Age Management in Italian Companies.
Findings from Two INAPP Surveys

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Abstract The aim of this paper is to analyze the behavior of the Italian companies and the solutions adopted for keeping and reintegrating ageing workers in the labour market, as well as the strategies implemented for their professional enhancement, starting from the results of two INAPP surveys. The first one, is a quantitative survey on the attitude of the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) employers towards the ageing workers; the second one is a qualitative research on age management best practices in the large companies. As a result, emergent trends will be underlined in the great enterprises, with a focus on similarities and differences with respect to the SMEs, in order to individualize a feasible development perspective.

Keywords Age management • Workforce ageing • Logistic regression model
1 Introduction

Since the last century, the most advanced countries all over the world are facing unprecedented demographic challenges, such as a population ageing due to two joint demographic factors: a greater life expectancy and a decreased fertility [1]. Therefore, population ageing is one of the most important challenges facing western countries and it is an irreversible event because the proportion of older people is growing faster than any other age group. Rapid ageing in western countries is accompanied by strong changes in family structures and roles, as well as in labour patterns. Since recent forecasts predict a relevant increase in participation rate of older workers from now on, due also to the pension reform, specific attention must be paid to the older workers personal and organizational resources for facing the (forced) extension of their working life (in terms of health conditions, skills maintenance, resilience to work-related stress factors etc.). The strategy of promoting active ageing in the workplace implies a system of business strategies called “Age Management”. This strategy is aimed at leading the competence transfer between generations, monitoring and supporting the time and procedures of retirement, exchanging knowledge between youngest and oldest workers (reverse mentoring) and other good practices such as life-long learning, and monitoring of worker health.

The aim of this paper is to reflect on the implications of demographic ageing on Italian businesses workforce and its management. It consists of two sections. The first one describes the results of the quantitative survey “Indagine campionaria presso gli attori del sistema produttivo sulla gestione della forza di lavoro matura” and presents a logit model estimation with the perceived increase in the workforce average age as the dependent variable. The second section illustrates the qualitative research, “Rilevazione delle Buone Pratiche realizzate da imprese private per fronteggiare il problema dell’invecchiamento della forza lavoro”, the emergent trends about age management strategies in large enterprises, highlighting similarities and differences with respect to the SMEs. Close the paper some remarks about work-force ageing and business strategies against the economic crisis.

2 Ageing Workforce in SMEs

The aim of the quantitative research “Indagine campionaria presso gli attori del sistema produttivo sulla gestione della forza di lavoro matura” is to study the relationship among the enterprises development strategies and the solutions adopted for the maintenance, the professional promotion and the possible reintegration of ageing workers, according to the recent pension reforms too. This research is a sample survey on 2,000 private SMEs (except agriculture) with 10–249 employees.

A nationally representative stratified probability sample of enterprises has been drawn out from the Register of active enterprises of Italian National Institute of
Statistics,\(^1\) considering: geographical area (North-West, North-East, Center, South and Islands), economic sector (Industry, Construction, low added-value Services and high added-value Services) and size class (10–19, 20–49, 50–249 employees) \([2]\).\(^2\)

As shown in Table 1, out of a total of 5.465.791 employees, 1.216.177 are over 50 (22.3%). Their distribution by gender shows a significant prevalence of men over women for all age class, in particular for age 50+ (women are only 28.4%).

Regarding gender analysis within age class, the incidence of female workers over 50 is very low for building sector (only 8.4%), high for low added-value services (33.9%) and very high for high added-value services (41.9%) where women incidence is elevated in every age class.

As shown in Table 2, the incidence of over 50 is greater for medium enterprises where is over 50 about one worker every 4 of them (24.3%). Regarding small companies is 20.6% and smallest is 21.3%. This is confirmed for female analysis: the incidence of women age 50+ is higher in medium (30.4%) than small (26.9 and 26.7%) with exactly 2 points up to total value (28.4%).

The incidence of workers over 50 is balanced within economic sectors because it is between 20.8% for high added-value services and 23.8% for industry (Table 3).

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\(^1\)ISTAT-ASIA Archivio Statistico delle Imprese Attive.

\(^2\)In every stratification’s level of the basic and backup sample drawn by INAPP, the statistical units have been managed using a procedure software that has allowed the respect of the preset quotas inside every strata.
Over 70% of SMEs consider older workers as a resource for the company’s competitiveness and business, almost 80% think they are important to preserve and send outward its core know-how, as a sort of trade mark (Fig. 1).

56% of SMEs adopt flexible working time (e.g. part-time) as the main age management tool, while other types of measures, such as teleworking, job rotation or adaptation of the workplace are much less provided. In particular, except in few cases (16%), intergenerational work groups should be strengthened in order to involve older workers in the intergenerational transmission of knowledge as tutor or coaches because only 20% does this always or often. Finally, in very few cases age management issue has been debated among social partners and also this propensity clearly decreases in smaller enterprises [3].

The recent crisis has highlighted the importance of education and training at all stages of life, in particular for older adults to avoid unemployment. This requires older people to maintain and update the skills they have, particularly in relation to new technologies. In INAPP survey, participation in lifelong learning for workers over 50 is 54%, but it is only formal classroom training: there is not a significant trace of training on the job, participation in congresses (e.g. exhibitions, trade fairs, conferences, workshop or seminars), participation in learning or quality circle, distance learning course program or study visits.

The survey on SMEs leads quantitative data on the theme of the difficult relationship between the market strategies and those of the human resources. 35% of surveyed enterprises perceive an ageing of their workforce: 10% of them looks this
ageing as a disadvantage, over 20% as an advantage and almost 70% have a neutral position. The perception of ageing is reported with higher frequency in the medium-sized companies (44.8% in those between 50 and 249 employees), in the industrial sector (39.9%) and in general in the North East (38.8%). It is a weaker “perceived” matter between the firms in the South (29.7%) and among companies of smaller size, especially in the field of basic services and construction where over 50 workers represent a major component of human resources.

The majority of the companies that had seen an increase (68% of 35%) tend not to consider the working ageing a factor beneficial nor disadvantageous. Those who consider ageing a value and an opportunity are about twice those who consider the increase in the average age as a problem for their business (21.6% vs. 10.4%), and these statements are slightly more frequent in the case of enterprises operating in industry (24.1%), in the South (24.1%) and the North West (23.4%).

Companies active in the industrial sector report a negative relationship between the workers ageing and the possibility to introduce new technologies (14%), the difficult adaptability of older people to new jobs (12.2%), the demand for flexible working time (9.9%) and more generally to organizational change (9.6%). Among the advanced services also, the increase in the average age of the workforce is defined as critical.

Among the Italian SMEs practices of age management are quite rare. For example, as far as the skills and knowledge transfer among generation is less developed than expected. With increasing size, the practice to use older workers for the transmission of knowledge and skills increases. In the enterprises between 50 and 249 workers, those over 50 are found to exert this role always or at least often in 28.7% of cases. Among the various productive sectors, services with high added values record the lowest percentage of recourse to the “silver workers” as trainers or tutors, while the other three economic sectors appear practically aligned each other [4].

Improving working conditions for older workers is the other key where companies have begun (or should begin) to take measures. Facilitating access to part-time jobs and developing flexible work arrangements are ways to give older workers choice and smooth work-retirement transitions.

More needs to be done to remove age-barriers to employment and to encourage greater participation after the age of 50. Age-neutral human resources management strategies would reduce age discrimination, and should be applied (e.g. in the context of recruiting processes). However, in order to increase employability, productivity and working conditions, age management strategies need to be developed. First of all, it should develop tools for a “demographic check” and for an “age structure analysis” in order to help companies build strategies adapted to their specific situations. General guidelines for age management have their limitations because of the heterogeneity of older workers as well as the more limited strategic human resources management capacities of SMEs. Guidance for SMEs, as well as coaching, mentoring and guidance for older workers and older job seekers, should be provided in a wider scale.
2.1 A Logistic Regression Model

The 2,000 SMEs in the sample analysis generated 207,675 Italian enterprises using a weight calibration variable (see Sect. 2). These were analyzed using a logistic regression model (in Stata release 13). In order to achieve this goal, we have used the perceived increase in the workforce average age as the dependent variable. Concretely, in our study analyzed variables are:

- Geographical distribution. Categorical. Four areas: North West, North East, Centre, South and Islands (reference cat.).
- Size enterprise. Categorical. Three intervals. From 10 to 19 (reference cat.), between 20 and 49, between 50 and 249.
- Career development (for over 50). Categorical. Three levels. Marginal measure (reference cat.), As others employees, More than others employees.
- Bonus and financial incentives (for over 50). Categorical. Three levels. Marginal measure (reference cat.), As others employees, More than others employees.
- Tutoring or coaching (by over 50). Categorical. Five levels. Never (reference cat.), Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always.
- Technical skills (competences to develop). Dummy variable: Yes, No (reference cat.).
- Intergenerational work groups or job rotation (competences already developed). Dummy variable: Yes, No (reference cat.).

Some covariates seem to have a direct relation with the dependent variable, but the descriptive analysis show that SMEs which perceive increase in the workforce average age (35%) adopt career development in marginal measure, or like the other employees, in 97% of the cases (and only 3% more than others employees); 96% of SMEs adopt bonus and financial incentives programs for over 50 in marginal measure or like the other employees. In addition, 79% of them do not promote intergenerational work groups or job rotation. In other words, SMEs propose particular programs not because of perceiving an increase in their workforce average age.

Table 4 shows coefficients (Beta) and odds ratios of logistic model. This means that the coefficients in logistic regression are in terms of the log odds, that is, the North East coefficient 0.398 implies that a one unit change in geographical area results in a 0.398 unit change in the log of the odds.

It can be expressed in odds by getting rid of the natural log. This is done by taking the exponential for both sides of the equation, because there is a direct relationship between the coefficients produced by logit and the odds ratios produced by logistic: a logit is defined as the natural log (base e) of the odds.

This fitted model says that, holding covariates at a fixed value, the odds of perceiving increase in the workforce average age for North East over the odds of perceiving increases for South and Islands (reference category) is exp
In terms of percent change, we can say that the odds for North East are 49% higher than the odds for South and Islands. In other words, the hazard to perceive an increase in the workforce average age is higher for North East enterprises rather than firms from South Italy (p values of North West and Center are not significant because p > 0.05).

Regarding economic sector, the hazard to perceive an increase in the workforce average age for low added-value services is lower of 26% than the odds for industry (OR = 0.741). The size enterprise play an important role: with reference very small enterprise (10–19 empl.), odds of small with 20–49 empl. (OR = 1.316) and
medium with 50–249 empl. (OR = 1.359) are higher. It means the odds increase as the size increases: small and medium firms have 32% and 36% hazard higher than very small firms (10–19 empl.) to perceive an increase in the workforce average age respectively.

Furthermore, enterprises who have career development initiatives for over 50 have an hazard almost 5 times higher than enterprises which adopt them in marginal measure (OR = 4.604). Hazard enterprises who adopt often and always programs of tutoring and coaching by workers over 50 are double than enterprises for those who never adopt those programs (OR = 2.175 and OR = 2.594). Also firms who adopt those programs rarely have hazard higher to perceive an increase in the workforce average age. Finally, hazard for companies with intergenerational work groups or job rotation is higher than firms without them (OR = 1.370). Substantially, an active role for older workers increases the hazard to perceive an increase in the workforce average age.

3 Age Management in Large Companies

The aim of the qualitative research is to describe and to analyze the most meaningful age management experiences realized by the great enterprises that operate in some specific segments of the industrial and services sectors, to face the problem of the ageing workers and the possible obsolescence of their skills and competences. This research is a sample survey on 152 large enterprises (15 of them identified as age management “good practices”, with 8 deepening case-studies) extracted from ASIA on the base of the geographical area (North-West, North-East, Center, South and Islands), size class (over 250 employees) and economic sector.

The chosen research methodological approach is based on the latest proposals, traceable in the literature, for the collection, classification and analysis of good practices (Best Practices Research—BPR), referring to the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, replication and transferability and mainstreaming (Fig. 2). Reference to the main studies on the subject, is also made for the definition of age management dimensions.

The 152 large enterprises surveyed are mainly manufacturing (65.8%); followed by the companies working in financial service (15.8%), telecommunications, publishing and information technology (10.5%), electricity, gas, water supply and waste management (5.3%) and building (2.6%). They are predominantly localized in

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3Manufacturing, building, electricity, gas, water and waste management supply, telecommunications, publishing information technology, financial services.

4Ministero del Lavoro, della Salute e delle Politiche Sociali – D.G. per le Politiche per l’Orientamento e la Formazione, La catalogazione delle buone pratiche FSE: lo scenario europeo, [5].

5Alan Walker e Gerhard Naegele, Malpede e Villosio [6], progetto “Age Management” della Regione Veneto (Iniziativa comunitaria Equal, 2006).
northern Italy (Northwest 41.4%, Northeast 32.2%), followed by the Centre (16.4%), and South and Islands (9.9%).

Companies with over 500 employees represent 57.2% while companies up to 499 employees represent 42.8% and they operate in 59.9% of cases at international level, in 26.3% of cases at national level and in 13.8% of cases at interregional and local levels. Enterprises that are not part of a group represent 23.0%, while in 23.7% of cases the group is present in Italy and in 38.2% abroad.

Out of a total of 196.133 employees, 47.566 are over 50 (24.3%). Their distribution by gender shows a significant prevalence of men (27.1%) over women (18.8%).

The number of the workers over 50, by company size, does not have significant deviations from the statistical average, a fact that occurs both for the economic sector and for geographical area. Mature workers are concentrated in the services sector (electricity, gas, water supply and waste management, and financial services) rather than in the production of goods (manufacturing and building) and in companies located in the south and in the center of Italy.

The results show, beyond more structured and consolidated experiences identified as “good practices”, a significant presence of “promising practices”, actions just started but not recognised as age management strategies yet. They demonstrate the growing and widespread attention paid by major Italian companies to a more responsible management of the aged workforce and professional cycle on the whole.

From a purely quantitative reading, it was found that 11 companies have declared to carry out interventions on all 5 dimensions of age management, 39 on 4, 65 on 3, 29 on 2 dimensions, only 6 companies on one dimension, while two companies do not perform any type of operation that refers to the dimensions under analysis. The enterprises of the sample, therefore, undertake measures and actions aimed the improvement either in multiple dimensions, or in more aspects of the same dimension.
Generally, large companies appear oriented toward finding solutions not strictly related to ageing workers, but rather to the life cycle management in the company; the age of workers, therefore, does not seem to be a particularly critical factor.

In the process of personnel recruitment, large companies mainly evaluate the professionalism and experience of the candidate in relation to the required task, taking into account the type of contract too. Anyway the staff recruitment method varies depending on sectors: the experienced figures are privileged in building; in sectors where the technological and computer skills occupy a leading role (telecommunications, publishing, information technology) young people are preferred, perhaps with less experience but with appropriate skills. In fact, the employment of young people with higher qualifications is concentrated in the most innovative companies. The results of survey show a relationship between enterprise innovation, internalization, high-tech sector and staff recruitment.

The large enterprises, with a predominant presence of over 50 employees, implement actions to improve this target’s working life quality: they carry out different medical examinations on age bases, encourage conciliation practices but, at the same time, they support the admission of young people during selections. Besides, they pay more attention to the exit from working activity, connecting the exit of mature workers with the admission of young people, or providing a reduction of the working hours. Enterprises which are mainly composed by young staff, carry out wide ranging/far-reaching policies, paying particular attention on professional training, on task redesigning and on the research of experienced staff during the recruiting phase.

It is worth remembering that even from the quantitative survey on the SMEs emerged that the demographic composition doesn’t represent an obstacle to the development of enterprises. The SMEs don’t consider the age as a relevant parameter to determine the efficiency of a worker (especially for clerical and managerial tasks), while during staff’s recruitment both profession competences and experiences are privileged.

In this context, the upgrading of skills plays a key role. Formative policies show a double value for the enhancement of mature workers: as an essential instrument in the continuous process of professional growth and as an opportunity for the intergenerational competences transfer, so that the aged workers become active part of the process. The survey recorded many examples, both in traditional ways (coaching, tutoring, mentoring) and in new recent modality (reverse mentoring).

Training, also, plays a key-role in the process of development of age management measures that support the permanence of mature workers within the company by improving the work organization (Table 5).

The topic of work organization is related also to the development of career. By means of age management, organizational strategies take into account the evolution of workers’ motivations, expectations and needs throughout his whole professional career, according to the company’s mission.

In companies that subsidize the work-family balance as an organizational set-up, the demographic structure shows that over 50 s rate is rather substantial (41.3%), quite far from the average value; in detail, males represent 46.3%, female 27.8%.
Equally evident, the over 50 presence in large enterprises that subsidize organizational practices like team job or job rotation (33.7%; Table 6).

Regarding these issues, it should be stressed that the results of the SMEs survey, underline an inadequate system for the definition of the employee’s career paths, in contrast with large companies policy. When these systems are present, they are focused on firms of upper-middle-size (50–249 employees) and they are rarely addressed to target over 50s. They are mainly achieved by changing roles and tasks, connected to new skills acquisition or seniority, but sometimes also to new responsibilities as coach or tutor for intergenerational skills transferring. Practices of skills verifying and potential checking, or periodic vocational guidance and assessment, are also not common.

The large enterprises that have implemented best practices in age management present some common features. All of them are very large companies (+500 employees) with more than 30% of workers over 50 and located in the north of Italy. They belong to international corporation groups and most part of them produce in the services sector, where working-life extension creates re-motivation and skills upgrade needs; whereas, in manufacturing sector, the most affected by economic crisis, the need to manage the life cycle of workers, seniors in particular, is linked mainly to the strenuous and arduous work, or to higher risk of on-the-job injury. The corporate culture of these 15 companies appears shaped around the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) approach and the human resource development (training is considered strategic), as well as around the propensity for innovation.

As you can deduce analyzing the 15 good practice observed by qualitative survey, especially by case-studies, the most important actions of age management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Up to 499 employees</th>
<th>500 or more employees</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a.v.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal training measures for over 50 workers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External training schemes for over 50 workers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training courses for mobile workers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergenerational skills transfer</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational exchanges with other companies</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget, recognition and/or skills certification</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal projects that develop new skills</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total companies</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Inapp (former Isfol), 2015
can be grouped into three priority areas: training, work-experience enhancing and intergenerational dialogue sustaining. The general aim is maintaining the overall company profitability by improving worker’s productivity, particularly that of older employees, normally related to highest costs.

Furthermore, actions for motivation support, for generational diversity enhancing and work-life balance promoting, are very important. Particularly, are included: interventions aimed to get old employees involved in new activities by enhancing their experience (both work and life); needs analysis realized paying attention to intergenerational dialogue and workers involvement; test of participatory working method, mixing working groups by gender and age.

Generally, large companies dealing with workers ageing, follow the same path characterized by some inevitable steps: (1) awareness of the problem; (2) analysis of the demographic structure of the company; (3) recognition of the mature staff needs; (4) design and launching of pilot projects; (5) results verification and evaluation for proper corrective actions implementation. This often involves the introduction of several organizational innovations, such as a new business function (e.g. Inclusion Division), or a specific responsibility position (e.g. Diversity Manager).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innovative organizational set-up</th>
<th>Over 50 personnel</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidizing practices of organizational set-up as team job and job rotation</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introducing new technologies</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing practices for work-family balance</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting practices of fidelization</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note* To compensate the lack or incomplete answer provided by respondents on the demographic structure of enterprises (number of employees by age and gender) missing data were imputed using the following criteria
– for “Total employees” were used the data in the ISTAT ASIA 2011
– for total employees over 50 were used average values by sector (ATECO2 digit), derived from ad hoc processing ISTAT survey “Labour Force 2013”
– for the distribution of employees by gender were average values by sector (NACE 5 digits), number of employees and geographical distribution of the survey Indigo-CVTS

*Source* Inapp (former Isfol), 2015
The main elements of strength of age management good practices are related with a positive approach that better interpret the right meaning of “lifecycle management”, instead of “older workers management” (positive valuation approach of ageing; intergenerational approach considering the complexity of company’s demographic system). Some key-factors moreover are very important in order to facilitate the initiative sustainability and implementation, such as clear communication in all project phases, convenient aims for both staff and company, assimilation in plant-level bargaining, economic sustainability, periodic results verification and final evaluation. At last, a favorable external environment, CSR friendly, free from clichés, stereotypes and prejudices that can compromise the results of corporate policies against discrimination, is essential. For such reason, a business network could be useful, by best practices knowledge too, to spread out a new corporate culture based on management’s innovation standard, still not very diffused in Italian work organizations.

4 Conclusions

The Italian enterprise actions are influenced not only by actual economic crisis, but also by the demographic ageing process and its impact on the workforce’s system evolution.

The quantitative survey reveals that the SMEs have implemented a defensive strategy against the crisis, with no relevant differences with regard to the size. The smallest one mainly have been hit by negative economic trends and their profitability and productivity decreased more than medium sized enterprises that invested in training and skills improvement in a more effective way.

Conversely, age management’s best practices survey shows that large companies implemented differentiated strategies. On the one hand you can find enterprises taking a defensive attitude (cutting costs, staff reduction, resorting to layoffs); on the other hand there are firms that have worked towards the internationalization, the innovation of product and process, the search for new markets, the expansion and the promotion of competitiveness also through human capital enhancement.

Qualitative in-depth analysis results show that demographic ageing is a field still unexplored also by largest companies. The focus on this phenomenon is quite recent and often connected to specific needs imposed by contingent circumstances or by external solicitations.\(^6\) In any case you can observe some solidify

\(^6\)For example: economic crisis increasing, retirement system reforming, 2012 as European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations declaring.
experiences too, where enterprises have been committed for long time in developing a new corporate welfare, based on working well-being and diversity management. With increasing size, enterprises implement virtuous actions in a long-term development prospect of working-life cycle and diversity management. Therefore, in large companies it is more likely to detect policies and structured age management’s interventions, as well as experiences inspired by CSR and developed in the long term, contributing to build a corporate identity within the territorial system.

In summary, the extension of working life is influenced by a factors combination: regulatory environment, labour market rules and the different business strategies aimed to facing the work-force ageing. Companies can contribute to keep older workers longer in employment by changing their structure and management strategies, while labour policies can make available financial incentives. Preserving older workers employability requires, therefore, multidimensional actions both in labour and welfare policies and in enterprises organizational set-up. Only the establishment of collaborative working relationships between all stakeholders involved (workers, enterprises, trade unions, local networks and the society as a whole) can improve both the older workers opportunities to keep their job and a longer work-life’s good quality. This will be possible if national and regional active labour market policies contribute to create a good working environment in order to develop a new corporate welfare inspired to diversity management criteria. In this context, the right answer to workforce ageing is the intergenerational cooperation rather than the generational turnover in labour market. If age represent an opportunity, instead of a critical factor, generational turnover mechanism should be definitively abandoned to increase the employment level.

References


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7These themes are in step with European Union guidelines suggesting working policies based on life-cycle, rather isolated target-group, and life-long age management and diversity management approach, aimed to considering relationship evolution between persons, labour-market and family-life.