



## 3.0 Silver Economy

### 3.1 Introduction

This Silver Economy sub-theme is part of the PEOPLE mini-programme which supports knowledge exchange about regional solutions to the consequences of demographic change. PEOPLE project focuses on the identification, analysis and dissemination of **good practices**, including the development of **new approaches**. At least 3 partner regions should be represented in a Sub-project but good practice should have EU-wide relevance. Beneficiaries must be **public authorities** (see section 3.6 for more detail) and provide match funding: 25% or 15% depending on their region.

### 3.2 Rationale

Europe's population is ageing, potentially resulting in a decline in total employment, lower prospects for economic growth and a smaller working population supporting a much larger number of elderly people. An immediate priority is to limit redundancy numbers; support people who are made redundant; and re-skill and re-engage as many as possible. A longer term priority is to support future economic growth. It is also important to ensure that these priorities promote equality and diversity for all groups, including men and women, people from different ethnic backgrounds and faiths, disabled people and people with different sexual orientations.

An important aspect of the Silver Economy is that older people are major contributors to their regional and local economies as consumers of products and users of services. Relevant services and products include those which relate to health and dependency; improve quality of life (e.g. travel, leisure, education, social activities); and involve a 'design-for-all' approach (e.g. vehicles, ICT hardware and software).

The European Employment Strategy foresees a need for a significant increase in the employment rate of all workers and, in particular, of older people. Two targets in respect of older workers were introduced as part of the Lisbon strategy: (1) to raise the employment rate of older workers in the EU to 50% on average by 2010; (2) to increase by 2010 the effective average retirement age from the labour market by 5 years.

Currently older workers' employment rates vary considerably between Member States. Raising the employment rate of older women and men in all Member States will produce a more favourable ratio between economically active and inactive people. It will increase older people's contributions to regional and local economies, not only as producers but also as consumers, service users and tax payers.





According to the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, while ‘work ability’ decreases amongst older people in relation to physically demanding work, mental work performance is maintained and cognitive and social skills may even be enhanced. This suggests the need for new forms of later career management.

There is also a strong social rationale for increasing older people’s employment rate. Work, provided it is ‘good work’, keeps people mentally and physically healthy and extends their healthy life expectancy. It can provide social networks and reduce loneliness. Paid work promotes financial independence and reduces poverty. Voluntary work offers personal fulfilment and benefits to the community.

### 3.3 *What do we want to achieve?*

The Silver Economy theme (SO3) has three **high level aims**:

- **Priority 3.1 Increasing the employment rate of older workers** by retaining older employees in, and returning unemployed older people to, the active workforce.
- **Priority 3.2 Tailored business support for and by older women and men** by supporting them to be self-employed and through mentoring for new businesses by retired professionals.
- **Priority 3.3 Enhancing the growing role of older people as consumers and service users** to the benefit of regional and local economies and of older people themselves.

Specific **programme aims** are:

- Developing, drawing together and disseminating **good practice** which has EU-wide relevance and will outlast individual projects.
- Influencing the design of regional and local **policies and programmes**.
- Promoting **equality and diversity** to counteract discrimination and promote opportunity for all groups including men and women, people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, people with disabilities and people with different sexual orientations.

### 3.4 *How are we going to achieve this?*

#### **(1) Increasing the employment rate of older workers**

Ways of achieving this include re-training, flexible working practices, gradual retirement schemes and broader ‘age management’ approaches. Knowledge management is also important, including promoting the transfer of skills and bridging





the generation gap in work and drawing on the skills and knowledge of older men and women when they leave work.

**(2) Encouraging tailored business support for and by older people**

Ways of supporting older women and men to become self-employed and to set up and develop their own businesses include awareness raising about the opportunities for self-employment; business start-up training; access to finance; and advice services to support on-going business development. Mentoring of new businesses (run by people of any age) can be provided by qualified professionals who are themselves retired.

**(3) Enhancing older people's role as consumers and service users**

Ways of achieving this include giving older people a stronger voice in the design of services and products and raising awareness amongst public and private sector providers. A related issue is protecting older people from unscrupulous companies or service providers who sell them products they do not need or cannot use.

Ways in which the **programme aims** might be achieved include the following:

- Identifying existing expertise and good practice.
- Identifying gaps in expertise and good practice and developing new approaches.
- Identifying products and services which older people require and ways in which the public authorities and older people can influence their design and ensure that equality and diversity issues are fully addressed.
- Supporting the EU-wide dissemination of good practice in pro-active ways.
- Initiatives to support increased consultation with older people and awareness arising in the public and private sectors

**3.5 Themes (priorities)**

Partners are invited to propose solutions which they consider would best achieve the high level and programme aims (including the requirement to promote equality and diversity): see section 3.3. However, particular consideration will be given to proposals with the following focuses.

**(a) Involving older people in promoting the silver economy**

- Public authorities developing and encouraging effective ways of involving older people in promoting the silver economy.
- Focuses may involve design of products and services, increasing older people's employment rates; or alternatives such as self-employment and volunteering.

**(b) Older people as consumers and service users**

- Public authorities influencing, and enabling older people to influence, the design of products and services (including public services) to meet the needs of older people.





- Actions to protect older people against unscrupulous companies or service providers from selling them products they do not need or cannot use.

**(c) Effective age and knowledge management**

- Promotion of effective ‘age management’ attitudes and practices by employers to make better use of the skills and experience of their older workers.
- Two way inter-generational transfer of knowledge and skills to increase the productivity and job satisfaction of younger and older workers.

**(d) Leadership and management capacity**

- Maintain the leadership and management capacity required to maximise opportunities to grow regional and local economies following the recession.
- Provide managers, executives and other higher skilled workers at risk of redundancy or recently made redundant with re-skilling to make them more employable.

**(e) Re-skilling to meet labour market needs**

- Skills training for unemployed and employed older workers to meet employment and skills needs in economic sectors likely to lead regions out of recession.
- Tailored provision which demonstrates how best to satisfy the requirements of older workers and employers.

**(f) Mentoring support for unemployed older people**

- Peer to peer mentoring support for redundant older workers delivered by volunteers with experience themselves of being made redundant.
- Cost-effective delivery through group coaching as well as one-to-one support.

**(g) Self-employment and enterprise opportunities**

- Tailored business support for older people to become self-employed and to set up and develop their own businesses.
- Awareness raising about self-employment opportunities; business start-up training; access to finance; and advice services to support on-going business development.

**(h) Mentoring for new and developing enterprises**

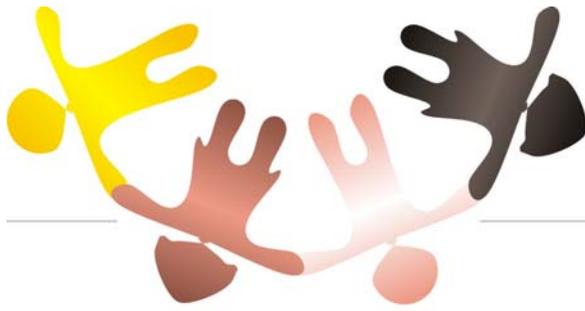
- Business mentoring support for new and developing enterprises drawing on the experience and skills of retired and redundant professionals and managers.
- Mentors to operate on a volunteer (unpaid) basis but, for some, the mentoring assignments would be a stepping stone towards going back into paid work.

**(i) Routeways to Volunteering**

- Redundant older workers meeting voluntary organisation recruitment requirements
- Contributing to the mission of the relevant voluntary organisation and also a possible stepping stone towards going back into paid work.

**(j) Supporting social enterprise**





- Older people setting up, or supporting the setting up of, enterprises designed to tackle social or environmental need.
  - Drawing on older people's expertise such as business start-up accessing finance; finding, managing and developing volunteers; leadership and management.
- (NB Proposals submitted under this theme must address specific silver economy issues; otherwise they should be submitted under the 'social entrepreneurship' PEOPLE theme.)

### **3.6 Which stakeholders could be involved?**

Beneficiaries must be public authorities and bodies whose expenditure is public expenditure in accordance with Article 2 (5) of Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006. Private entities or non-profit organisations can only be involved as Collaborative partners.

Stakeholders whom the beneficiaries may wish to involve include:

- older women and men and organisations representing them;
- employers and organisations representing employers;
- older people and employers to act as role models and champions of good practice;
- education and training organisations;
- organisations which provide information, advice and guidance to employed and unemployed older people;
- organisations which support unemployed older people back into employment, into self-employment or into volunteering;
- institutions, private sector and non profit organisations with particular expertise, including design expertise; manufacturers and service providers.

### **3.7 Indicators**

Partners will be expected to demonstrate that Sub-projects have:

- Addressed equality and diversity issues effectively during their initial design, development and implementation.
- Achieved cost-effective ways of:
  - increasing the employment rate of older workers; or
  - encouraging tailored business support for older people; or
  - enhancing older people's role as consumers and service users/ public and private sector awareness of this.
- Disseminated these results effectively amongst the seven PEOPLE regions and contributed pro-actively to EU-wide dissemination.
- Made effective arrangements for matching less experienced with more advanced regions and for keeping active the partnership network after the co-financed period.





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**Development and testing delivery of new approaches will attract the majority of Sub-project funding.** Partners will be expected to demonstrate the **cost-effectiveness** of achieving their outputs as compared with other delivery methods. Partners will be expected to propose a **range of indicators** to demonstrate the effectiveness of these approaches such as numbers of older men and women from different ethnic backgrounds: receiving tailored careers advice; undertaking skills diagnostic assessments; drawing up individual development plans; achieving aims identified in their development plans; successfully completing re-skilling programmes; placed in work; receiving in-work support; achieving sustained employment or self-employment; engaged in self employment; engaged in volunteering.

**Other indicators** which partners may wish to consider include people and organisations engaged through the Sub-project, such as the stakeholders above mentioned.



**European Union**

European Regional Development Fund

