



Creative Age Management Strategies for SMEs in the Baltic Sea Region

Annex 1: Country Studies UNITED KINGDOM

Alexander Frevel



Part-financed by the European Union
(European Regional Development Fund)



Bundesministerium
für Verkehr, Bau
und Stadtentwicklung

Creative Age Management Strategies for SMEs in the Baltic Sea Region

Annex 1: Country Studies UNITED KINGDOM

Alexander Frevel



Publication Date: 12. September 2012

This report has been produced within the EU-funded project Best Agers.

This publication has been produced with the assistance of the [European Union](#) and the [German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development](#).

The content of this publication is the sole responsibility of the authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.

The Best Agers project is part-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) through the Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013

More information about the project and its results is available at:
www.best-agers-project.eu

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/member-countries/unitedkingdom/index_en.htm

Socio-Demographic Situation (Selected Indicators)

Indicators	United Kingdom (UK)	Europe (EU-27)
Area	243,610 sq. km	4,324,782 sq. km
Population (06/2011)	62,698,362	495,400,000
Population density (pop. per sq. km)	250 Inhabitants per sq. km	115 Inhabitants per sq. km
Capital	London	
Form of Government	Constitutional monarchy with a bicameral Parliamentary Government: House of Commons, House of Lords	
Number of Children per Woman	1.84	1.52
Average Age	39.6	40.3 not EU27, but the average of the ten participating countries

www.ipicture.de; 13.09.2011

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2010/01/weodata>; 13.09.2011

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3846.htm>; 07.04.2012

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (commonly known as the United Kingdom, the UK, or Britain) is a sovereign state located off the north-western coast of continental Europe. The country includes the island of Great Britain, the north-eastern part of the island of Ireland and many smaller islands. Apart from the land border on the island of Ireland the UK is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean, the North Sea, the English Channel and the Irish Sea.

The United Kingdom is a unitary state governed under a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary system, with its seat of government in the capital city of London. It is a country in its own right and it consists of four countries: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. There are three devolved national administrations, each with varying powers, based in Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh, the capitals of Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland respectively. Associated with the UK, but not constitutionally part of it, are the three Crown Dependencies. The United Kingdom has fourteen overseas territories. These are the remnants of the British Empire which, at its height in 1922, encompassed almost a quarter of the world's land surface and was the largest empire in the history. British influence can still be observed in the language, culture and legal systems of many of its former territories.

UK is a developed country and has the world's seventh-largest economy by the nominal GDP and eighth-largest economy by the purchasing power parity. It is the second-largest economy in the European Union. Britain was the world's first industrialised country and the world's foremost power during the 19th and early 20th century. The UK remains a great power with leading economic, cultural, military, scientific and political influence.

Major ethnic groups (2001 census): White 92.1% (of which English 83.6 %, Scottish 8.6 %, Welsh 4.9 %, Northern Irish 2.9 %), black 2 %, Indian 1.8 %, Pakistani 1.3 %, mixed 1.2 %, other 1.6 %.

Major religions (2001 census): Christian (Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist) 71.6 %, Muslim 2.7 %, Hindu 1 %, other 1.6 %, unspecified or none 23.1 %.

Major languages: English, Welsh, Irish Gaelic, Scottish Gaelic.

Demography of the United Kingdom

A Census occurs simultaneously in all parts of the UK every ten years. The Office for National Statistics is responsible for collecting data for England and Wales with the General Register Office for Scotland and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, each being responsible for censuses in their respective countries. In the 2001 census the total population of the United Kingdom was 58,789,194, the third largest one in the European Union. By mid-2009, it was estimated to have grown to 61,792,000. 80 % of the population is living in the cities.

The annual population growth rate (2011 est.) is 0.557 %. In 2008, natural population growth overtook net migration as the main contributor to population growth for the first time since 1998. Between 2001 and 2008 the population increased by an annual rate of 0.5 % on average. The population estimates published in 2008 for the mid-2007 revealed that, for the first time, the UK was home to more people of pensionable age than children under the age of 16. It has been estimated that the number of people aged 100 or over will rise steeply to reach over 626.000 by 2080.

The England's population in mid-2008 was estimated to be 51.44 million. It is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, with 383 people resident per square kilometre in mid-2003, with a particular concentration in London and the south-east. The mid-2008 estimates put Scotland's population at 5.17 million, Wales' at 2.99 million and Northern Ireland's at 1.78 million, with much lower population densities than England, compared to England's 383 inhabitants per square kilometre.

In 2008 the average total fertility rate (TFR) across the UK was 1.96 children per woman. Whilst a rising birth rate is contributing to the current population growth, it remains considerably below the 'baby boom' peak of 2.95 children per woman in 1964, below the replacement rate of 2.1, but higher than the 2001 record low of 1.63. In 2010, Scotland had the lowest TFR at only 1.75, followed by Wales at 1.98, England at 2.00, and Northern Ireland at 2.06.

The younger population (0-14 y.) of 17.5 % (2008) is estimated to decline in 2050 to 16.6 %; the working age population (15-64) of 66.4 % is expected to decrease to 60.5 % until 2050, and the elderly population (over 65) will grow from 16.1 to 23.0 %.

The average life expectancy at birth amounts to 80.1 years (male 77.4; female 82. 5). Until 2050 it will increase up to 83.8 (males) and 87.7 (females).

The population flow is 2.6 migrants / 1,000 inhabitants (2011)

Participation Rate	United Kingdom	Europe (EU27)
Participation Rate 15 – 64 (2008) males	82.1	77.8
Participation Rate 15 – 64 (2008) females	69.0	63.4
Old age dependency ratio (2008)	24	25
Old age dependency ratio (2050)	38	50

European Commission - DG for Economic and Social Affairs: The 2009 Ageing Report: economic and budgetary projections for the EU-27 Member States (2008-2060), Luxembourg 2009

The participation rate (15-64 year olds) was in 2008 located above the EU27 average. The unemployment rate was relatively low (6 %) until early 2008; the economic crisis led to its increase of over 8 %.

The unemployment rate for 16- to 24-year-olds has risen sharply in the current recession from 15 % in 2008 to 19 % in 2009 and up to 20 % in 2010. It is now more than three times the rate for older workers. As a result, two-fifths of all those who are unemployed are now aged below 25.

Qualitatively, the unemployment rate for older workers (25 to retirement) has followed a similar pattern with a sharp rise between 2008 and 2009.

Source: <http://www.poverty.org.uk/35/index.shtml>

Elderly Participation and Retirement	United Kingdom	Europe (EU27)
Participation rate 55-64 (2008) males	69.4	57.3
Participation rate 55-64 (2008) females	50.4	38.2
Legal retirement age planned changes	65 (m); 60 (f)	
Actual retirement age (2008)	63.1	61.4

European Commission - DG for Economic and Social Affairs: The 2009 Ageing Report: economic and budgetary projections for the EU-27 Member States (2008-2060), Luxembourg 2009

Focus-Online, Hutterer, M.: Franzosen arbeiten nur bis 59, 12/08/2010; ref: EU-Commission, Eurostat, Missoc, Ageing Report, dpa

Pensions in the United Kingdom are divided into seven major categories: Basic State Pension, State Second Pension (S2P), Occupational Pensions, Stakeholder Pensions, Group Personal Pensions and Personal or Individual Pensions. Personal accounts, automatic enrolment and the minimum employer contribution will be new policies joining these from 2012.

The state provides basic pension provision intended to prevent poverty in old age. Until 2010, men over the age of 65 and women over the age of 60 were entitled to claim a state pension; from April 2010 the age for women is gradually being harmonised to match that for men. In a long-term perspective, the retirement age for both men and women will rise to 68 by not later than 2046 and possibly much earlier.

The UK Government strongly supports the Commission's position on extending working lives. Over recent years, the UK has pursued several policies, such as putting in place age discrimination legislation, adopting active labour market policies and helping create a positive culture towards older workers among businesses. To ensure that those who wish to work beyond 65 are able to, the Government will phase out the Default Retirement Age from April 2011.

In 2007, the UK legislated for a gradual increase in the State Pension age to 68 by 2046, to follow the equalisation of the pensionable age for women with that for men starting in 2010. However, given the challenges posed by ageing, the Government has reviewed the timing of the rise to 66, after carrying out a call for evidence among stakeholders. The timing of further increases and how to best manage the challenge posed by rising longevity will also be looked at.

Source: European Commission's Green Paper - Towards adequate, sustainable and safe European pension systems – UK Government response, 12 November 2010 (pdf)

Indicator for Work-Life-Balance	United Kingdom	Europe (EU27)
Working hours fit well or very well with family or social obligations (2005)	84.8	79.4
Working hours fit well or very well with family or social obligations (2010)	87.3	81.5
work affects the health negatively (2005)	20.8	35.4
work affects the health negatively (2010)	14.4	25.0
(very) satisfied with the working conditions (2005)	92.7	82.3
(very) satisfied with the working conditions (2010)	92.6	82.3

European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions, Fourth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), Dublin 2008; First Findings2010: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/smt/ewcs/results.htm>

The compatibility of the working hours with the private matters is very good in the opinion of employees. With the values over the EU27 average, the United Kingdom is here in a good position after Denmark and Norway.

In 2005, 20.8% of the British population believed that work endangers the health; in 2010, there were actually 14.4%. This placed the United Kingdom in the first position among the countries participating in the study.

It is also reflected in the job satisfaction at the level of 92%, which is 10 percentage points above the EU27 average and the fact that the UK occupies an outstanding leader position.

Healthcare

Healthcare in the United Kingdom is a devolved matter and each country has its own system of private and publicly funded health care, together with alternative, holistic and complementary treatments. Public healthcare is provided to all UK permanent residents and is free at the point of need, being paid for from the general taxation.

Regulatory bodies are organised on a UK-wide basis such as the General Medical Council, the Nursing and Midwifery Council and non-governmental-based, such as the Royal Colleges. However, political and operational responsibility for healthcare lies with four national executives, the specific Governments. Each National Health Service has different policies and priorities, resulting in contrasts.

Since 1979, the expenditure on healthcare has been increased significantly to bring it closer to the European Union average. The UK spends around 8.4 per cent of its gross domestic product on healthcare, which is about one percentage point below the average of the European Union.

The economy is increasingly services-based although it maintains industrial capacity in high-tech and other sectors. The City of London is a world centre for financial services. About 75 % of the employees work in several service sectors, almost 24 % are employed in manufacturing and less than 1 % works in agriculture.

www.ipicture.de; 06.04.2012,

European Commission: The 2009 Ageing Report,

Eurostat: http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/member-countries/unitedkingdom/index_en.htm

Indicators for working conditions	United Kingdom	Europe (EU 27)
can carry out the current profession with 60 years (2005)	63.6	58.3
can carry out the current profession with 60 years (2010)	66.9	58.7

European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions, Fourth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), Dublin 2008; First Findings2010: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/smt/ewcs/results.htm>

In 2005, 63.6 % of the British believed that they would be able to perform their current job also at the age of 60. Five years later, this figure increased by 6.3 percentage points, while it decreased in almost all the countries participating in this study between 2005 and 2010.

Indicators for lifelong learning and participation in vocational trainings	United Kingdom	Europe (EU 27)
European Lifelong Learning Index (ELLI) (2010)	56.92	52.06 [not EU27, but average of the eight participating countries]
participated in the last 12 months at employer-paid trainings (2005)	38.6	26.1
participated in the last 12 months at employer-paid trainings (2010)	44.0	33.7

European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions, Fourth European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS), Dublin 2008; First Findings2010: <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/surveys/smt/ewcs/results.htm>

European Lifelong Learning Indicators; Bertelsmann-Stiftung, www.elli.org

In a comparison of the training intensity, United Kingdom was in the midfield of the surveyed countries in the European Lifelong Learning Index with nearly 57% in 2010. The fact that the efforts to intensify professional development are bearing fruit is shown by the fact that the proportion of the participants increased significantly from 2005 to 2010 and the value of 44% is surpassed only by the Scandinavian countries.

General Overview

The participation rate of the elderly is high in the international comparison. The given need for action is thus considerably lower than in the other European countries.

Pension System

The pension system was reformed fundamentally in 2005 and it offers the labour force more scope for decisions.

- Persons who reach the retirement age (65 years; for women it is to be increased from 60 to 65 years from 2010 to 2020), can postpone their retirement age freely, so as to acquire higher standards.
- For each subsequent year of employment, the pension is increased by 10.4 % per year or by 1 % for 5 weeks.
- Persons who postpone the retirement age to at least 12 months may alternatively receive a taxable lump sum.
- From 2024 to 2046, the retirement age will gradually be increased to 68 for both genders.

Labour Market Policy

The employment strategies in the United Kingdom are connected with the European Employment Strategy (EES).

The central objectives of the EES – full employment, job quality and workplace productivity, as well as increased social cohesion – have been adopted and the following strategies are pursued at the national level.

Programs of the Government

The main programmes of the government aim at increasing the employment rate of persons aged 50-69.

New Deal 50+

New Deal 50+ aims to help people aged 50 and over who are looking for or considering a return to work. Many people over 50 find that although they want to work, it is difficult to find a worthwhile job that pays a decent wage. Others want to work but require help and advice.

New Deal 50+ is for you if you are 50 or over, are not working and have been receiving one of the following benefits for at least six months:

- Jobseekers Allowance
- Income Support
- Incapacity Benefit
- Severe Disablement Allowance

It is also available to you if your husband/wife is claiming benefit for you or if you have been receiving National Insurance Credits.

Time spent on Invalid Care Allowance and Bereavement Benefits also count towards the six months. The programme is entirely voluntary - it's up to you whether you take part.

What help is available?

You can choose to have one-to-one personal advice, a wide range of practical help from a Personal Adviser at your local job and benefit office, to help you find a job that is suitable for you. They will help you consider all the opportunities open to you and offer you support through a series of interviews.

What does it offer?

- You may be entitled to additional help by way of an increase in your Working Tax Credit (administered by the Inland Revenue). This is a payment to top up the earnings of people on low incomes. The amount you get will depend on your household's income.
- A Training Grant of up to £1500 may also be available when you start work. £ 1200 can be used to improve your existing skills and up to £ 300 can be used to learn new skills to help you stay at work. The Training Grant can be claimed over two years from the date you started New Deal 50+.

Source: <http://www.delni.gov.uk>

Pathways to Work

Pathways to Work is a programme which helps people who are claiming Employment and Support Allowance or incapacity benefits to get work.

You'll be expected to take steps to find work or prepare for work, unless you have a health condition or disability that severely affects your ability to do so. As well as help from Jobcentre Plus, you may get extra support from one of its partner organisations from the private and voluntary sectors. Those organisations are called 'providers.' You may be entitled to extra money when you start or stay in work.

Who is eligible?

When you make a claim for Employment and Support Allowance or incapacity benefits, you will automatically be considered for Pathways to Work. Only people aged between 18 and the age when you are eligible to receive Pension Credit will automatically be considered. This applies if you are claiming for the first time, or are claiming again after a break in receiving a benefit.

Incapacity benefits include:

- Incapacity Benefit
- Income Support on the grounds of incapacity
- Income Support while you are appealing against a decision that you are not incapable of work
- Severe Disablement Allowance

You can still apply for help from Pathways to Work if you're entitled to certain benefits because of your health condition or a disability.

You can calculate your State Pension age by using the State Pension Age Calculator. The results also give the date when you may be able to get Pension Credit.

How it works

The service offers individual support and access to a wide range of help.

Work-focused interviews

You will usually be invited to a series of up to six Work Focused Interviews. Your needs will be assessed and the approach taken will be based on this assessment. This helps you receive a more personalised service. If you receive Employment Support Allowance, the second Work Focused Interview will usually be after the outcome of your Work Capability Assessment is known. Your interviews will be with a personal adviser who will:

- help you remain focused on your ability to work
- help you develop a personal action plan to help you get the job you want
- discuss work opportunities with you
- explain the support that may be available to address key health and non-health related obstacles - for example, managing debt
- tell you about any financial benefits you may be entitled to once you start work

- work out how much better off financially you would be in work

Attending and taking part in the interviews is a condition for receiving the full amount of benefit.

The Condition Management Programme

The Condition Management Programme can help you better understand and manage your condition or disability. It uses the principles and approach of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. The programme does not replicate current NHS treatment.

Health professionals deliver the programme and tailor it to meet your needs.

Provider-led Pathways to Work has a similar Condition Management Programme. It is either delivered by the provider or by another specialist.

Please see below for further information about Jobcentre Plus-led and provider-led Pathways to Work.

Return to Work Credit

Return to Work Credit is a tax-free payment of £40 per week for people that have, or have had, a health condition or disability.

It can be payable for up to 52 weeks as long as:

- your job is expected to last at least five weeks
- you are working on average over 16 hours a week
- you are earning no more than £15,000, before tax, per year
- you are earning at least the National Minimum Wage
- you have been getting an incapacity benefit for 13 continuous weeks or more
- you have started work or will be starting work within the five-week period immediately after being entitled to a qualifying benefit
- you claim within five weeks of starting work

Jobcentre Plus-led and provider-led Pathways to Work

'Pathways to Work' is delivered by Jobcentre Plus in 18 districts. In the remaining Jobcentre Plus districts, Pathways to Work is delivered by organisations from the private and voluntary sectors. The organisations that carry out the programme are called 'providers.'

Jobcentre Plus-led Pathways to Work

Jobcentre Plus advisers conduct all the mandatory interviews.

Your adviser can use a package of employment, training and rehabilitation programmes to provide tailor-made support for you. This package, known as 'Choices', includes the Condition Management Programme and Return to Work Credit, along with access to other Jobcentre Plus programmes.

Provider-led Pathways to Work

A Jobcentre Plus adviser carries out the first interview. Local providers conduct the remaining five mandatory work-focused interviews, and offer support to get you back into work.

Any support you are offered will be tailor-made for you and includes a Condition Management Programme and access to Return to Work Credit.

Source: <http://www.direct.gov.uk>

"Age Positive Campaign"

The Age Positive campaign, from the Department for Work and Pensions in the UK, promotes the benefits of employing older workers. It encourages employers to make decisions about recruitment, training and retention that do not discriminate against someone because of their age. Age Positive uses publications, research, press, events and awards initiatives to get the message across - and to help employers comply with legislation to outlaw age discrimination in employment.

Support is given to promote Good Practice standards, prepared by the Department for Work and Pensions, to help employers recognise the business benefits of an age-diverse workforce. This is a voluntary guidance to encourage employers to make decisions that do not discriminate against someone because of how old they are. The information covers good practice in six areas of employment. Each section contains guidance and indicators of success.

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

The regulations (which do not affect the age at which people can claim their state pension):

- ban age discrimination in terms of recruitment, promotion and training.
- ban unjustified retirement ages of below 65.
- remove the current age limit for unfair dismissal and redundancy rights.

They also introduce:

- a right for employees to request working beyond the retirement age and a duty on employers to consider that request.
- a new requirement for employers to give at least a six-month notice to employees about their intended retirement date so that individuals can plan better for retirement, and be confident that "retirement" is not being used as cover for unfair dismissal.

Scope of Regulations

The Regulations apply to employment and vocational training. They prohibit unjustified direct and indirect age discrimination, and all harassment and victimisation on grounds of age, of people of any age, young or old.

As well as applying to retirement they

- remove the upper age limit for unfair dismissal and redundancy rights, giving older workers the same rights to claim unfair dismissal or receive a redundancy payment as younger workers, unless there is a genuine retirement
- allow pay and non-pay benefits to continue which depend on length of service requirements of 5 years or less or which recognise and reward loyalty and experience and motivate staff
- remove the age limits for Statutory Sick Pay, Statutory Maternity Pay, Statutory Adoption Pay and Statutory Paternity Pay, so that the legislation for all four statutory payments applies in exactly the same way to all
- remove the lower and upper age limits in the statutory redundancy scheme, but leave the current age-banded system in place
- provide exemptions for many age-based rules in occupational pension schemes.

As well as engaging with employers nationwide, Age Positive works closely with the Job Centre Plus network, the LEP (Local Employer Partnership) initiative and other initiative within the Department for Work and Pensions; it also liaises closely with other cross-government agencies, Sector Skills Agencies and professional organisations and institutes across sectors - Institute of Directors (IOD), Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD); Road Haulage Association, ACAS, Business Links, Chambers of Commerce, The Employers Forum on age (EFA) and the Age and Employment Network (TAEN) to name a few.

It also has 153 employers signed up to being Age Positive Employer Champions - employers who do not discriminate on the basis of age in their recruitment, retention and retirement policies.

Source: Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_Positive, see also: <http://www.agepositive.gov.uk/>

"Employers Guidance Campaign"

Promoting age diversity in the workplace; employers should encourage older workers to remain at the company.

"New Deal for Skills" / Flexible New Deal

Skills Training UK's Flexible New Deal delivery will be effectively managed with 57 Full Service Centres throughout Sussex, Surrey and Kent, as well as specialist provision to ensure the highest quality service. Our continuous improvement team

will work closely with sub-contractors and Skills Centres to ensure high standards are maintained. We have the ability to increase flows to cope with the demand, with an additional centre in Croydon available for extra provision when required, and we will support sub-contractors with capacity building, and staff training and development. There may also be additional provision available in Folkestone via a Community Centre.

Flexible New Deal will enable us to provide employers with a flexible and adaptable service. Working with you to meet all your recruitment needs, our various Routeways for Jobseekers will ensure that they have acquired the skills and knowledge to meet your needs, including specialist training where appropriate. We have the experience of running bespoke pre-employment training, which is individualised and employer led, and we also offer complete organisational needs analysis. In addition, we are able to arrange pre-interview screening to ensure the best candidates are selected for the interview.

Source: <http://www.skillstraininguk.com>

"Employer Training Pilots"

This programme provides small and medium-sized enterprises with financial support, which allows for training their staff.

The Employer Training Pilots (ETP) have been established in six Learning and Skills Council areas in September 2002 and were intended to run for one year. Additional funding was subsequently made available to allow to extend the pilots for a second year and to introduce a further six one-year pilots.

All pilots aim to provide training to a first level qualification or in basic skills for employees, and feature combinations of:

- paid time off work to train
- wage compensation for employers
- free or subsidised training
- information, advice and guidance for employers and employees.

The evaluation of the pilots runs from September 2002 to March 2005 and involves qualitative surveys of employer and employee participants and case study work with all major stakeholders and quantitative surveys of training provision and take-up in pilot and control areas. This report is concerned with the qualitative evaluation of the first year of operation of the first six pilots – i.e. to end-August 2003.

Participation in the first year

Over 3,000 employers and 14,000 learners registered to take part. Levels of take-up vary across the pilot areas with some attracting over four times the proportion of the employers in the area than others. 70 per cent of the employers are small (1 to 49 employees) and two-fifths had not had any previous contact with government agencies, though most do have a positive approach to learning and training.

Employers come from a range of sectors, particularly care but also distribution and manufacturing.

ETP learners are typically female, aged over 35, work full-time in a low-skilled job in a small workplace, earning around £6 per hour. Three-quarters left school at or before the age of 16, only one-third had positive experiences of education and most have no qualifications, though most had a positive attitude towards learning and had done some in the previous three years. The vast majority were working towards an NVQ level 2 qualification (or equivalent), most often in health and social care. Around 10 per cent were on basic skills courses.

Experience of the pilots

The pilots have used varied approaches to marketing which have demonstrated that they need to be active in approaching employers. Targeted approaches like telemarketing have worked better than general campaigns. Initial interest is followed up by members of local ETP teams and good communications, clear roles and responsibilities, appropriate skills and providing a quick response are all important in securing maximum engagement.

Employees generally hear about ETP from their employer and their participation is usually voluntary – around 70 per cent of eligible employees in each workplace were taking part. The standard ETP approach is to assess an individual's competence, train to the identified skill gaps, and then conduct a final assessment (i.e. 'assess-train-assess'). However, fewer than half the learners get a comprehensive initial. This needs analysis and there is a variety of other approaches in operation.

Paid time off is used by the learners for combinations of formal training inputs, contact with tutors, independent learning and compiling evidence. At least some of the learners study and compile evidence of their competence in their own time at home as well.

Information, advice and guidance models vary considerably between the pilots. Most information and advice comes from the brokers who interact with the employers about their needs and from the providers. More formal provision is less well-developed and, where in place, generally involves some combination of early support to learners (e.g. via a helpline), exit interviews with learners and general workplace-based capacity building, all on a voluntary basis.

Motivations, benefits and satisfaction

Employers say they are attracted to ETP mainly by the free and flexibly-provided training, although wage compensation can be important in some circumstances – e.g. to win senior management approval in large companies or to pay for staff to do learning in their own time in small firms. The vast majority of employers saw potential benefits in terms of providing employees with better skills and self-confidence and thought that this fitted well with their business plans. There is no evidence that taking part in ETP displaces other training activity. Most employers saw the pilots as an opportunity to train workers who would otherwise not be trained, though some said

they would have done the training without ETP. Using these and other qualitative indicators, 20 per cent of employer participants could be considered deadweight.

Nearly all employers said that they were satisfied with their experience of ETP, particularly with the initial contacts and training arrangements and slightly less so with payment arrangements and provision of information, advice and guidance. There is some evidence that satisfaction with wage compensation varies with the amount paid but little evidence that satisfaction levels are affected by the amount of paid time off provided.

Learners are attracted to the pilots by the chance to obtain the skills to do their jobs better and to gain a qualification. They were generally very satisfied with their experience and most felt that they had learnt something new that would benefit them in their current or future job.

Conclusions

At the halfway stage of the pilots, it is inevitable that many questions remain to be tackled, including those on completion rates, robust measures of deadweight, quantitative assessments concerning the impact of the various elements of the ETP offer, the longer-term impact on learners, employers and providers.

What can be said is that the pilots have been successful in getting substantial numbers of employers involved in training their low-skilled employees to qualifications. Over one-fifth of these employers can be seen as 'hard-to-reach' and the learners and the sort of employees ETP was designed to target. Employers and learners express high levels of satisfaction.

There are some challenges which remain to be tackled – to increase the numbers of learners being helped with basic skills (for which a number of new measures have been put in place), to increase the proportion of 'hard-to-reach' employers taking part, and to learn lessons from the best-performing pilot areas to raise standards in general.

Source: <http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/>

"Trade Union Learning Fund"

Unionlearn is here to help unions spread the lifelong learning message to even more members. Our Mission: "We will transform workers' life chances through lifelong learning".

Much has been achieved in the realm of trade union education and union learning over the past few years. But unions need to make a step change if they are to reach out to all the members who could benefit from study at the workplace or a local college or learning provider. That's why the TUC has established unionlearn to help unions develop and diversify their provision.

- Unionlearn aims to help unions to become learning organisations, with programmes for union reps and regional officers and strategic support for national officers.
- It will also help unions to broker learning opportunities for their members, running phone and online advice services, securing the best courses to meet learners' needs and kite-marking union academy provision to a quality standard.
- Finally, Unionlearn will research union priorities on learning and skills, identify and share good practices, promote learning agreements, support union members in learning and skills bodies, and help shape sector skills agreements.

Source: <http://www.unionlearn.org.uk/about/index.cfm>

Company Measures

Within the framework of the "Age Positive" Campaign, the Department for Work and Pensions (www.agepositive.gov.uk) prepared the "Code of Practice on Age Diversity in Employment" for companies and offered good practices regarding recruitment, selection, education and training, dismissal and retirement. Many enterprises of various sizes and from different fields have joined the campaign. Those who can demonstrate a positive implementation of the Code of Practice receive the award of the "Age Positive Champion." Those companies play an important role in the campaign, since they demonstrate that the anti-discriminatory treatment of the elderly has a positive effect on the company. Some of the good practice examples are presented here briefly.

HBOS plc was formed in 2001 from a merger of two banks and adopted the Practice on Age Diversity in Employment. HBOS plc has set itself the goal "to have best and the most highly motivated staff." This includes a generation balance in terms of equal opportunities for all. HBOS recognised that the ageing of the population has an impact not only on the staff but also on the customers, and people prefer to do business with their peers. The financial services company attaches great importance to the aspect that the workforce should reflect the profile of the society in which it operates. The management of the HBOS plc is of the opinion that it is indispensable to pay attention to a good combination of younger and older employees in order to be able to appeal to a broad group of customers. HBOS has implemented the following "good practice" activities:

- A training video entitled "Fair's Fair" was produced as a centrepiece of an excellent outreach programme and the topic of the elderly was included in the employee handbook and the guidelines for managers;

- The newsletter entitled "Age Concerned?" was issued for the business team staff.
- The issue of age and the benefits of a mixed-age workforce and customer base was integrated as a part of the regional Diversity Roadshows;
- Questions about the date of birth and age were removed from the application documents;
- Monitoring of the workforce in accordance with the age is conducted, which should serve as a catalyst of changes in the company;
- It uses a wide range of images in the recruitment materials in order to attract the applications from all age groups;
- The Steering Group for Equal Opportunities at the management level is committed to age diversity and incorporates the strategy into its activities;
- HBOS is the member of the Employers Forum on Age and actively contributes to the consultation process within the framework of the age discrimination legislation.

HBOS sees the benefits of the Age Diversity Management in the compatibility between employees and customers. People like doing business with like-minded people, and therefore, it is important to have a diverse workforce in terms of age. A mixed workforce brings the opportunity to enter new markets and new horizons. Age diversity reduces the costs of recruitment and turnover and is also advantageous for the company.

ASDA Stores is a supermarket chain which knows the benefits and values the years of professional experience of its older employees. It sees them as an important resource of education of young people. The chain employs 20,000 people over 50 years of age, representing 19% of the staff. Similarly to HBOS, ASDA tries to recruit people who reflect the local population. ASDA is committed to employ older people, since they correspond to the local customer base and thus can provide services for the target group. Decisions on employment are made exclusively under the criterion "Who is the best for the job?" Further the recruitment motto is as follows: "We hire for attitude – and train for skill." The working conditions are adapted to the needs of elderly workers, and incentives of various kinds are offered. These include for example the so-called "Benidorm leave" (a three-month unpaid leave during the winter months) as well as unpaid one-week leave for grandparents after the birth of a grandchild. Further awards include care leave and discounted healthcare.

A new store has recently been opened with a staff of more than 40% of persons over 50 years of age. It is currently looking for other locations in which this strategy might work. The store managers are also encouraged to take advantage of programmes such as the "New Deal 50 plus."

Also the **National Health Service** deals with the issue of active ageing. At the national level, the organisation of the NHS employers launched a major awareness

raising campaign in which it is making NHS Trusts aware of the demographic situation and its future challenges. Traditionally, the healthcare service recruits school and university graduates but it is becoming increasingly more difficult. Employers need to think how to recruit and keep older workers. This means fighting "ageism" and offer opportunities which match the abilities and aspirations of older workers. Individual institutions are encouraged to take their human resources practices and the age profile of their staff under scrutiny and develop new strategies at the management level.

The **Portsmouth City Teaching Primary Care Trust** is an Age Positive Champion and provides health services in Portsmouth. The staff consists of people between 16 and 73 years of age. The enterprise regularly controls the age profile of the company as well as of the new employees and it strives to meet the good practices of the anti-discrimination policy. In addition, the company offers its employees flexible working and retirement options which apply to all age groups.

Natural Gas Services Ltd was established in 1995 of five former British gas engineers and managers between 40 and 50+ years of age. Instead of thinking of an early retirement pension, they founded their own company which is now a successful enterprise offering gas installations and services, with a mixed-age workforce. The enterprise recruits people of all ages, and the recruitment criterion is: "What can he or she offer and learn?" The company received the "Investors in People" award for its training policy. Natural Gas Services Ltd trains all the employees, both 20-year-olds and over 50-year-olds.

Also within the framework of the aforementioned **Prince Initiative for Mature Enterprise – PRIME** (www.primeinitiative.org.uk) there are numerous case studies of successful start-ups established by people over 50 years of age. This "not-for-profit organisation" is the only one in the UK which has the specific objective to support people over 50 years of age with establishing their own company. PRIME provides various loans to persons whose applications were rejected by a bank because they were unemployed for longer or could not provide any collateral. Success stories are for example: Rena Howe, social entrepreneur; John Connolly, specialised e-Bay reseller; Mervin Thomas, song writer; Jen Howell, IT training and accountancy; etc. Almost all of them were previously unemployed and nearly all of them have their own companies and discovered new professional opportunities in their third stage of life.

Source: www.elderly.at/attach/10ESB_Good_practice_in_active_ageing.pdf

Other References

Department for Work and Pensions (Pat Irving, Jennifer Steels and Nicola Hall): Factors affecting the labour market participation of older workers: qualitative research. Research Report No 281. A report of research carried out by ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions, Leeds 2005

Elder, James (Department of Work and Pensions): Extending working life UK Strategy. Country example (pdf)

European Commission's Green Paper - Towards adequate, sustainable and safe European pension systems – UK Government response, 12 November 2010 (pdf)

Her Majesty's Government: Are you over 50? A guide to advice, support and services across government. London, March 2009

Framework and activities for organising meaningful activity biographies: the look abroad. Part 5, Great Britain; latest information on the 2006 Carl Bertelsmann Prize: 'Ageing - stay active. Employment in the economy and society' Gütersloh 2006. (Rahmen und Aktivitäten zur Gestaltung sinnvoller Tätigkeitsbiographien – Der Blick ins Ausland. Teil 5: Großbritannien. Aktuell zum Carl Bertelsmann-Preis 2006: 'Älter werden - aktiv bleiben. Beschäftigung in Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft')

The Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution: Demographic Change and the Environment. Twenty-ninth Report, February 2011