the elderly, the involvement of seniors in company's processes, etc. **RASA The Alliance of Active Seniors** in Riga has implemented Vecmāmiņu kontaktbirža – social grandmas for rent (“Grandmothers contact exchange”) initiative to involve seniors in the labour market. While another social enterprise **LUDE** producing rugs in Latvia employs senior citizens to tackle social challenges such as poor life quality of pensioners and seniors inability to find job due to health issues. Due to similar reasons a social business in Latvia named **MAMMU hangers** has been implemented where seniors living on the countryside provide the business with clothes hangers made from natural wood. Also in Latvia, **JSC Grindex**, the leading pharmaceutical company in the Baltic states employs pension-aged people (around 10% of total employees) as mentors for younger staff and representatives of the company and also cooperate with Latvian Pensioners' Federation to promote active lifestyle and provide useful information about medication and health issues.

### 3.1 Good practices on the supply side of labour

#### Good Practice 1

##### Viiratsi Saeveski AS

##### Country

Estonia

##### Title/ name of the initiative

Reducing the impact of vibration

##### Actor

Viiratsi Saeveski AS, main activity production of sawn timber, NACE 16101  
Financer

##### Status of the initiative

In practice

##### Reasons for the initiative

Vibration of the floor occurred in some workplaces in wood processing technology line. Vibration is one known work environment hazard that could lead to occupational illness.

##### Description of the initiative/idea/proposal

To reduce the impact of the vibration, the company decided to cover the floor with rubber mats produced from old car tires.

##### Target group of the initiative

All employees in all age groups; around 60 (data from 2010)  
<http://www.aripaev.ee/default.aspx?publicationid=31503ED6-39D4-4163-9D98-74AA1E3959CE&code=75006>

##### Impact

Employees are no longer exposed to vibration when working. Employees' feedback has been extremely positive. They have expressed that the difference is noticeable when being in the area covered with rubber mats compared to the walking surface next to the line.

##### List of sources used

[http://www.ti.ee/public/files/214\\_Viiratsi\\_Saeveski\\_AS.pdf](http://www.ti.ee/public/files/214_Viiratsi_Saeveski_AS.pdf)  
<http://www.aripaev.ee/default.aspx?publicationid=31503ED6-39D4-4163-9D98-74AA1E3959CE&code=75006>

**Good Practice 2****Eesti Energia****Country**

Estonia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Coping with the situation of ageing workforce

**Actor**

Eesti Energia, the biggest enterprise in the industry in Estonia, the biggest employer in Estonia. NACE code D (Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply), 6,968 employees

**Status of the initiative**

On-going

**Reasons for the initiative**

To cope with the situation of ageing workforce (in about next three years almost 1/3 of employees will reach retirement age; in one region (strategically very important for the company) almost 80% employees will reach retirement age)

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

Five measures have been implemented:

- 1) Shared jobs- (as older workers capacity to work decreases with age, they were offered shorter flexible (part-time) and trainees were recruited. This enabled to utilise older workers work experience and help trainees to settle in better
- 2) Mentorship programme- older and experienced workers are mentors for their younger colleagues who have moved up in their career ladder (this helps to keep and share the valuable knowledge in the enterprise)
- 3) Training- some of the workplaces in Eesti Energia demand very specific skills/knowledge, which are not taught in universities, therefore young and unexperienced workers will have on-site work training under older and much experienced workers
- 4) Personal stories of different older vibrant employees, with a long tenure, still working in Eesti Energia are shared through intranet within the company in order to show that Eesti Energia values all its employees irrespective of their age and to set a positive example to other employees
- 5) For older workers in production or fuel field who have or are facing redundancy and who have 5 or less years until retirement and who do not find new jobs, the company created a social fund that aims to provide those employees with a small income until pensionable age.

**Period of implementation**

Start date unknown, currently on-going

**Target group of the initiative**

Employees aged 50+

**Impact**

The knowledge and experience of the older employees are made visible and are shared with younger workers.

Older employees are satisfied with the possibility to work part-time.

Eesti Energia is a desired employer among students.

**List of sources used**

Interview with Eesti Energia personnel manager (in 2012)

**Good Practice 3****Skype****Country**

Estonia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Creation of healthier work environment and support for employees to be more physically active

**Actor**

Skype Technologies OÜ, telecommunications sector, NACE 62091 (exact number of employees is not available, but it remains around 400 employees according to available information)

**Status of the initiative**

On-going

**Reasons for the initiative**

Main problem for people working in ICT sector is low level of exercising and poor eating habits that in turn can cause different health problems

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

To support employee's health and guide employees to healthier lifestyle the company has several measures:

- Company offers free breakfast and lunch. Employees have the opportunity to choose from different healthy meals (e.g. fruits, salads etc.)
- Services of massage therapists once a month to alleviate tensions commonly occurring among employees working with computers (such as neck and shoulders area)
- Financial support to promote regular exercising and physical activity. The company has concluded agreements with several sports facilities, gyms etc. The company pays a part of the membership fee/ participation fee to those facilities so that their employees would be more motivated to regularly exercise.
- Life, accident and illness insurance. The company provides life, accident and critical illness insurance for all its employees to ensure its employees with the sense of security.
- The companies office is located near health trails and is equipped with washing facilities, sauna and room for employees to keep their bicycles to motivate employees to exercise.
- The ease work-related stress, skype has equipped its office with x-box, Wii, table football, pool table, TV, magazines and books
- Employees can bring their kids and dogs to the workplace

**Period of implementation**

Start date unknown, currently on-going

**Target group of the initiative**

All employees

**Impact**

According to available information, the company states that employees are happy and satisfied, work-related performance has improved and work environment is healthier.

**List of sources used**

<http://arileht.delfi.ee/news/uudised/skypei-maffia-firmast-lahkuvad-talendid-loovad-uusi-ettevotteid.d?id=69381135>

[http://ti.ee/public/files/205\\_Skype\\_Technologies\\_OU.pdf](http://ti.ee/public/files/205_Skype_Technologies_OU.pdf)

**Good Practice 4****Deloitte****Country**

Estonia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Comprehensive package of activities to promote healthy lifestyle

**Actor**

Deloitte Audit Estonia, NACE 69201

**Status of the initiative**

On-going

**Reasons for the initiative**

To promote healthier lifestyle, maintain employees health and alleviate potential health risks stemming from work organisation (fixed or constrained body positions, sedentary work etc.)

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

To support employees health and guide employees to healthier lifestyle the company has several measures:

- The company offers fresh fruit once a week from November till March (cold season when the potential to become ill is the highest)
- The office is equipped with two big rubber balls to alleviate tensions caused by fixed or constrained body positions) and two standing work stations
- Services of massage therapists to alleviate tensions commonly occurring among employees working with computers (such as neck and shoulders area)
- Opportunity to vaccinate against flu
- From 2011, the company organises annual tennis tournament, during this tournament beginners can take lessons
- The company employees actively take part from different sports events (football tournaments, marathons etc.)
- Company offers flexible work place arrangements. Employees can in agreement with employer work at home.
- The company offers "Loyalty vacation" for employees with longer tenure. This is applied for employees who have worked for the company for 5 years and for every year the person has 1 extra day of paid leave. The maximum number of loyalty vacation days in a year is 10.

**Period of implementation**

Start date unknown, currently on-going

**Target group of the initiative**

All employees

**Impact**

According to available information, the company claims that employees are more satisfied with work environment

**List of sources used**

[http://ti.ee/public/files/183\\_Deloitte\\_Audit\\_Eesti%281%29.pdf](http://ti.ee/public/files/183_Deloitte_Audit_Eesti%281%29.pdf)

**Good Practice 5****Fortaco Estonia OÜ | Sillamäe Sadam AS | Eesti Energia Tehnoloogiatööstus: Health measures****Country**

Estonia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Health assistance for employees to promote employees health

**Actor**

Different enterprises: Fortaco Estonia OÜ (previously Komasa Estonia OÜ), main field of activities is production of metal constructions NACE 2511; Sillamäe Sadam AS, main field of activities is cargo handling NACE 52241; Eesti Energia Tehnoloogiatööstus, repairment of devices NACE 33191)

**Financer**

Enterprises themselves: Komasa Estonia OÜ; Sillamäe Sadam AS; Eesti Energia Tehnoloogiatööstus

**Status of the initiative**

On-going

**Reasons for the initiative**

All the companies have created health cabinets for similar reasons: the work is complex and demanding and is done in difficult circumstances; the company facilities are located outside the city and by providing employees with necessary health assistance at workplace helps to save their and companies time and financial resources. This also helps early detection of illnesses and encourages people who have postponed doctors visits due to reasons as (long waiting lists and too much time spent to going and coming from doctors appointments) to find solutions to their problems.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

In all three companies health cabinet with medical personnel is open daily

Employees have the opportunity to measure their blood pressure, perform EKG, get injections, massage etc.

Expenses to cabinet, services and personnel are covered by the companies

**Period of implementation**

Start date unknown, currently on-going

**Target group of the initiative**

All employees

**Impact**

Fortaco Estonia OÜ has stated that around 150-180 employees visit the health cabinet in a month. They in total have 350 employees. They state such arrangement is very comfortable for employees and saves times and money.

Sillamäe Sadam AS stated that the number of sickness cases has decreased thanks to the health cabinet

Eesti Energia Tehnoloogiatööstus stated that this has mainly decreased the amount of time spent for doctors visits.

**List of sources used**

[http://ti.ee/public/files/175\\_Komas\\_Estonia.pdf](http://ti.ee/public/files/175_Komas_Estonia.pdf)

[http://ti.ee/public/files/210\\_Sillamae\\_Sadam\\_AS.pdf](http://ti.ee/public/files/210_Sillamae_Sadam_AS.pdf)

[http://ti.ee/public/files/210\\_Sillamae\\_Sadam\\_AS](http://ti.ee/public/files/210_Sillamae_Sadam_AS)

[http://ti.ee/public/files/77\\_Eesti\\_Energia\\_Tehnoloogiatoostus.pdf](http://ti.ee/public/files/77_Eesti_Energia_Tehnoloogiatoostus.pdf)

**Good Practice 6****Enterprises OÜ MISS-L and PVMP-EX OÜ****Country**

Estonia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Exercising during breaks

**Actor**

Enterprises OÜ MISS-L and PVMP-EX OÜ

**Financer**

Enterprises themselves: OÜ MISS-L and PVMP-EX OÜ

**Status of the initiative**

On-going

**Reasons for the initiative**

What are the reasons for introducing the initiative? What social challenge does it address?

Due to work nature, employees are working in a forced position for an extended period of time and doing monotonous work which puts them in high risk of evolving impairments related to neck and shoulder area

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

In OÜ MISS-L, the personnel exercises every day at 1pm

In PVMP-EX OÜ, exercising takes place during one of daily breaks. Exercising is carried out by work environment representative who has had specific training. The company also takes part of a study on work-related musculoskeletal overload illnesses carried out by Tallinn University Haapsalu College Health Promotion and Rehabilitation Competence Center. During this study, 88 employees have been checked and 17 has had treatment.

**Period of implementation**

Start date unknown, currently on-going

**Target group of the initiative**

All employees (seamstresses)

**Impact**

According to OÜ MISS-L, employee's health risks have decreased and their labour productivity has increased.

According to PVMP-EX OÜ, employees who have taken part of exercising and in the study, have stated that their health has improved.

**List of sources used**

[http://ti.ee/public/files/171\\_Miss\\_L.pdf](http://ti.ee/public/files/171_Miss_L.pdf)[http://ti.ee/public/files/171\\_Miss\\_L.pdf](http://ti.ee/public/files/171_Miss_L.pdf)

[http://ti.ee/public/files/223\\_PVMP\\_EX\\_OU.pdf](http://ti.ee/public/files/223_PVMP_EX_OU.pdf)

**Good Practice 7****Viking Window AS****Country**

Estonia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Implementation of seniority premium for recognizing and creating employees loyalty

**Actor**

Enterprise Viking Window AS, production of wooden doors, windows, shutters and frames NACE 16231

**Financer**

Viking Window AS

**Status of the initiative**

On-going

**Reasons for the initiative**

The company provides in-house training for employees. Due to high personnel turnover, the company looked for options to motivate employees to stay

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

Seniority premium is paid to employee whose length of service is at least 5 years.

Seniority premium is paid once a year based on Executive Boards decision.

The amount of the seniority premium is dependant of the length of service (in case of 5 years 50% from previous year's average monthly wage; in case 6 years 60% etc.).

**Period of implementation**

Start date unknown, currently on-going

**Target group of the initiative**

Production workers, long-term workers

**Impact**

According to personnel statistics collected by the company in 2012, 41% of employees received seniority premium and in 2013, 35% of employees received seniority premium.

**List of sources used**

[http://ti.ee/public/files/192\\_Viking\\_Window\\_AS.pdf](http://ti.ee/public/files/192_Viking_Window_AS.pdf)

**Good Practice 8****University of the Third Age****Country**

Estonia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

University of the Third Age (Väärikate Ülikool)

**Actor**

It is implemented in six towns in Estonia by the University of Tartu in cooperation with local partners (Foundation Saaremaa Universities Centre; Central Estonia teaching and competence center, city governments)

**Financer**

In every town, there are different financers – city governments, the Council Of Gambling Tax, the Local Initiatives Program, University of Tartu

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

- Promoting life-long learning and offering possibilities for older people to gain knowledge.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

In lectures and seminars different political, scientific and generally educative practical and theoretical issues are studied. Lecturers are experts, politicians and civil servants. Seminars take place once or twice a month from autumn to spring and in 6 different towns. Topics vary in towns.

**Period of implementation**

Since 2009 (continuing)

**Target group of the initiative**

The initiative is targeted at developing skills of persons aged 50+.

**Impact**

No formal evaluation is currently available. However, the project is very popular - it started in 2009 in Pärnu and then spread year after year to other towns in Estonia as well.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.ut.ee/et/kooolitus/vaarikate-ulikool>

<http://www.tallinn.ee/est/Tallinn-pakub-koostoos-Tartu-Ulikooliga-eakatele-enesetaiendamise-voimalusi>

<http://www.yks.ee/projektid/>

**Good Practice 9****NGO Second Chance (MTÜ Teine Võimalus)****Country**

Estonia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Older people – a valuable resource on the labour market

**Actor**

NGO Second Chance (MTÜ Teine Võimalus)

**Financer**

European Social Fund programme “Increasing the Supply of a Qualified Labour Force 2007–2013”

**Status of the initiative**

Finished

**Reasons for the initiative**

In light of population ageing it is important, on the one hand, to promote the value of older workers and, on the other hand, to encourage older people to be active in the labour market and to increase their competitiveness.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

Information dissemination

A webpage <http://www.teinevoimalus.ee/> was created. There can be found articles and information, it offers free counselling and it is also an environment for communicating with others. In collaboration with the Unemployment Insurance Fund, 9 seminars were held for employers in order to discuss challenges and concerns faced by ageing workforce; introducing key benefits of recruiting older people to help overcome widespread prejudices against older workers. Also, videoclips on the national TV and articles were produced, 3 roundtables and 1 conference were held.

Training

4 trainings were provided for unemployed aged 50+. The purpose was to build their self-esteem, develop skills, provide information on labour market developments, introduce the idea of life-long learning and to provide access to e-learning etc.

**Period of implementation**

30.11.2009- 31.01.2012

**Target group of the initiative**

Older people aged 50-74, employers.

**Impact**

11 project indicators were set – the number of participants in the trainings, the proportion of people that filled in the survey at the end of the project, the improvement of computer literacy, writing CV and motivation letter, social abilities, self-esteem; the increase of awareness of their rights, health risks in the workplace, healthy habits; motivation to participate in life-long learning; the training being resultant for the participants. The indicators were measured with survey that was carried out at the end of the project. Most of the project indicators were fulfilled and exceeded.

Also, surveys were carried out among employers that took part of the seminars. According to the results, the employers mostly stated that the issue is important, the information gathered was new to them and they are ready to employ older workers.

As a result of the project, discussions about older workers, their value and needs took place in the society.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.teinevoimalus.ee/et/paevateemad/Projekt/455-Projekt>

<http://issuu.com/kadrilaas/docs/projektiraamat?e=4305861/2970617#222222>

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1210012s/ee1210019q.htm>

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1210012s/ee1210019q.htm> NGO Second Chance

**Good Practice 10****NGO Support and Schooling Center Trust****Country**

Estonia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Bringing older people into labour market by increasing their social ability and competitiveness

Implementing organisation(s)

In case of company, please include information on the main activities, size, sector of activity. Companies can also remain anonymous if requested.

NGO Support and Schooling Center Trust (MTÜ Tugi- ja Koolituskeskus Usaldus)

**Financer**

European Social Fund programme "Increasing the Supply of a Qualified Labour Force 2007–2013"

**Status of the initiative**

Finished

**Reasons for the initiative**

The competitiveness of older people is low and therefore it is hard for them to stay or re-enter in the labour market.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

10 work clubs for 250 unemployed persons' and persons' in danger of losing their job aged 50+ were created. Individual psychological, juridical and career counselling was provided to all participants and schooling- and career schemes were made for all participants. All participants passed computer training based on individual needs and previous skills, and schooling based on their occupation. Non-Estonian speaking participants were provided a language course. 50 support persons/mentors were trained for offering mentorship for older unemployed persons. In six counties, cooperational networks were launched that try to help older unemployed workers to return to work. A handbook that provides specific directions and advice to unemployed older workers on how to return back to work was issued, project results were introduced in 1 day seminars with foreign experts in four counties.

**Period of implementation**

01.11.2009-31.10.2012

**Target group of the initiative**

Older unemployed persons. It is aiming at enhancing the employability of older workers.

**Impact**

Information on impact is currently not available.

**List of sources used**<http://esf2007.sm.ee/index.php?id=235><http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/studies/tn1210012s/ee1210019q.htm>

**Good Practice 11****“Developing a Comprehensive Active Ageing Strategy for Longer and Better Working Lives”****Country**

Latvia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

A strategy “Developing a Comprehensive Active Ageing Strategy for Longer and Better Working Lives” (in cooperation with the World Bank)

**Actor**

Ministry of Welfare

**Financer**

Co-financed by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – PROGRESS and the government budget

**Status of the initiative**

Proposal

**Reasons for the initiative**

To develop an active ageing strategy in Latvia that would ensure longer and better working lives for the elderly, taking into account current demographic challenges that the country faces.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

The strategy will analyse the current situation of population aged 50 and over, identify main labour market challenges, assess existing measures, evaluate measures needed for improving current situation and give corresponding recommendations.

**Period of implementation**

2014 - 2016

**Target group of the initiative**

Persons aged 50 and over

It aims at assessing what measures should be taken in order to enhance the employability of older people.

**Impact**

The expected impact is that it will be clear what challenges the country faces with respect to active ageing policies and suitable recommendations will be provided. Thus, Latvia’s authorities will be able to take respective actions to tackle the issues pointed out by the World Bank.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.lm.gov.lv/text/2752><http://www.lm.gov.lv/text/2752>

<http://www.lm.gov.lv/text/2739><http://www.lm.gov.lv/text/2739>

<http://www.lm.gov.lv/text/2739>

**Good Practice 12****State Employment Agency****Country**

Latvia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Employment measures for certain groups, including persons aged 50 and over

**Actor**

State Employment Agency

**Financer**

Co-financed from the European Social Fund and the government budget

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

To encourage the participation of certain unemployed people, who are in a disadvantaged situation, in the labour market. To facilitate the acquisition of skills and competencies that would ensure a permanent job for the target persons.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

The unemployed persons 50 and over were provided with subsidised workplaces, in accordance with the specific education and work experience requirements from the employer.

**Period of implementation**

2008 - 2013

**Target group of the initiative**

Persons in a disadvantaged situation, including persons aged 50 and over, and persons with disability. It aimed at enhancing the employability of an ageing workforce and integrating specific groups in the labour market.

**Impact**

Of all people who had taken part in the project, persons aged 50 and over composed 31 %, 32 % and 36 % in 2010, 2011 and 2012, respectively.

In 2011, 131 (26.3 %) persons obtained a permanent workplace after participating in the project.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.nva.gov.lv/index.php?cid=433&mid=313&txt=2908&from=0>

[http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/darba\\_tirgus/lmzin\\_muzisgl\\_130712.pdf](http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/darba_tirgus/lmzin_muzisgl_130712.pdf)

[http://www.lm.gov.lv/text/2739State Employment Agency](http://www.lm.gov.lv/text/2739State%20Employment%20Agency)

**Good Practice 13****Lifelong learning measures for employed persons****Country**

Latvia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Lifelong learning measures for employed persons

**Actor**

State Employment Agency

**Financer**

Financed by European Social Fund

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

- To provide an opportunity for employed persons to supplement and improve the necessary work-related knowledge and skills.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

The lifelong learning project offers to participate in professional or informal education programmes. The State Employment Agency covers either 70 % of costs (not exceeding 249 EUR) or 100 % of costs (not exceeding 355.72 EUR) for different target groups.

**Period of implementation**

2010 onwards

**Target group of the initiative**

Various target groups, including persons aged 45 or more

It aims at further enhancing employability of older workers and ensuring lifelong learning.

**Impact**

Although the initiative targets various groups, people aged 50 and over have actively taken part in the project.

In 2010, 1 163 persons or 23 % of all involved were seniors. In 2011, it was 2 210 or 20 % of all involved.

In 2012, almost 10 % of all involved were persons aged 55 and over.

The most popular programmes among seniors in all years were foreign and national language courses and courses linked to professional development.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.nva.gov.lv/index.php?cid=433&mid=435&txt=2913&from=0>

[http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/darba\\_tirgus/lmzin\\_muzisgl\\_130712.pdf](http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/darba_tirgus/lmzin_muzisgl_130712.pdf)

**Good Practice 14****Senior advisor network****Country**

Latvia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Senior advisor network

**Actor**

Connect Latvia (in cooperation with Best Agers)

Connect Latvia is a non-profit membership organisation which helps entrepreneurs, inventors and start-up companies.

**Financer**

No financing

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

- To use the knowledge of senior advisors in various fields (finance, marketing, business management, public relations, strategy, etc.) in order to support companies, organisations and inventors.
- To show the potential of older people and eradicate discrimination by age.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

Connect Latvia develops a senior advisor network, consisting of approximately 30 experts, who voluntarily provide counselling sessions (up to three) for the interested companies, organisations and inventors.

**Period of implementation**

From 2012 onwards

**Target group of the initiative**

Seniors (55 or older) with distinct knowledge in certain field

It aims at keeping older people economically active.

**Impact**

Senior advisors assist entrepreneurs on specific knowledge that young people do not have in order to develop their businesses.

For example, a furniture manufacturer company SIA Cardboarders was provided mentoring on how to attract potential investors.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.best-agers-project.eu/Partnership/CONNECTLatvia/tabid/1202/Default.aspx>

<http://www.best-agers-project.eu/BestAgers/Definition/tabid/1109/Default.aspx>

**Good Practice 15****Get Connected, Latvia****Country**

Latvia

Title/ name of the initiative

Get Connected, Latvia

**Actor**

Lattelecom

Lattelecom is one of the leading telecommunication and Internet service provider companies in Latvia.

**Financer**

Project financed by Lattelecom

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

- To provide older people with the necessary computer skills for improved competitiveness in the labour market.
- To reduce digital divide.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

Seniors can apply for free computer skill courses which happen on three levels based on current expertise.

**Period of implementation**

2008 onwards

**Target group of the initiative**

Seniors aged 50 or more

It aims at enhancing employability of ageing workforce.

**Impact**

Those who complete the highest (expert) level courses are expected to know how to turn on and off a computer, use a mouse and an keyboard, access the Internet, use email and search for information. From 2008, 20 000 seniors have obtained computer skills through the Get Connected, Latvia initiative.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.connectlatvia.lv/pub/default.php?lapa=341&oid=341>

<http://www.db.lv/laikraksta-arhivs/bizness-regionos/virzit-jaunos-un-pasiem-sevi-376371>

<http://www.piesledzieslatvija.lv/lv/par-apmacibam/>

<http://www.senioriem.lv/raksti/2013/4/14/piesledzies-latvija/>

**Good Practice 16****Social grandmas for rent (“Grandmothers contact exchange”)****Country**

Latvia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Social grandmas for rent (“Grandmothers contact exchange”)

**Actor**

RASA (Association “Riga active senior alliance”)

The Alliance of Active Seniors in Riga is a volunteer society which promotes active participation of seniors in the society, protects social and economic rights and interests of senior people; organises educational, health-improving and entertaining classes and events.

Over 440 members.

**Financer**

Co-financed by Riga City Council committee for education, culture and sports (2846.38 EUR)

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

- To involve seniors in the labour market.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

A grandma for rent is a project, which prepares grandmas for work with children, whose parents are working and who do not have a place in a kindergarten, and the elderly, who cannot take care of themselves. It trains grandmas in areas of psychology, pedagogy and first aid and gives practical experience (internship) in a kindergarten. In the end, grandmas receive a certificate that gives the right to provide qualified assistance to families.

Now the project has evolved into 40-hour-course on child care basics where participants receive a state accredited diploma.

**Period of implementation**

2012 onwards

**Target group of the initiative**

Seniors aged 50 or older

It aims at involving the ageing workforce in the labour market.

**Impact**

A contact-base with a list of seniors who are certified to look after children is created. By mid-2012, 21 seniors had been trained.

From 2013, there is evidence that grandmas after finishing courses work as nannies for kindergarten and primary-school age children. Some of them report receiving 1.5 LVL (2.2 EUR) per hour.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.biedribarasa.lv/vecmaminu-kontaktbirza><http://www.biedribarasa.lv/vecmaminu-kontaktbirza>

[http://www.tvnet.lv/zinas/latvija/421331-vecmaminu\\_kontaktbirza\\_plano\\_izverst\\_darbibu](http://www.tvnet.lv/zinas/latvija/421331-vecmaminu_kontaktbirza_plano_izverst_darbibu)

<http://www.iksd.riga.lv/public/44636.html>

<http://www.piesledzieslatvija.lv/lv/jaunumi-par-piesledzies-latvija!/11334>

<http://www.piesledzieslatvija.lv/lv/jaunumi-par-piesledzies-latvija!/11334> Social grandmas for rent

**Good Practice 17****Seminars on inter-generation cooperation methods****Country**

Latvia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Seminars on inter-generation cooperation methods

**Actor**

Unknown (within the Best Agers project); takes place in the EU House in Riga

**Financer**

Financed by Best Agers project (partially by the European Regional Development Fund)

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

- To provide older people with pedagogical skills and methods of cooperation in order to promote mutual understanding between generations and transfer of relevant knowledge to students and young entrepreneurs.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

Seniors were invited to participate in the training programme. The curriculum of the event (developed within the Best Agers project) covered areas as leadership, career change, career guidance, etc. In the end of the programme, participants received a certificate, which affirmed the acquired knowledge.

**Period of implementation**

May 21 – June 7, 2012

**Target group of the initiative**

Seniors aged 55 or older

It aimed at providing seniors with knowledge that would enhance their labour market relevance.

**Impact**

At the end of the programme, participants were expected to acquire a variety of methods for work with young people as well as gain experience and network.

**List of sources used**

<http://esmaja.lv/senioru-nodarbinatiba/senioriem-maca-metodes-ka-labak-saprasties-ar-jauniesiem>

<http://www.la.lv/mazo-skolenu-vecakiem-palidz-socialas-vecmaminas-2/>

[http://www.la.lv/mazo-skolenu-vecakiem-palidz-socialas-vecmaminas-2/Seminars on inter-generation cooperation methods](http://www.la.lv/mazo-skolenu-vecakiem-palidz-socialas-vecmaminas-2/Seminars%20on%20inter-generation%20cooperation%20methods)

**Good Practice 18****RIMI Latvia****Title/ name of the initiative**

“RIMI Latvia” good practice in corporate age management

**Country**

Latvia

**Actor**

“RIMI Latvia” LLC is one of the leading retailers in Latvia and member of the „RIMI Baltics“group. “RIMI Latvia” currently operates 36 Rimi supermarkets, 21 Rimi hypermarkets and 56 Supernetto stores. The company employs 4900 people. Employees aged 45-50 represent around 20% of the staff, and the age group of 55-64 accounts for 11% of the staff. There are also a few employees over 70 year old and one aged over 80 years.

In 2012 “RIMI Latvia” received a title of the senior friendly enterprise.

**Financer**

“RIMI Latvia” LLC

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

RIMI personnel policy in general is supportive to social risk groups.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

The personnel policy of RIMI allows its employees to choose the intensity of their work (how many hours to work per week) themselves. RIMI has a practice of financial benefits for longer tenure. In addition to standard package of the medical insurance, employees with long tenure receive supplementary dentist insurance and medication allowance.

Ergonomic, health and safety matters are looked at for all age workers not only elderly ones.

Period of implementation

**Target group of the initiative**

RIMI employ people with disabilities, older people and teenagers during school holidays and summer.

This policy prolongs the working life of the senior people (among other risk groups) employees of RIMI.

**Impact**

The expected impact would be prolonged working life of the seniors (RIMI employees), enhancement of the welfare of the elderly people as well as potential integration of elderly in the society.

**List of sources used**

Interview with the head of the Personnel Department of the Retail supermarket chain “RIMI Latvia”

**Good Practice 19****Employability of Elderly Employees**

Country  
Lithuania

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Employability of Elderly Employees

**Actor**

Coordinator - "Frauen für Frauen", Austria  
Wirtschafts- und Beschäftigungsoffensive Murau (Austria)  
Partners: Austria, Lithuania, Germany  
Implementing partner in Lithuania was NGO „Education, Research & ConsultancyCenter“ (ERCC)<sup>1</sup>  
ERCC is running the following activities: Helps with staff selection; Organizes psychological trainings and courses as well as career guidance; Conducts research.

**Financer**

The project is funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme Grundtvig Learning Partnership.  
Project No. LLP-GRU-MP-2007-LT-00105

**Status of the initiative**

Finished

**Reasons for the initiative****Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

The main objective of the project is to discover ways that help the older workers to remain physically and mentally fit to work until the retirement.

**Period of implementation**

2007 09 10 – 2009 08 30

**Target group of the initiative****Impact**

The outcome of this partnership is a clear notion about reasons and potential measures to prevent elderly employees of dropping out. The findings are not least presented on an online Course-management-system (CMS) that also allowed us storing documents and communicating in an effective way throughout the partnership.

In concrete terms we found out:

Employability seems best described in words of the Finnish researcher Ilmarinen, who spoke about four columns: health, competence, values, work.

The awareness of the problem of losing employability rises with the size of an enterprise and is more likely for Human Resource-managers of large enterprises than for staff-managers or even owners of SMEs, who suffer from lack of time and money to deal with the topic properly.

Differences between the partner countries concern the duration of work life and the income in times of retirement. Enterprises in Austria and Germany lack of qualified young people, Lithuania suffers more from lack of experienced young people.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.ercc.lt/index.php?Page=143&lang=lt>  
Interview with Renata Baltrimiene, ERCC

**Good Practice 20****Computer literacy training for 45+****Country**

Lithuania

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Computer literacy training for the people older than 45 years old

**Actor**

Lithuanian Union of the Pensioners' Societies

NGO

Volunteer nature of work

**Financer**

Funded by ESF 2007-2013 Human Resources Development Programme

**Status of the initiative**

Finished

**Reasons for the initiative**

The rapid development of information technologies in the modern labour market has resulted one of the key requirements for finding the job – it is an ability to work on a computer. Many older people do not have IT skills and knowledge. It is more difficult for older people to adapt to technological change. In addition, the income level of the elderly is too low they could pay for computer courses.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

It was planned to train 3,200 people over 45 years old. The participants obtained the ECDL computer literacy programme that provided them with the knowledge of modern information technology. The participants learned to work with a personal computer, thereby increasing their competitiveness in the labour market.

**Period of implementation**

2011-01-01 - 2013-12-31

**Target group of the initiative**

Economically active people over 45 years old

**Impact**

Economically active people of pre-retirement and retirement age across the different regions of Lithuania<sup>2</sup> learned to use the PC for work purposes, and significantly raised their competencies. Thus, the participants increased the chances to continue their working life and to maintain their economic activity in the longer term.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.esparama.lt/paraiska?id=16606&pgsz=10>

**Good Practice 21****“Healthy Office”****Country**

Lithuania

**Title/ name of the initiative**

“Ofiso sveikuoliai” (“Healthy Office”)

**Actor**

„Lietuvos geležinkeliai“ („Lithuanian Railways”)

Transportation, railways

10485 employees (2014-09-23) 3

**Financer**

„Lietuvos geležinkeliai“ („Lithuanian Railways”)

**Status of the initiative**

Ongoing

**Reasons for the initiative**

The project started by "Lithuanian Railways" employees as reply to the information campaign during "Health Year" 2013-4. With regard to the worrying health situation of Lithuanian citizens (high mortality rate due to cardiovascular diseases) it was decided to study the situation of company employees, 30% (about 3000) of which spend most the work time by PC.

"Lithuanian Railways" together with National health institute of Lithuanian Sport University (Lietuvos sporto universiteto Nacionalinis sveikatinimo institutas) implemented the survey among the staff about the well-being and physical activity. Data showed that 82 per cent of the company's administration employees work in sedentary jobs, and the most commonly mentioned complaints – the neck, back, and head pains related with too little physical activity. After evaluation of the survey data, the company has implemented the health programme for the office staff.<sup>6</sup>

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

Activities include physical exercises in the workplace twice a day. Also specifically for "Lithuanian Railways" methodologies on correct posture, nutrition were formed. Two breaks of exercise were introduced into the staff work routine. During expected time computer displays the workout exercises. To be stretched as a regular, the special video lessons were created. All exercises are designed in accordance with the Pilates methodology and can be performed while sitting. Also, "Lithuanian Railways" employees are able remotely consult the sports and nutrition specialists.

Healthier lifestyle programme was offered for "Lithuanian Railways" office workers across the country. Wellness programme events were held in Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipeda and Siauliai.

**Period of implementation**

2013 March – 2015 March

**Target group of the initiative**

All age groups

**Impact**

In order to maximize the efficiency of the programme it is continue to be improving. Additional data about the number of staff involved in the programme (about 3000) and whether they experience positive effect onto the health and mood changes are currently collecting.

The company is currently considering the ways to involve and encourage the railway passengers to live healthier and be more physically active.<sup>7</sup>

**List of sources used**

Interview with Vidmantas Gudas (PR „Lietuvos geležinkeliai”) conducted in 2014 09 17

[HTTP://WWW.LSU.LT/MOKSLAS/NAUJIENOS/LSU-MOKSLININKAI-SUKURE-SVEIKATINGUMO-PROGRAMA-BIURO-DARBUOTOJAMS](http://www.lsu.lt/mokslas/naujienos/lsu-mokslininkai-sukure-sveikatingumo-programa-biuro-darbuotojams)

<http://www.litrail.lt/-/sveikatos-virusa-platins-ir-tarp-keleiviu>

**Good Practice 22****Career mobility of Europe's older workforce****Countries**

UK, AT, EL, LT, NO, PL

**Title/ name of the initiative**

CAREER MOBILITY OF EUROPE'S OLDER WORKFORCE: IMPROVING AND EXTENDING THE EMPLOYABILITY OF AN AGEING WORKFORCE IN EUROPE THROUGH ENHANCING MOBILITY / CAMEO (Lifelong Learning Programme)

**Actors**

University of Strathclyde, Centre for Lifelong Learning / UoS - UK

**Partners:**

- Zentrum fuer Soziale Innovation / ZSI – AT
- Life Long Learning Research Institute / 3L Research Institute – EL
- Baltic Education Technology Institute / BETI – LT
- European Centre for Women and Technology / ECWT – NO
- University of Social Sciences / UoSS – PL

**Baltic Education Technology Institute / BETI – LT**

BETI was founded in 2003 by an active team of professionals who have been working in the field of ICT and education technologies for more than 15 years. While implementing different activities in higher education and vocational training sectors the rich experience, knowledge and skills were accumulated in the field of ICT enhanced training, distance education methodology, learning technologies, multimedia production, development of web applications, etc. BETI develop teaching curriculum for immigrants for self-learning and professional competencies in order to improve their integration into the society.

The activities of the Baltic Education Technology Institute are:

- consulting regarding project initiation, application preparation, partnership formation, budgeting, performance monitoring, and other success factors;
- competence development of distance learning course producers, providers and administrators;
- extracurricular and in-service courses;
- distance education and e-learning courses;
- business information systems;
- intranet solutions;
- content management system;

Also BETI has great experience in websites and portals, social network tools, as well as virtual learning environments systems creation and management. In addition, research and needs analysis, web design, Flash and video animation and video shooting.

Size: about 30 employees

**Role in the Project**

BETI will utilise the experience and expertise to lead, Development of thee-Academy. They will also be responsible for Integration of 'Matching' Database, the platform design and installation of it. They will also be involved in the development of e-learning material and translations into Lithuanian language. In addition, they will be responsible for the preparation of e-Academy and 'Matching' Database guidelines. The project is going to be disseminated in many national and international events, of which P4 will play an active role.

**Financer**

Grundtvig/ Lifelong Learning Programme

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

The need for better use of older workers in a shrinking labour market as this will lead to increased competitiveness as well as the need for better advice, guidance and counselling, with greater involvement of employers in this process.

BETI reasons to be involved in the project – the importance of the target group and possibilities to implement the products of the Project in the future (for example implementing adult education activities using the elaboration of the Project).

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

Aims:

- Improve the knowledge base for policy makers of attitudes to the mobility of older workers among employers in the Public, Private and SME sectors.
- Develop an e-Academy for older workers to improve engagement with ICT and benchmark and validate skills and experience against the EQF.
- Create a pan-European Strategic Advisory Group to ensure effective dissemination and valorisation of project results.

Objectives

Carry out a narrative inquiry across 12 European countries, geographically representative for different parts of Europe and different labour market and economic conditions, using semi-structured interviews with Human Resource Managers, Managing Directors or business owners in the Public, Private and SME sectors in each country – Total of 36 narratives presented in a final report.

Research and develop a platform for older worker's that is user friendly and provides individuals with an opportunity to digitally map their skills, experience and qualifications against the EQF. The platform will also be a portal for learning, with content populated by the partnership.

Ensure the e-Academy has the functionality to be integrated into existing systems employers may have to better utilise the opportunity for development and adaption to employer needs.

Creation of a 'Matching Database' with the dual purpose of allowing older workers to register their skills, experience and current position on mobility, with employers who are looking to overcome skills gaps within their organisation.

Formation of a Strategic Advisory Group consisting of representatives and policy makers from Chambers of Commerce, Trade Unions, Lifelong Learning organisations and other targeted network groups to ensure effective dissemination and valorisation beyond the life-span of the project.

Publication of project findings as an academic paper in the New Technology, Work and Employment Journal to ensure a global reach of project developments and results.

**Period of implementation**

2014 - 2015

**Target group of the initiative**

It is anticipated that the project outputs/products/results will be used and implemented by a range of stakeholders, specifically:

Older workers (over the age of 50)

Employers (public/private/SME/)

Trade Unions

Chambers of Commerce

National agencies involved in VET/CVET

Social partners

Policy makers at a local, regional, national and European level

VET/CVET providers

Lifelong Learning Institutes

Educational institutions (Universities and Colleges)

The Consortium of the Project

**Impact**

Throughout the project activity, the partners involved in the consortium will play an active role in developing, delivering and analysing the various work packages, therefore ensuring involvement and true ownership of the project. By adopting this strategy, partners will be able to learn from each other and develop new ways of working through utilisation of specialist expertise in the work packages.

The project will change the interpretation of mobility and offer a new strategy for engaging older workers and making use of the human capital which exists. Through the development of the project products and findings, a new strategy can be offered that will have lasting effects beyond the life-time of the project.

The project started in 2014, January 15 and at the moment the research in partner countries are ongoing. BETI is responsible for ICT products for older people that will be also available for target group after the project.

**List of sources used**

Baltic Education Technology Institute (BETI)

<http://www.beti.lt/index.php?r=projects/view&id=86>

Interview with Daina Gudoniene

**Good Practice 23****Best Agers Lighthouse****Country**

Lithuania

**Title/ name of the initiative**

BEST AGERS LIGHTHOUSES

**Actor**

KTU – Regional Science Park, LT  
Kaunas, Lithuania

KTU Regional Science Park (KTURSP) is an innovation centre and business incubator linked to Kaunas University of Technology. KTURSP has been actively participating in the main stage project as a Work Package leader, coordinating the activities related to competence transfer between generations and innovation support carried out by senior experts and mentors.

**Roles in the project**

In the extension stage, KTURSP takes part as Facilitating Partner, overseeing an intervention and organising LAMP internal meetings in Kaunas. KTURSP also coordinates dissemination activities at partner level and promotes the project at external events.

**Financer**

Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

The reasons to participate in Best Agers (Lighthouses)

The demographic trends and market change from planning economy to market economy have led the entrepreneurship to a situation where Best Agers with a lot of experience are willing to retire from one side and young people with a lot of new and innovative ideas are willing to start their own business from the other side. This creates a gap between generations. From our point of view and interest, The Best Agers project addressed those issues on how to remove the gap and transfer the knowledge and experience from older generation to young people. Finding new and innovative ways to promote and support entrepreneurship is the main goal of KTU in the project.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal****Intervention process description**

Based on survey conducted, on findings of interviews with leaders and specifics of organisation, there was selected to introduce employer's health measures: Nordic walking exercises, educational seminars on the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and discussions about prospects of senior workers (more 55 years old). Internal mentors were very active and invited workers of all age groups to participate in the wellness process. Main intervention objectives were: to encourage employees to exercise more, follow healthy diet, adapt activities healthy lifestyle in his/her activity, engage in prevention of diseases due to immobility and discussion of senior workers prospects.

Following measures of Intervention in Lighthouse organisation was organized:

- Nordic walking exercises
- Seminars on healthy living issues (Healthy nutrition secrets, Stress, tensions, self-control)
- Events strengthening communication between the generations (Debates on perspectives of ageing workers).

The total number of participations in intervention measures: about 250 persons (around 20% of them are older people).

Age of the participants was determined by verbal interview before each event.

Nordic walking exercises for the workers of the organisation and for the organisation itself did not cost

anything. Was used wellness programs to citizens offered by Kaunas City Municipality, as well as other free offers (Kaunas city public health office and other).

### **Period of implementation**

1st September 2013 by 31st May 2014

### **Target group of the initiative**

Faculty of economics and management, KTU University.

The Faculty was chose due to the diverse age structure, as well as due to the size of the unit: Faculty of Economics and Business of KTU employee 108 persons, there are studying about 4000 students.

9 of project participants belong to the group of people of age 55+

### **Impact**

About 30 people participated in the project activities.

Post-hoc survey showed improvement of the healthy lifestyle and nutrition skills of the participants, as well as general physical activity.

The trainings and Nordic walking activities contributed to the better communication within the members of the Faculty and thus their better employability.

Intervention results

Results of intervention are best reflected in the charts comparing data of first (2013) and second (2014) survey. Most important is the fact that people have started actively exercise and take care of his/her health, as long as it has not impaired. In addition, they learned about existing health options proposed by University, used measures proposed by Best AL project and partly changed his/her attitudes to a healthy lifestyle.

Future plans

The positive experience of the Best AL project will be widely publicized and will be offered to transfer advantage of the project experience in Faculty of Economics and Business across the university.

In KTU is working center of physical culture and sport, which coordinates the sports and fitness activities: developing physical education, sport and health development programs and coordinate their implementation; organize by the University's community health camps and healthy lifestyle education.

It is likely that in the near future can be carried out staff survey concerning staff needs and sport and health measures plan could by adjusted.

### **List of sources used**

Interview with Tercizijus Varkala, Project manager

<http://www.ktc.lt/lt/apie-parka/projektai/19-projektai/238-best-agers-lighthouses>

<http://www.best-agers-lighthouses.eu/project-partners/local-age-management-partnerships/ktu-regional-science-park.html>

**Good Practice 24****“Physical Activity Promotion in the Workplace” 1/2****Country**

Lithuania

**Title/ name of the initiative**

"PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROMOTION IN THE WORKPLACE" („Fizinio aktyvumo skatinimas darbo vietoje“)

**Actor**

Projekto vykdytojai:

Coordinator - NGO " Positive health team“ (Pozytivos sveikatos komanda) ,

Partners - Institute of Hygiene and Public Health Offices of Vilnius and K?dainiai district

NGO "Positive health team“ has one employee (the head of organisation) and 4 volunteers.

**Financer**

The project is financed by the Ministry of Health while implementing the programme for promotion of non-governmental organisations involved in health promotion activities.

**Status of the initiative**

Finished

**Reasons for the initiative**

The reasons of health promotion programs for Lithuanian enterprises and institutions:

In 2011 - 2012 the Institute of Hygiene conducted a descriptive study on the effectiveness of preventive services, which showed that only a few percent of the Lithuanian companies comply with a permanent staff health promotion policy.

- About 60 % of active time of day people spend at their work places.

Prolonged sitting, bulky forced movements and little agility are the strong risk factors for many diseases.

EU - OSHA studies show that health promotion programs can contribute to the lengthening the working age, the reduction of employees' morbidity, to increase motivation and job satisfaction of employee, as well as to increase productivity thus reducing the economic burden on employers.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

Aim of the project - according to the WHO and EU-OSHA (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work) recommendations to implement the physical activity promotion programs in selected two companies.

Project result - the recommendations for public, occupational health professionals, employers, managers and employees on the effective implementation of physical activity promotion programs in the companies or institutions were elaborated on the basis of the Project activities implemented.

**Period of implementation**

2013 July – 2013 November

**Target group of the initiative**

The project was designed for healthy, active people.

Two groups of employees were chosen during the project:

- a) mental, sedentary job workers and
- b) police officers.

Total number of project participants was about 150 employees. About 10% of them were 50+

**Impact**

More than one third of participants indicated that during the Project they felt the positive health changes and increased motivation to take care about the own health for about 90% of them (the survey of participants was conducted before and after the interventions).

The recommendations for health specialist and other professionals who want to develop similar programs to prepare them qualitatively were further used in other projects.

The project "Promotion of physical activity in the workplace" is considered as a great example of state, non-governmental and private sector cooperation while promoting the health of the employees.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.sveikatoskomanda.lt/txt-3-projektai>

Interview with Sigita Viait, Head of "Pozityvios sveikatos komanda"

<http://www.sveikatoskomanda.lt/6-kontaktai>

**Good Practice 25****“Physical Activity Promotion in the Workplace” 2/2****Title/ name of the initiative**

"Physical activity promotion in the workplace" („Fizinio aktyvumo skatinimas darbo vietose“)

**Actor**

Vilnius Public Health Office  
(Municipal budget body)  
<http://www.vvsb.lt/en/home-2/>  
Over 120 employees

**Financer**

Ministry of Health

**Status of the initiative**

Just started

**Reasons for the initiative**

What are the reasons for introducing the initiative? What social challenge does it address?  
Follow up of the Project "PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROMOTION IN THE WORKPLACE" (2013)

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

In 2014 September 10<sup>th</sup> the project "Promotion of physical activity in the workplace" was introduced to the employees of the company "Vilnius Energy". They were informed about effective health promotion measures, encouraged to take care of their own health.

Vilnius Public Health office professionals provide advice to the project participants about proper nutrition and physical activity issues, and perform analysis of body weight and blood pressure. Also the physical carried out a detailed evaluation of the physical properties. During the event at the "Vilnius Energy" the programme to promote physical activity in the workplace was introduced. The programme consists of theoretical and practical sessions.

The company's employees will be invited to spend an active afternoon breaks, they will be able to take part in Nordic walking classes. Training session will also contain stretching exercises using Nordic walking sticks as well as other technical training, practice and theory.<sup>12</sup>

**Period of implementation**

2014 September – 2014 November

**Target group of the initiative**

Working-age employees of "Vilniaus energy" (limited liability company) whose work is of sedentary nature (mainly administration staff, who spend work time by the computer). Over 200 people were involved in total.

**Impact**

Excepted impact -  
The results will be evaluated using the questionnaire.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.vvsb.lt/sekmingai-startavo-projektas-fizinio-aktyvumo-skatinimas-darbo-vietose/>  
Interview with Ala Cholopova, Public Health Promotion Specialist

**Good Practice 26****Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund****Country**

Lithuania

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund (Verslumo skatinimo fondas)

**Actor**

Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund was established in December 30 of 2009 with the initiative of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour (MSSL) initiative. The tripartite agreement was signed between MSSL and the Ministry of Finance and the company INVEGA.

The loans are issued by 57 credit unions. The issue of the loans is coordinated by the Lithuanian Central Credit Union (CCUL), the Fund is managed by company "Investment and Business Guarantees"

**Financer**

ESF

Financial engineering measure "Entrepreneurship Promotion" is one for the Human resources development measures implemented during the period 2007-2013 by Lithuanian Ministry of Social Security and Labour (MSSL).

**Status of the initiative**

On-going

**Reasons for the initiative**

The increase of the unemployment urged to look for the ways to create the opportunities and financial incentives to create the new jobs and promote self-employment. In 2009, 4th of March Lithuanian Government commissioned to develop the financial engineering instrument "Entrepreneurship Promotion". The aim of this instrument is enable micro and small businesses, and individuals to start their own business as well as encourage the social enterprises to develop their business, to develop entrepreneurship and self-employment, and job creation.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund covers such activities:

- Micro-credit (up to 86 thousand LTL), combined with the start-up business training and counselling, as well as assistance in the development and implementation of business plans.

Since the end of 2013 m. MSSL introduced and provide additional financial incentives – partial compensation of wages that is implemented by another measure "Subsidies to promote entrepreneurship". Under this measure, significant (25 thousand LTL) financial support to cover the part of wage costs given for above mentioned priority groups (the unemployed, the disabled, persons older than 50 years old and young people up to 29 years.).

VSF borrowers also have the opportunity to benefit from state guarantees provided by INVEGA INVEGA and the partial loan interest subsidy up to 95 per cent. (financial support to the borrower to compensate for part of the interest paid on the loan).

Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund borrowers also have the opportunity to benefit from state guarantees provided by INVEGA as well as INVEGA's partial loan interest subsidy (up to 95%).

**Period of implementation**

2009 03 04 - 2018 12 31 (Loans will be provided till 2015 09 30.)

**Target group of the initiative**

Young people (under 29 years) is one of the priority groups of the measure "Entrepreneurship Promotion". Other priority groups: the unemployed, the disabled, and persons older than 50 years.

Persons belonging to priority groups consists 62% of all persons who participated in entrepreneurship training. 48% of them got the loans and started business.

**Impact**

During 2013 from the Entrepreneurship Promotion Fund for start-up entrepreneurs was provided 15.8 million LTL of loans, that is 35% more than in 2012 (11.7 mill. LTL). More active lending was caused by a new opportunity to the borrowers to recover the wages of the employees under the measure "Subsidies to promote entrepreneurship".

Since the beginning of the measure the entrepreneurial trainings was attended by 2551 representatives of target groups (young people make up over 50% of them). In the same period 75 older people (50+) have participated in the entrepreneurial training and got loans.

Since the beginning of the initiative it was created about 1,000 businesses and 2,000 jobs.

**List of sources used**

Interview with Zaneta Maskaliuviene, Chief Specialist at Structural Assistance Policy Division. Ministry of Labour and Social Security

<http://www.invega.lt/lt/paslaugos/lengvatines-paskolos/verslumo-skatinimo-fondas.htm>

**Good Practice 27****ELIS electric****Actor**

Elis Electric  
Electrical installation materials, electrical, SME

**Financer**

The company

**Status of the initiative**

On-going

**Reasons for the initiative**

- To retain skilled and experienced workers at work.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

In order to retain skilled and experienced workers at work, they are offered various opportunities enabling them to fully use their professional potential and, at the same time, reconcile their family and work obligations, perform tasks that meet their health condition. For example, experienced older electricians are offered to perform only a part of the task that requires high-level qualification, preciseness and proficiency, whereas tasks related to heavy physical loads, endurance or climbing (e.g., lifting heavy loads, working at height, etc.) are delegated to younger workers who are less experienced but physically stronger. In addition, formation of mixed-age teams indirectly contributes to improving qualifications of younger-generation employees. The following examples of more flexible work organisation applicable in the said company can be mentioned: flexible working schedules (adapted to individual needs), part-time work, transfer to other positions. Furthermore, the retired ex-employees, at their request, are invited to do one-off jobs requiring specific skills under fixed-term employment contracts. Older workers of the company are also provided additional health insurance covers.

**Period of implementation**

Such practices are widespread during the last 3-4 years, but in general are implemented during about the past 8 years.

**Target group of the initiative**

Employee of (pre-)retirement age

**Impact**

According to the subjective opinion of the managers the impact can be identified as such:

- Satisfaction of the older employees by more flexible work path.
- Exchange of the skills between young and older employees.

**List of sources used**

Interview with the CEO O.Laneckij (2014 10 20)  
<http://www.ercc.lt/index.php?Page=121&lang=en>  
<http://www.socmin.lt/lt/veikla/tarybos/lietuvos-pensininku-reikalavimai-lietuvos-pensininku-sajungai-bociai.html>  
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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ZrRY3y8bQY>  
<http://www.lsu.lt/mokslas/naujienos/lsu-mokslininkai-sukure-sveikatingumo-programa-biuro-darbuotojams>  
[HTTP://WWW.LITRAIL.LT/-/SVEIKATOS-VIRUSA-PLATINS-IR-TARP-KELEIVIU](http://WWW.LITRAIL.LT/-/SVEIKATOS-VIRUSA-PLATINS-IR-TARP-KELEIVIU)  
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<http://www.ldb.lt/en/Information/Pages/default.aspx>  
<http://www.ldb.lt/Informacija/Veikla/Naujienos/UserDisplayForm.aspx?ID=6858>

<http://www.ldb.lt/Informacija/Veikla/Naujienos/UserDisplayForm.aspx?ID=6989>

<http://www.vvsb.lt/sekmingai-startavo-projektas-fizinio-aktyvumo-skatinimas-darbo-vietose/>

<http://vz.lt/article/2014/1/10/verslo-naujokai-tustina-verslumo-skatinimo-fonda>

### 3.2 Good practices on the demand side of labour

#### Good Practice 1

##### Working with a stipend in municipalities

##### Country

Latvia

##### Title/ name of the initiative

Working with a stipend in municipalities

##### Actor

State Employment Agency

##### Financer

Co-financed by the government budget and the European Social Fund

##### Status of the initiative

In practice

##### Reasons for the initiative

- To minimize the negative social effects of the crisis on the labour market.
- To provide the vulnerable groups of the society, including older workers, with temporary jobs and thus livelihood.

##### Description of the initiative/idea/proposal

The project provided the unemployed who did not receive the unemployment benefits with a chance to work. The following conditions applied: low-skilled, physical work, 40 hours a week working hours, minimum length of participation – two weeks, maximum length of participation – six months. For a month work a person could get a stipend of 100 LVL (146 EUR).

##### Period of implementation

2009 - 2011

##### Target group of the initiative

All age groups, including older people

It aimed at returning long-term unemployed to the labour market.

##### Impact

Although the initiative was meant for all age groups, older people compiled a large part of all involved. In 2010, 19 052 (or 36 %) seniors took part in the project while in 2011, 20 507 (or 41 %) seniors participated in the project.

Thus, the unemployed seniors returned to the labour market for a time period and ensured their short-term survival.

##### List of sources used

[http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/darba\\_tirgus/lmzin\\_muzisgl\\_130712.pdf](http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/darba_tirgus/lmzin_muzisgl_130712.pdf)

**Good Practice 2****Senior-friendly company competition****Country**

Latvia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

Senior-friendly company competition

**Actor**

Ministry of Welfare, Institute of Corporate Social Responsibility, Employer's Confederation of Latvia, Free trade Union Confederation of Latvia

**Financer**

Are there any public incentives used? If yes, please describe the incentives.

EU structural funds

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

- To explain how to practically create a suitable working environment for seniors.
- To develop appropriate HR policies. To promote business practices for seniors-oriented employment policies.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

The Ministry of Welfare organized an event-competition where senior-friendly companies were awarded. Companies were evaluated on following criteria: suitable working environment for the elderly, the involvement of seniors in company's processes, etc.

**Period of implementation**

2012 (with a hope that it would continue; no information on continuation)

**Target group of the initiative**

Older workers, employers

It aimed at encouraging employers to hire and retain older workers.

**Impact**

As it turned out, companies had very little knowledge on what qualifies as a senior-friendly company. The further expected impact was that, with the help of the competition, awareness of what it means to be a senior-friendly company would be raised. It was expected that companies would consider what they can do to improve the situation for the elderly.

**List of sources used**

<http://www.lm.gov.lv/news/id/4009>

<http://www.puaro.lv/lv/puaro/par-senioram-draudzigiem-atziti-pieci-uznemumi>

<http://www.puaro.lv/lv/puaro/par-senioram-draudzigiem-atziti-pieci-uznemumi> Senior advisor network

**Good Practice 3****LUDE – social business****Country**

Latvia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

LUDE – social business

**Actor**

LUDE is a social enterprise that employs senior citizens and utilizes potential textile waste, creating design rugs. Small business (about 8-15 people)

**Financer**

The “seed-money” for the start of the company received from the programme “Brigde”.

The Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art in collaboration with the Soros Foundation – Latvia has created the programme “Brigade” to support creative, sustainable entrepreneurship, based in art and culture, which deals with social issues and contributes in raising the quality of life of local communities.

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

Social challenges: poor life quality of pensioners; senior person's inability to find job due to health issues

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

LUDE employ senior age people who “create stylish and colourful rugs out of textile production leftovers and recycled garments” using old wooden weaving looms

**Period of implementation**

Since March 2013

**Target group of the initiative**

Senior age people

Currently 5 seniors are employed; 19 seniors were employed in total

**Impact**

19 seniors were provided with a job, involved in social activities.

Inspired several enterprise developments.

Share experience (give lectures) of employing senior people

**List of sources used**

<http://www.lude.lv/http://www.lude.lv/>

<http://www.senioriem.lv/raksti/2012/4/17/seniori-labu-padomu-deveji/>

[http://www.senioriem.lv/raksti/2012/4/17/seniori-labu-padomu-deveji/LUDE – social business](http://www.senioriem.lv/raksti/2012/4/17/seniori-labu-padomu-deveji/LUDE%20-%20social%20business)

Interview

**Good Practice 4****MAMMU hangers****Country**

Latvia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

MAMMU hangers

**Actor**

MAMMU – a social business, a fashion company that closely cooperates with young Latvian mothers in need. MAMMU organizes their training, teaches them skills and provide materials required for production of MAMMU fashion wares.

**Financer**

The “seed-money” for the start or development of the company received from the he programme “Brigde”.

The Latvian Centre for Contemporary Art in collaboration with the Soros Foundation – Latvia has created the programme “Brigade” to support creative, sustainable entrepreneurship, based in art and culture, which deals with social issues and contributes in raising the quality of life of local communities.

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

Support pensioners in countryside.

Senior unemployment, poor quality of living

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

„A little side project with eco-designer Georg Dwalischwili is working with the retired elderly in the Latvian countryside. Grandfathers walk through the forest and they look for branches which are already bent like a clothes hanger and then they carve them and sand them down and then we have a blacksmith who adds a hook to it. So we have naturally grown clothes hangers. It's just an experiment, but it's the next direction that we will establish further“.

**Period of implementation**

Since about summer 2013

**Target group of the initiative**

Seniors from countryside in need

**Impact****List of sources used**

<http://www.mammu.lv/http://www.mammu.lv/>

<http://www.coolhunting.com/style/interview-fionn-dobbin-mammu.php>

**Good Practice 5****Grindeks****Country**

Latvia

**Title/ name of the initiative**

“Grindeks” good practice in corporate age management

“Grindeks” and Latvian Pensioners’ Federation cooperation agreement

**Actor**

JSC “Grindeks” is the leading pharmaceutical company in the Baltic States. Main fields of action are research, development, manufacturing and sales of original products, generics and active pharmaceutical ingredients. 10% of Grindeks employees are people in pension age (about 720 employees in total).

**Financer**

Are there any public incentives used? If yes, please describe the incentives.

JSC “Grindeks”

**Status of the initiative**

In practice

**Reasons for the initiative**

The areas where experienced older people work are mainly technical areas, where practical knowledge and experience of technical process is needed. These skills can't be acquired quickly and just theoretical knowledge is not sufficient. For “Grindeks” it is very important that technical knowledge is passed on, therefore older employees serve as mentors.

In order to facilitate the dialogue between “Grindeks” and the public, in particular, its most vulnerable categories, such as pensioners, the company has started cooperation with the Latvian Pensioners’ Federation. Signing the cooperation agreement “Grindeks” emphasized the importance of direct communication with the Federation, therefore the company is pleased to participate in various events organised by the Pensioners’ Federation to meet Latvian pensioners. This move has received a very positive feedback from the Pensioners’ Federation representatives for its support of Latvian pensioners and promoting healthy life.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

Older employees serve as mentors. Company is ready to accommodate the needs of their aged employees, in the form of shorter working hours, switching work to less physically and stress demanding and considering ergonomic needs.

Representatives of “Grindeks” participate in meetings with pensioners. Throughout the meetings the company actively promotes the principles of an everyday active life, as well as provides information about correct, safe and effective medication usage principles that are up to date and useful for every senior. “Grindeks” also regularly publishes information on various health issues and proper use of medications in the Latvian Pensioners Federation's newspaper “Latvian Pensioner”.

**Period of implementation**

2012 - onwards

**Target group of the initiative**

Senior employees as well as other employees of “Grindeks”

Initiative aims at extending working lives of elderly employees, through flexible working time practices and ergonomic jobs.

Latvian pensioners

The initiative aims at health protection and active life promotion, through information campaigns and seminars.

**Impact**

The expected impact would be:

Extended working life of elderly employees of “Grindeks”, enhancement of the welfare of the elderly people.

More seniors who are informed about health and medical issues, potentially improved, healthier more active and more integrated into the society elderly in Latvia.

**List of sources used**

Interview with “Grindeks” personnel manager

[www.grindeks.lv](http://www.grindeks.lv)<http://www.grindeks.lv>

[http://www.grindeks.lv/mce/uploads/ksagrindeks\\_2012eng.pdf](http://www.grindeks.lv/mce/uploads/ksagrindeks_2012eng.pdf)

**Good Practice 6 (also Supply Side)****STAY IN THE LABOUR MARKET****Country**

Lithuania

**TITLE/ NAME OF THE INITIATIVE**

StaY in the labour market

**Actors**

Lithuanian Labour Exchange (Lietuvos darbo birža)

Lithuanian Labour Exchange is an institution under the Ministry of Social Security and Labour in charge for implementation of the public population employment guarantees on the labour market, directly subordinate and accountable to it.

Lithuanian Labour Exchange had 1441 employees in June, 20139

**Financer**

ESF

Project value – 81,2 mln. Ltl.

**Status of the initiative**

On-going

**Reasons for the initiative**

It is much more difficult to compete in the labour market for the long-term unemployed and people 50+ due to the age, the loss of skills and socialization problems. Those two groups of the unemployed are most passive at labour market, they are facing the greatest difficulties in job search.

The dropping out of the labour market of older people and the long-term unemployed causes not only the deterioration of personal and family relationships, but also results in their social exclusion.

**Description of the initiative/idea/proposal**

During the Project three supported employment measures will be implemented: a) subsidised employment, b) support for acquisition of job skills , and c) job rotation.

Nearly 12.9 thousand unemployed will participate in the subsidised employment measures, of which - 6.8 thousand of long-term unemployed and 6 thousand of working age 50+ unemployed. 1,5 thousand will participate in support for acquisition of job skills measure (among them 300 of older unemployed).

Labour exchange will partially compensate the costs for employers who employ long-term and older than 50 years of age.

**Period of implementation**

2014 01 02 - 2015 05 31

**Target group of the initiative**

ESF project "Stay in the labour market" is created for the unemployed people over 50 years old (till the age of retirement) and the long-term unemployed into the labour market.

It is expected that of nearly 15 thousand people will participate in the activities the project. Of which over 8.3 thousand of long-term unemployed and 6.3 thousand of older than 50 years old unemployed.

**Impact**

It was planned that every second participant after the project will find the right job and join the social life. As the head of EU support management Subdivision of Lithuanian Labour Exchange Galina Savickien commented „Maybe not everyone will get the permanent jobs in the future, but we hope that the temporary employment of the long-unemployed and the 50+ during the project will motivate higher social activity and enable these groups to further employment"10.

During the first 6 month of the project implementation over 8,3 unemployed people were participating the Project activities. Every third of them were 50+. 406 participants found the temporal job since the Project has started.

**List of sources used**

Lietuvos darbo biržos Komunikacijos skyrius, tel. (8 5) 236 0799. 11

<http://www.ldb.lt/Informacija/Veikla/Naujienos/UserDisplayForm.aspx?ID=6858>

About the project:

[http://www.ldb.lt/Informacija/ESParama/Puslapiai/esf\\_islik\\_darbo\\_rinkoje.aspx](http://www.ldb.lt/Informacija/ESParama/Puslapiai/esf_islik_darbo_rinkoje.aspx)

## **4. Extending Working Lives and Lifelong Learning: Drivers and Barriers**

### **4.1 Supply Side**

#### **4.1.1 Workability / Employability: Motivation**

Regarding the issue of motivating longer working lives among employees in Baltic countries, some main conclusions based on previous research and data collected in the Mopact project include:

- Combination of relatively low pensions and possibility to receive simultaneous income from work are important motivations for longer employment in Baltic countries. This is reflected in relatively high employment of older workers, whereas it comes at a cost of high poverty risk among retired population due to low replacement rates of pensions.
- Although increase in retirement age does raise employment of older workers according to some research results (Vörk 2009), it also raises use of alternative pathways to retirement (e.g. Vörk 2009 on Estonian example).
- Efforts have been made to reduce early retirement in Baltic countries, although this has not given immediate effects since: (a) changes coincided with economic crisis which may have outweighed the unfavourable conditions to early retirement, i.e. due to lack of alternatives in the labour market, people still chose early retirement; and (b) parallel, even more unfavourable changes in the pension system in some countries which made early retirement still the favourable option for many individuals (e.g. in case of Latvia) (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014).
- Favouring early retirement in some occupations due to their higher health risks has been raised under discussion in case of Estonia – research suggests that the health status of people who receive these favourable pensions is not poorer than the health state of other people in the same age group (National Audit Office of Estonia 2014). It has been debated that the system has not been modernised for more than 20 years and do not reflect modern occupational risks whereas the system does not give any financial incentives to employers to improve working conditions (Vörk, Piirits, and Masso 2016). Reforms are planned in Estonia to modernise the pension systems in occupations with higher health risks, although their contents have not yet been agreed.
- Adapting working conditions to the needs of older workers is a common company-level practice outlined in many cases. Nevertheless, Eurostat data suggests reducing working hours prior retirement is not a common practice among population in Baltic countries or in EU countries on average. This suggests there is a need to facilitate human resource practices enabling adaptation of working conditions and, thus, raising awareness among employers of the practical solutions. As Estonian data suggests employees do not tend to request for flexible work opportunities despite employer's favourable attitudes, there is also a need to inform employees of flexible working conditions as an alternative to early exit from the labour market.

A qualitative research among companies based in Northern Lithuania confirmed that, according to employers' views, economic incentives (possibility to receive both pension and wage) and better work environment (positive attitudes of employers and employees to older workers, working conditions adopted to the needs of older employees) are important motivations for longer working lives (Milkintaitė 2011; summarised in Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014).

Several examples of company level practices from Baltic countries have been outlined where working conditions have been adapted to the needs of older workers to keep them employed longer, including:

- Shared jobs for older workers. As older workers' capacity to work decreases with age, they were offered shorter flexible (part-time) working hours and trainees were recruited which enabled utilise older workers' work experience and help trainees to settle in better (Cedefop 2015 case of Eesti Energia, Estonia). Another company offers its experienced older electricians a choice to perform only a part of the task that requires high-level qualification, preciseness and proficiency, whereas tasks related to heavy physical loads, endurance or climbing (e.g. lifting heavy loads, working at height, etc.) are delegated to younger workers who are less experienced but physically stronger (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014 case of Elis Electric, Lithuania).
- Adapted work load/ working conditions for older workers. While the example is relatively similar to the previous ones, in these cases difficult jobs are not shared with younger colleagues, rather older workers are given an opportunity/ choice to reduce work load or choose working conditions more convenient for their abilities. This is done, for instance, through flexible working schedules adapted to individual needs or switching work to less physically demanding/stressful jobs (cases of Grindex, Latvia; Rimi, Latvia; Elis Electric, Lithuania discussed in Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). An example illustrated use of flexible working conditions: a Lithuanian construction company Elis Electric calls its retired ex-employees, at their request, to do one-off jobs requiring specific skills under fixed-term employment contracts (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014).

**Setting positive examples** was outlined as one strategy to value older workers. An Estonian energy company – Eesti Energia – has introduced a lifetime achievement acknowledgement to employees who have been working in the company for at least 25 years. The company awards the winner with a memento and monetary prize (based on in-depth case study report<sup>35</sup>). Also, the company shares the nominees' stories of their work history in the company via intranet and internal newspapers. The aim is to show that Eesti Energia values all its employees irrespective of their age and to set a positive example to other employees (Cedefop 2015). Another way of acknowledging older workers, observed in multiple occasions, is celebration of work anniversaries or other important anniversaries (e.g. special congratulations on the 50<sup>th</sup> and/or 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary) (e.g. Pupienienė 2013; Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014).

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<sup>35</sup> Case study reports are not published individually. Summary report available from: <http://mopact.group.shef.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Report-on-drivers-of-change-EU-wide.pdf>

#### 4.1.1.1 Health

Health is one of the central challenges to ensuring active ageing in Baltic countries and motivating longer working lives. Of particular concern is men's health as male life expectancy in the Baltic countries is among the lowest in the EU. This reveals in high inactivity among men prior to retirement due to health reasons. Several practices to tackle this challenge among national as well as company level can be identified. While company health packages are not always targeted specifically to older workers, they play an important role in preventing health problems in the workplace and supporting healthy lifestyles among employees supporting longer healthy lives. Some of the examples outlined include:

- Shifting from passive payment of disability pensions to activation measures is taken with the Estonian workability reform. Since the reform will take effect since 1 July 2016, there is yet no evaluation of the results of the reform. Nevertheless, initial analysis has outlined that, as a result of the reform, the number of people with reduced employment capacity participating in the labour market could increase by 30 thousand people by 2023 (Saar Poll OÜ 2014).
- As there are a multitude of good practice examples at company level to improve employees' health and enhance healthy working conditions, collection and facilitation of good practice examples is a good way of setting example. For a similar purpose, network of companies has been set up to exchange practices of healthy work places. While most activities are not targeted directly to older employees but all employees in the company, these activities are not directly acknowledged as supporting active ageing and longer working lives. Thus, it could be further facilitated what is age management at company level and what practices are implemented.

Based on the networks, collection of good practice examples etc. a wealth of examples on company level practices to promote employees' health can be collected. However, it is difficult to evaluate their effectiveness in promoting longer working lives as effects are not as direct and can reveal in a longer perspective.

Some attempts have been taken in the Baltic countries to **motivate employers' investments and efforts in contributing to employees' health and occupational health and safety**. For instance, in Lithuania, legislative amendments from 2008 provided for the differentiation of the amount of insurance contributions paid by the insurer, depending on the number of accidents at work (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). Furthermore, it refers to the methodology of ascribing insurers to the groups of rates of social insurance contributions of accidents at work and occupational diseases (Ibid.). Some recent research has suggested implementation of similar measures in Estonia as well, which would, according to rough estimates, prevent around 10% of occupational accidents annually (Masso et al. 2015).

In Estonia, tax reductions on employers' expenses to improve employees' health has been discussed for several years. While both, employers and trade union representatives have supported the abolishment of the tax (Kallaste 2007; Osila and Turk 2011), the state has so far opposed it arguing that tax reductions would not give the expected effect as it would decrease social tax revenues and thereby have a negative effect on the health and pension insurance

financing (Tamm 2010). Nevertheless, in April 2016, government announced that as of 2018, up to 400 Euros of employers' expenses on employees' health per year will be free of fringe benefit tax<sup>36</sup>. This is not a new / innovative practice in European comparison, although it serves as a good example of success factors of similar intervention mechanisms across different institutional and social contexts.

Efforts have also been made to **raise awareness of health risks** at work through various information campaigns. For instance, in Estonia several knowledge campaigns have been conducted regarding health risks at work, including prevention of falls (2009), guidance and training of employees regarding occupational safety (2009), raising awareness among employers and employees regarding their rights, healthy and safe working conditions (2012), working environment management in companies (2012), campaign on psychosocial risks at workplace (2012) (see also Ministry of Social Affairs 2010; Ministry of Social Affairs 2009).

Several company level examples of improving employees' health were identified in the framework of the Mopact project. Multiple examples are outlined in Bauknecht (2015). Nevertheless, most of these examples are not directly targeted at older workers, which make it difficult to drawing direct connection between company-level measures and longer working lives. In the current report, individual measures are not outlined, they are rather summarised as a collection of good practice examples. Some individual measures directly targeting older workers are discussed, though.

As outlined by Nurmela et al (2014), ESF financing has an important role to play in supporting active ageing, healthy workplaces and increasing healthy life years in the society. For instance, in Estonia during 2007-2013, ESF financed several projects with the aim of assessing and improving the working environment in individual companies.

**Facilitation of best practice examples and exchange of experience** has been used to promote health related initiatives at company/organisation level. For instance, in Estonia, Labour Inspectorate collects descriptions of good and innovative examples from Estonian enterprises regarding their measures of work environment and work organisation (measure financed by ESF). The examples represent cases where companies have contributed more to their employees' welfare than is required by legislation. Examples are collected and disseminated annually since 2009, outlining best practices each year. Practices need to be necessary, targeted, innovative, transferable to other employment contexts and efficient. Each year three cases are highlighted as best case examples while the collection of good examples is published online. In 2015, Labour Inspectorate published a collection of best practice examples from 2010-2015 (Labour Inspectorate 2015). According to the Labour Inspectorate, they have received feedback that people active in work environment topics regularly follow the database and have found several interesting ideas (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). Also, the visiting statistics of the web site of Labour Inspectorate confirms that the database is among the highest visited sites on their page. In 2013 the aim was to reach 185 good examples in the database (by the end of 2012 the database included 165 examples).

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<sup>36</sup> Valitsus toetas töötaja liikumisharrastuselt erisoodustusmaksu kaotamist, 27.04.2016 (in Estonian): <https://valitsus.ee/et/uudised/valitsus-toetas-tootaja-liikumisharrastuselt-erisoodustusmaksu-kaotamist>

Another measure used to facilitate exchange of experience on healthy work places is networking of employers – in Estonia a Network for Workplace Health Promotion<sup>37</sup> is set up. The network was started already in 2005, since 2006 its activities are coordinated by the National Institute for Health Development. With the ESF support, the network is widened with new members. Also, members receive opportunities to participate in training and receive counselling regarding workplace health promotion. As at April 2016, the network had 246 members (different enterprises, organisations).

Some of the company cases analysed in the Mopact project, indicated that several companies have introduced **additional health care package** for older workers, introducing additional health insurance covers (e.g. Rimi, Latvia and Elis Electric, Lithuania) (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). For instance, in Rimi Latvia, terms of health insurance improve with tenure (Bauknecht and Naegele 2015). The critical years are ten and fifteen: after 15 years of working in Rimi Latvia, an employee gets the best package of health insurance provided by the company, which is equivalent to the ones senior executives have. The best insurance package contains unique terms such as increased monetary coverage and partial coverage of dental services.

#### 4.1.1.2 Life-cycle Orientation

##### Care

Reconciliation of paid work and care obligations has not been one of the focus topics within the Mopact project. For this reason, these practices are not covered in the data collected within the project. Nevertheless, a recent report on the work-life balance measures for persons of working age with dependent relatives in Estonia for the European Social Policy Network (ESPN) has summarised that main problems related to alleviating care burden and removing obstacles in labour market participation of carers arise from lack of services, restricted access to services, lack of suitable services and insufficient social guarantees for carers (Vörk, Paat-Ahi, and Biin unpublished). The report also outlines high regional inequality of services, such as institutionalised care, home care, support person or personal assistant and lack of flexibility and diversity in current services to meet the demand of very different conditions that carers face (Ibid.). These problems have been acknowledged at national level in Estonia and ESF resources have been targeted to tackle the problem and provide necessary services for work-private life reconciliation (Ibid.). Furthermore, a working group has been assembled to discuss potential solutions for reconciliation of care and working life. The report provides a thorough overview of work-life balance measures for working population with dependent relatives and discusses their effectiveness. These reports are submitted for all EU countries and will be published at the website of the ESPN network together with a synthesis of results.

No examples of company/organisation practices with particular aim of combining care obligations with paid work was collected within the Mopact project. This is not to say that there are no such practices. Although company case studies did not capture such cases and these were

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<sup>37</sup> Web-site of the Network is available at: <http://www.terviseinfo.ee/et/tervise-edendamine/tookohal/tervist-edendavate-tookohtade-tet-vorgustik>

not specifically looked for in designing and selecting case studies. Furthermore, practices of flexible working conditions also support reconciliation of paid work and private activities (see also 2.1.1.2 above).

### **Informal Work**

Reconciliation of formal and informal work (i.e. volunteering) has not been one of the focus topics in WP3 of the Mopact project. Nevertheless, the topic of volunteering among older population was covered in WP5 (“Health and Well-being”). In-depth research on policies that facilitate social involvement among older people was conducted only in Estonia of the three Baltic countries (see Matt 2015). Some of its conclusions are outlined below.

The WP5 report on Estonia outlines that a precondition for volunteering in old age is enough free time and material resources: as older people often continue working after formal retirement age due to their low income, they are not being socially active and contribute as volunteers (Matt 2015). When looking at different components of the Active Ageing Index<sup>38</sup>, the Estonian scores are among the lowest when it comes to participation in the society (25<sup>th</sup> among EU-28 countries in 2014). Subcomponents of the index indicate that older people contribute much less as volunteers (20<sup>th</sup> place) and they are politically much less active (23<sup>rd</sup> place) in comparison to other EU countries. The Active Ageing Index for Latvia and Lithuania are close to that of Estonia: ranking 21<sup>st</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> position respectively.

The Mopact report outlines that the issue of how to motivate older people being more socially active hasn’t been widely debated in Estonia (Matt 2015). Thus, there are no innovative practices to outline that would tackle this topic. In Estonian case, it is rather a matter of acknowledgement of the relevance of volunteering as a form of active ageing next to formal work.

Examples of active participation of older people in society were outlined in the WP5 report (Matt 2015). These cases concentrated fully on informal work and did not touch upon the topic of combination between formal work and volunteering.

Some project-based examples were also identified in background research for WP3 (see Nurme, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). Although in these cases as well there is no component of combining volunteering with paid work. Examples include a Grundtvig programme financing the voluntary service for people aged 50+ to support citizen activity in the age group in Estonia and Lithuania (Grundtvig Initiative on Volunteering in Europe for Seniors). Activities of Lithuanian Caritas are also focused on senior volunteering in the social sphere (training and seminars on opportunities for volunteers: trainings have been attended by more than 300 persons learning the principles of social work and sharing their volunteering experience).<sup>39</sup>

#### **4.1.1.3 Lifelong Learning**

In terms of lifelong learning, there is a need to facilitate lifelong learning for older age groups on all levels, including macro level policies, meso level (company and organisation practices) and micro level (personal motivation). As research in the Mopact project showed, there are not

<sup>38</sup> <http://www1.unece.org/stat/platform/display/AAl/Active+Ageing+Index+Home>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.caritas.lt/index.php?id=new&new=21>

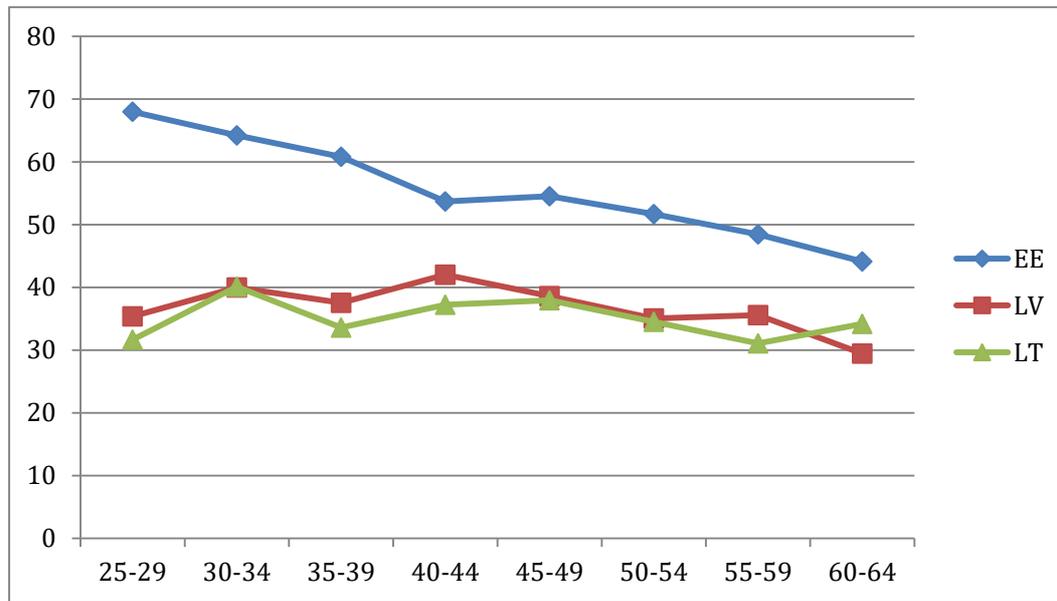
many examples of good practice to outline in this field and age barrier remains an important obstacle, particularly in Estonia and Lithuania. Thus, rather than giving good examples, Baltic countries are in need of learning from other countries' experience in this field of active ageing. Some suggestions based on Mopact research include:

- Facilitation of good practice examples of policy measures supporting learning participation among older age groups, including their effectiveness, could be useful in motivating policy developments. There are not many examples of macro level policies from the Baltic countries which would give enough attention to older age groups and the barriers they face.
- On micro/meso level, there is a need to motivate both employers to provide training as well as older workers to take up learning when offered the opportunity; tackling the age barrier (i.e. attitude of being too old to learn) is an important challenge.

Educational attainment among older age groups in Baltic States is considerably higher than in the EU on average. In age groups of 25 to 34 and 35 to 54 the share of people in Baltic States who only have education corresponding to ISCED levels 0-2 is roughly three times lower than the EU average for those age groups (Eurostat). Nevertheless, statistics reveal a worrisome educational gap in tertiary education attainment between the sexes (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). In the older age group the EU wide average difference between men and women is 3.4% points. In Latvia and Lithuania the gap is 6% and 7% points and in Estonia the difference is nearing to 10% points. But gender differences in attainment of tertiary education are even bigger for the younger age group. EU average is 30% for men and 40% for women while in Baltic States the gap varies from 17 to 25% points meaning that future older generations can expect even bigger gender differences in their education levels than they experience now.

In general, the three Baltic countries are described by very different participation patterns in education and training across the life-course. As shown in figure 1 below, participation in non-formal education over the past year is the highest in Estonia and remains so through all age groups based on 2011 data. At the same time, Estonia shows a significant decrease in training participation across age groups, while in Latvia and Lithuania participation rates remain stable through the whole age range. Thus, in Estonia efforts should be targeted towards maintaining high participation rates of the youngest age groups also in their further careers while measures in Latvia and Lithuania need to aim towards higher participation across the whole age range.

**Figure 7 Participation in non-formal education in Estonia (EE), Latvia (LV) and Lithuania (LT) by five-year age groups, %**



Source: Adult Education Survey 2011, author's calculations

Against this background, Estonian and Lithuanian lifelong learning strategies tend to have very little impact on lifelong learning participation among older age groups thus far (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). While in Estonia, the need to enhance participation in learning across all age groups has been recognised, these aims have not been backed up by policy measures targeting older age groups specifically. Thus, Baltic countries are in need of good practice examples from other countries to outline possibilities of supporting lifelong learning participation among older age groups with macro level policies. As will be outlined below, enhancing learning participation among older age groups is largely project-based with a local/organisation level approach putting a stronger emphasis on meso level rather than macro level policies.

A good example has been outlined in Latvia, where, from 2010-2013, a lifelong learning measure for employed people was implemented. The measure provided **financial motivation to older age groups to participate** in learning: persons that have less than 5 years left till the retirement age were within privileged groups, receiving 100% SEA financial support for the training (max 355 EUR). Other groups had to make co-financing of 30% of the training costs. In the beginning of 2012 – 10% of all project participants were individuals 55 and over (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014).

**Offering training courses for older age groups** have also been used to enhance participation in learning in old age. For instance, in '*Training with employer*' measure in Latvia almost 20% of all participants of the measure in 2010 and 2011 were people in the age group 50 and over (LR Labklājības Ministrija 2012). This measure provided the updating of professional skills and competences, while attending SEA provided training on the basis of employers' pre-orders. The measure was offered during 2009-2015.

Although some evidence suggests, measures enhancing lifelong learning in companies/ organisations among older age groups are still novelties and relatively rarely represented (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014), some company practices have been outlined.

Concerning older and experienced workers, **knowledge transfer/mentorship** seems to be an example implemented in several companies. In these cases, older workers are mostly in the role of mentors providing guidance and support to their younger colleagues with the aim of integrating young professionals in the workplace and giving knowledge not received from initial training. For instance, such practices were reported in Lithuanian companies according to a qualitative survey and in some company case studies, e.g. Grindex (Latvia), Elis Electric (Lithuania) (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014) and in Eesti Energia (Estonia) (Bauknecht and Naegele 2015).

An example of a large company – Eesti Energia (Estonia) – has illustrated that **presence of a systematic training programme** and basic principles of training can be an important factor in supporting training throughout the working life. Eesti Energia has its own development and competence centre where training programmes and ground principles of training are elaborated (case discussed in Bauknecht and Naegele 2015). The company has elaborated special development programmes for business critical occupations that are: engineers, production managers, project managers and internal trainers. Every year the company reviews current situation, sets new goals and activities to ensure that occupations vital for the company are fulfilled with qualified employees. This support the vision of providing continual training throughout the working life to all employees to keep the skills of all employees up to date and in accordance with business requirements.

In both Lithuania and Estonia, **university initiatives targeted at providing knowledge on various topics to older age groups** have been outlined as good examples of promoting active participation in learning in older age. Although these activities are not directly related to improving employability, they do contribute to enhancement of lifelong learning culture across the life-course, extending beyond active employment. For instance, in Lithuania at the end of 2012, the total number of University of the Third Age (UTA) students was around 6,000 (almost double the number in 2008). Women aged 60-75 with at least vocational education account for most of UTA students (“Social Information and Training Agency. Analysis on the Third Age Universities System’s Performance.” 2012). In Estonia, University of the Dignified started in 2010 targeted to all interested people aged 50+. In 2015, the initiative was awarded by the Minister of Education and Research as the best learning initiative of the year with almost 2,000 enrolled students in seven Estonian cities.

As a barrier to including older workers in learning, a Lithuanian company manager has outlined that older workers are reluctant in taking up training. This is supported by research evidence (Adult Education Survey, 2011; author’s calculations) suggesting that in Estonia and Lithuania the share of non-participants who claim they do not participate due to old age or poor health are among the highest in European comparison – 13% of non-participants in Estonia and 9% in Lithuania say they did not take up learning because of old age or poor health conditions. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> highest results respectively. In Latvia, this reason is outlined rarely, being among the lowest two countries.

**Information and experience exchange at organisational level** has been used to facilitate good practice examples. For instance, a project “Late Life Learning - Discovering the Pathways for Cooperative Partnerships” was implemented in 2015. Participants included partners involved in training older age groups from 4 Nordic and Baltic countries who operate around a common idea of late life learning, accelerate their learning, cooperation and experience exchange. In order to fulfil this goal, partner institutions will offer exchange opportunities for groups of seniors’ trainers. They will have an opportunity to get acquainted with different approaches applied in partner countries.

Some project initiatives have **created learning opportunities for older age groups**. These initiatives have been led by various enterprises and NGOs in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania (see also Bauknecht 2015). For instance, during 2012-2014 a project was implemented by various Baltic partners with the aim of creating online interactive, multimedia based training module for elder people to improve their ICT skills for better usage of e-services that are provided by the libraries (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). This training module with specific topics for elder people will be accessible on the internet platform, integrated into public libraries web pages, and disseminated via public libraries. Similarly, an ICT oriented training course was developed in a Latvian project “Get Connected, Latvia” (introduced in 2008). The project provided free computer courses available for anyone interested aged 50 and over (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). The aim was to reduce the digital divide between generations. According to Lattelecom data (Internet service provider and Telecommunications Company in Latvia), 1500 individuals aged 50+ participated in the activity in 2008. During the next year participation number increased more than four times, being 6680 participants in 2009.

#### **4.1.2 (Sustainable, real) Self-Employment**

Promotion of self-employment among older workers has not been covered as a means of active ageing in the Baltic Mopact reports. Eurostat data suggests total self-employment among all economically active population remains around 9-10% in all three Baltic countries, being slightly below EU-28 average of 14%. The shares remain the same in 25-64 year old population as well as in pre-retirement age (55-64 age group). There are some gender differences, though. In all Baltic countries (as in EU on average) men are more often self-employed compared to women. While 12% of economically active men aged 25-64 are self-employed in all three countries, the shares among women vary between 5-8%. Same patterns are in the 55-64 age group. In total, self-employment does not seem to be a particular solution for older workers in the Baltic countries: while in EU28 countries on average, the share of self-employed population increases from 14% to 19%, when comparing 25-64 age group and 55-64 age group, there is no large increase in the share of self-employment across age groups in the Baltic countries (remains within 1-2 percentage points). There are no examples of promoting self-employment among older age groups from Baltic countries. This is not to claim that there are no policies, however, the topic of self-employment as a form of active ageing was not covered in data collection within the project.

### 4.1.3 Work beyond Legal Retirement Age

In all Baltic countries, working beyond legal retirement age is motivated by:

- Low replacement rates of pensions and possibility to accumulate pensions with income from work (see also 2.1.1. above);
- Deferred retirement options which increase pension entitlements.

Working beyond legal retirement age is mostly motivated by national level policies while only one company-level practice was identified with the particular aim of supporting employment beyond retirement. Nevertheless, the case illustrates that the measures used to support employment beyond retirement at company level combine elements of various topics covered in other chapters of the report, including job sharing and flexible working conditions. Thus, the aim of prolonged employment beyond retirement age is reached through a combination of various measures. Companies implementing various measures thus also contribute to the aim of motivating work beyond retirement.

All Baltic countries allow for deferred retirement. According to the MISSOC database<sup>40</sup>, unlimited deferment is possible in Estonia and Latvia while Lithuanians can defer retirement for up to five years as at July 2015. In Estonia, old-age pension is increased by 0.9% for every month of deferred retirement. In Lithuania, pension is increased by 8% for each full year of deferment. In Latvia, working beyond pensionable age is reflected in the pension calculation formula. In Estonian case, it has been outlined that take-up of this option is relatively low (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). In 2012, 2.0% of pensioners who entered into the old-age pension scheme, had used the option to delay retirement (Ibid.). However, there have been no studies on the reasons why the use of this option has been so low.

A Lithuanian case highlighted particular aim of offering employment opportunities to the workers at the age beyond official retirement age (Bauknecht and Naegele 2015 case of Elis Electric, Lithuania). The measures introduced for this combine elements of policies covered in the rest of this report, including job sharing (experienced older electricians are offered to perform only a part of the task that requires high-level qualification, preciseness and proficiency, whereas tasks related to heavy physical loads, endurance or climbing (e.g., lifting heavy loads, working at height, etc.) are delegated to younger workers who are less experienced but physically stronger), flexible employment relationships (retired ex-employees, at their request, are invited to do one-off jobs requiring specific skills under fixed-term employment contracts) (Ibid).

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<sup>40</sup> Mutual Information System on Social Protection, <http://missoc.org/index.htm>

## 4.2 Demand Side

### 4.2.1 Financial Incentives for the Employment of Older Worker

There are only very few cases of financial incentives for the employment of older workers from Baltic countries. While there are general measures of, e.g. wage subsidies, these are not targeted specifically at older workers. Also, there are often no impact assessments from the perspective of age (e.g. comparing the effectiveness of measures among younger and older age groups). Furthermore, there were no non-public financial incentives identified to motivate demand for older workers. Below some available evidence from Baltic countries has been outlined.

#### **Public financial incentives for the employment of older workers**

In Latvia, 'work experience with a stipend' programme (in place until the end of 2011) has been particularly popular among older individuals (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). The measure aimed to provide work and income support for those unemployed who no longer receive unemployment benefits, but are willing to engage in community jobs in municipalities, performing low-skilled non-commercial work such as cleaning, development and maintenance of public infrastructure and local social services. Within this programme, local authorities created new (mainly unskilled) jobs for unemployed people where they could work for up to six months and receive a stipend of LVL 100 (EUR 142) which was later reduced to LVL 80 (EUR 114) (Latvijas Lauksaimniecības and Meža Zinātņu Akadēmija 2011). 36% of all participants of the programme in 2010 were individuals 50+, and 41% respectively in 2011. Despite high participation rates and overall very positive evaluation (Latvijas Lauksaimniecības and Meža Zinātņu Akadēmija 2011), the programme was also criticised in the media for bringing only short-term benefits, as it does not create permanent working places and programme participants are not socially insured (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014).

The 'subsidised workplace programme' is another initiative provided for older individuals in Latvia. This initiative is considered to be particularly efficient in promoting older people employment as well as continued employment (after the end of the subsidy period) (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). The aim of the measure is to facilitate the development of sustainable and long-term working places for unemployed with lower productivity level and preserve their skills and competencies (LR Labklājības Ministrija 2012). In this programme, private employers provide jobs subsidised by the Latvian PES and offer them to unemployed people for a period up to 12 months. Those over 50 years of age were 31- 36% of all beneficiaries of the programme in 2010-2012. The programme had a positive impact on continued employment, according to SEA data; around 26% of individuals of pre-retirement age after their participation in the programme were able to find a permanent job in 2011 (LR Labklājības Ministrija 2012). Around 74% of individuals of pre-retirement age who took part in this programme found a job within three months of it ending<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> Projektu un kvalitātes vadība, *NVA nodarbinātības pasākumu novērtējums* (Evaluation of SEA employment measures), Rīga, 2013; *NVA pakalpojumu darba devējiem novērtējums* (Evaluation of SEA services for employers), Rīga, 2012

### **Non-public financial incentives**

There were no non-public financial incentives identified among Baltic countries.

#### **4.2.2 Non-Financial Incentives for the Employment of Older Worker**

Employment protection legislation can potentially have various impacts on older people's employment. Baltic countries vary in their extend of employment security for older workers. Estonia in particular has moved towards higher flexibility in employment rules. Nevertheless, all three countries in total have concluded that these regulations tend to have relatively low impact on employment of older workers due to enforcement problems and low awareness of these regulations. Further, in some sectors there still exist regulations limiting employment opportunities based on age (although countries have moved towards their abolishment). On meso level, some initiatives to motivate employment of older workers were identified.

#### **Public non-financial incentives for the employment of older workers**

**Employment protection legislation** has been discussed as public non-financial incentive for the employment of older workers. In general, older workers seem to be covered by more strict rules in Latvia and Lithuania while Estonia has moved towards a more flexible model (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). Older workers have higher employment protection compared to younger people based on two main principles: higher employment protection to people who are in pre-retirement age (or reached retirement age) and higher employment protection to people with longer job tenure (based on the assumption that older people have more often longer job tenure). Though there is no evidence from research allowing to judge on the impact of this additional protection on employment opportunities of older workers, we may presume that this could act as disincentive for employers for hiring older workers.

Employment protection base on a person's age varies in Baltic countries. Estonia does not have any special conditions for people in pre-retirement age. Further, Estonia's employment protection legislation is considered highly flexible according to OECD's calculations (OECD 2013). At the same time, Lithuanian employment legislation includes longer advance notice requirement, stricter dismissal rules and additional financial benefits upon termination of employment contract for people in pre-retirement age. Latvia remains in between the two extremes - people in pre-retirement (along with nine other categories of employees) are given priority in remaining in employment upon redundancies.

In all three countries, job tenure provides additional protection in cases of layoffs and termination of employment contract. In Estonia, protection of workers in the labour market based on their job tenure has moved towards more flexibility along with the rest of employees with the recent labour law reform. For instance, length of notice periods has been reduced by one month in case of individual dismissals. Since 2009, severance pay for employers is no longer dependent on job tenure, meaning that the expenses for dismissal of employees with longer job tenure has become cheaper for employers reducing by 1 – 3 month average salary, depending on the length of job tenure. Also, until 2008, people with longer job tenure had a preferential right to keep a job during layoffs in certain cases. These preferential rights have not

been included in the new Employment Contracts Act.

In Lithuania and Latvia, longer job tenure ensures mostly higher redundancy benefits. In Lithuania, severance pay varies from 1 average monthly wage up to 6 average monthly wages in case the length of service is more than 20 years. In Latvia, redundancy compensation varies from one month average earnings to four months average earnings for employment tenure of more than 20 years<sup>42</sup>.

However, these regulations are not reported to have an extensive impact on employment of older workers due to poor enforcement and low knowledge of these conditions (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). The fact that people often do not know their rights and thus labour law requirements are not followed, has been confirmed in a research on the implementation of Employment Contracts Act in Estonia (Masso et al. 2013). Both Latvia and Lithuania have reported cases where employment contracts were terminated “by agreement between the parties” or people left the job “voluntarily”, i.e. without the aforementioned notice periods and/or severance pays, see for instance Gruzevskis and Blaziene (2013), Kamerade (2012).

Latvia still reports laws that limit the opportunities available to older employees, setting the legal age limits for individuals working in specific sectors or professions i.e. civil servants, as well as judges, prosecutors, police officers, border guards (The Civil Service Law, the Office of the Prosecutor Law and the Military Service Law). Civil servant after reaching the retirement age loses the status of civil servant, and his/her work unless there is a special permission (issued by the director of the organisation or the ministry) for them to continue work. Age limits have been also applied to<sup>43</sup> the Law on Institutions of Higher Education until 2003 when the Constitutional Court has recognized these restrictions illegitimate (Kamerade 2012). Similar provisions were declared invalid in Estonia in 2007. In 2007 the Estonian Supreme Court declared invalid the articles of the Public Service Act that legally permitted the dismissal of public sector employees aged over 65 years, merely on the basis of their age. Moreover, if the dismissed employee had an employment history of more than five years, the compensation for dismissal based on the employee’s age was smaller than that of regular redundancies. Similar articles of the Employment Contracts Act affecting private sector employees were changed a year earlier, in 2006 (see also Nurmela and Karu (2007).

### **Non-public non-financial incentives for the employment of older workers**

Data analysed for the Baltic country reports indicated some meso level initiatives with the aim of increasing employers’ willingness to employ older workers. For instance, the Lithuanian Trade Union Confederation initiated international project funded by the European Commission– ‘Age Management Strategy for Sustainable Growth in Era of Crisis’ (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). The project, experts from various countries will exchange their experience in the area of age management. The project aims at exchange of experience and developing competencies of Lithuanian employers and their representatives in the area of age management. Training seminars and national level meetings are organised during implementation of

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<sup>42</sup> These compensations are paid by the employer.

<sup>43</sup> The age limits (up to 65 years old) were applied to administrative positions and academic positions in the state research institutions and organisations, as well as positions in elected collegiate scientific institutions, to university professors, assistant professors and administrative positions (rector, vice-rector, dean)

the project together with an Age Management Manual issued at the end of the project activities.

Another example of sharing experience and information on age management among employers is the 'senior friendly enterprise' award from Latvia, organised in 2012 (Nurmela, Osila, and Leetmaa 2014). The Ministry of Welfare together with Free Trade Union Confederation, the Employers' Confederation and Institute for Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility identified best practices in the field and as a result five enterprises<sup>44</sup> were awarded a 'senior friendly enterprise' status. The main aim of the award was to promote best practices regarding seniors' employment and to show and explain with practical examples how to create suitable working environment for seniors and to develop appropriate motivation policies.

A project-based initiative in Estonia by NGO Second Chance organised, together with Unemployment Insurance Fund, nine seminars were held for employers in order to discuss challenges and concerns faced by ageing workforce; introducing key benefits of recruiting older people to help overcome widespread prejudices against older workers (Bauknecht 2015).

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<sup>44</sup> SIA Rimi Latvia, AS Latvijas Balzams, SIA Grifs AG, VAS Starptautiska Lidosta Riga (Riga Airport), SIA Janis Roze

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