

## **Extending Working Life – Pedagogy Assisting Workforce Transition (PAWT)**

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**Partners:** Finland, Turkey, Ireland, Romania, Slovenia, Lithuania, Bulgaria

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Europe is getting older. In 2007, 35.2% of the EU's 495 million people were over the age of fifty.

The old age dependency ratio in Europe is expected to approximately double from an initial 25% in 2004 meaning that by 2050 there would be about one inactive person for every two of working age. The size of the aged population is expected to grow not only in relative but also in absolute terms with the number of Europeans aged 80 and over expected to nearly triple, rising from 18 million in 2004 to approximately 51 million in 2051 (eurostat). 66% of this over 80 population will be women. In the context of this demographic change there is no doubt that our social security systems' capacity to maintain today's standard of living for future generations of older people will be severely challenged. For many individual Europeans the term retirement equates to living in poverty, with the risk of poverty of persons over the age of 65 increased by one third against national averages in most countries. To achieve more sustainable economic and social development, the EU has set itself the target of increasing the employment rate of older people. For this to be successful, governments, social partners and organisations need to work together to develop the skills and employability of older people.

Education, guidance, training and employment opportunities must be adapted to an age-diverse workforce. New pedagogical approaches are the key elements to facilitate extended workforce participation for older workers. Induction training for adult education providers to enable them design and deliver new educational content across a variety of learning platforms must be developed to support their continuous professional development. Transition programmes that enable older workers acquire new skills, and a re-conceptualisation

of employment both in terms of specific work areas and work practices are essential if future economic growth, competitiveness, social inclusion and efficiency are to be achieved. Education must address today's issues and challenges with appropriate new learning partnerships and learning tools that are flexible, adaptable, and easily updated and upgraded. Too often, support agencies busy themselves addressing the needs of yesterday instead of the needs of tomorrow. There is consensus among EU Member States about the need for active labour market policies aimed at raising employment levels among older workers and at postponing retirement. Although not working in such fixed patterns of employment as before, engaged in new roles and environments, Europe's older generations have a key and continuing role to play. PAWT will develop:

- A comprehensive pedagogic framework for addressing the skill needs of older persons that is person centred, appropriate and flexible and facilitates learning in a variety of environments and on a range of applicable platforms;
  
- An induction programme for adult education tutors working with older persons to facilitate successful training outcomes;
  
- New education partnerships involving target group members, workforce development experts and adult education professionals;
  
- A model research skills and ICT skills curriculum to train older persons as qualified researchers with core and elective modules;
  
- A robust business development model for older persons to support their self-employment as individuals or in cooperative groups of researchers in all partner countries;
  
- A model guidance service. Businesses and public authorities face increasing demands to provide services and facilities that meet the diverse needs of an ageing population.

Success will depend on how effectively countries can utilise their ageing work-forces. Supporting older persons to remain productive members of society through continued labour force participation is essential to reduce social exclusion and escape the poverty trap.

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More information: <http://pawt.pikes.fi/> /