

# Ageing Europe - statistics on working and moving into retirement

Statistics Explained

*Data extracted in July 2020.  
Planned article update: February 2024.*

**" The share of people aged 55 years or more in the total number of persons employed in the EU-27 increased from 12 % to 20 % between 2004 and 2019. "**

**" In 2019, 48 % of all working men aged 65 years or more in the EU-27 were employed on a part-time basis compared with 60 % of women aged 65 years or more. "**

**" Agriculture, forestry and fishing was the largest employer of people aged 65 years or more in the EU-27, employing 14.9 % of the workforce for this age group in 2019. "**

*Ageing Europe — looking at the lives of older people in the EU* is a Eurostat publication providing a broad range of statistics that describe the everyday lives of the [European Union's \(EU\)](#) older generations. Some older people face a balancing act between their work and family commitments, while financial considerations and health status often play a role when older people consider the optimal date for their retirement. Many of the EU Member States are increasing their state [pension](#) age, with the goal of keeping older people in the workforce for longer and thereby moderating the growth in the overall financial burden of state pensions. The success of such attempts depends, to some degree, on having an appropriate supply of jobs. This may partly help offset the impact of population ageing, while improving the financial well-being of some older people who might not otherwise have an adequate income for their retirement.

## Employment patterns among older people

In 2019, there were 200.0 million persons aged 15 years or more [employed](#)<sup>1</sup> across the [EU-27](#) ; of these, some 40.3 million were aged 55 years or more — with 22.4 million people aged 55-59 years, 12.8 million aged 60-64 years and 5.1 million aged 65 years or more.

The total number of adults (aged 15 years or more) employed in the EU-27 rose overall by 11.1 % during the period from 2004 to 2019. Much higher growth rates were recorded for older people as the number of persons employed and aged 55-64 years increased by 89.8 %, with a similar expansion in the number of persons employed who were aged 65 years or more (up 82.1 %).

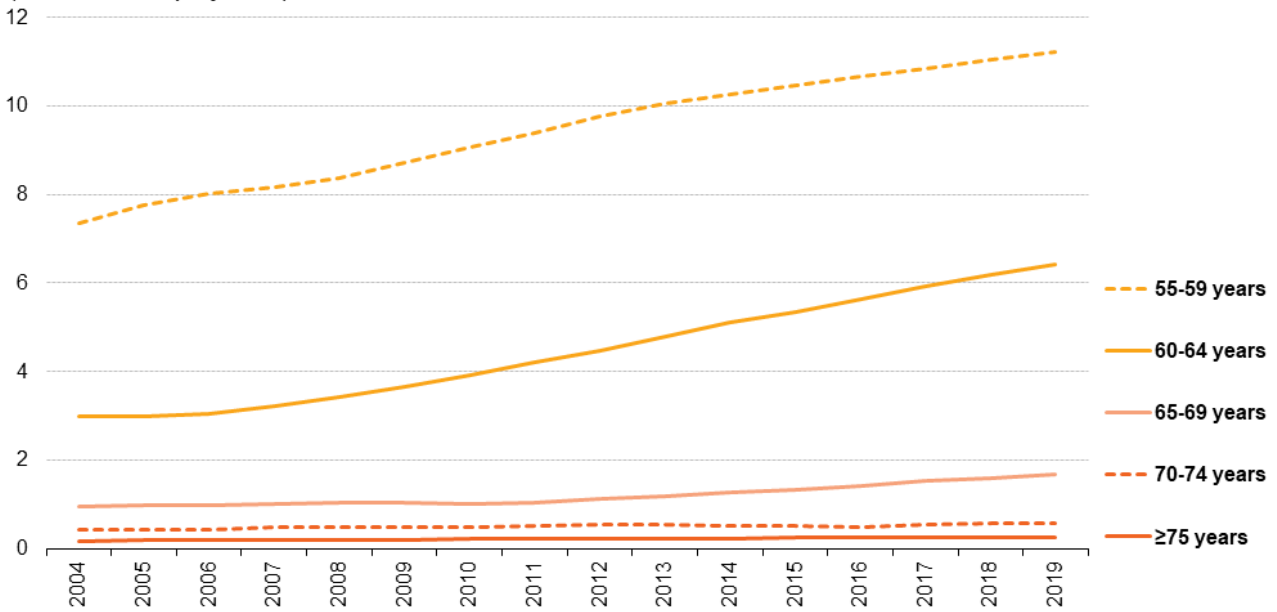
### People aged 55 years or more accounted for one fifth of the total workforce

The share of people aged 55 years or more in the total number of persons employed in the EU-27 increased from 11.9 % to 20.2 % between 2004 and 2019 (see Figure 1); this development was uninterrupted, as the share rose each year. The number of people employed increased at its fastest pace among people aged 60-64 years, with the total number of employed people in this age group more than doubling (up 139 %); the number of people aged 65-69 years and 55-59 years who were employed also increased at a rapid pace, rising by 99 % and 70 % respectively.

<sup>1</sup> Employed persons include those who, during the reference week when the labour force survey was conducted, worked for one hour or more for pay, profit or family gain, or who had a job but were temporarily absent from work.

## Older persons in employment, by age class, EU-27, 2004-2019

(% of total employment)



Note: breaks in series, 2005.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: lfsa\_egan)

eurostat

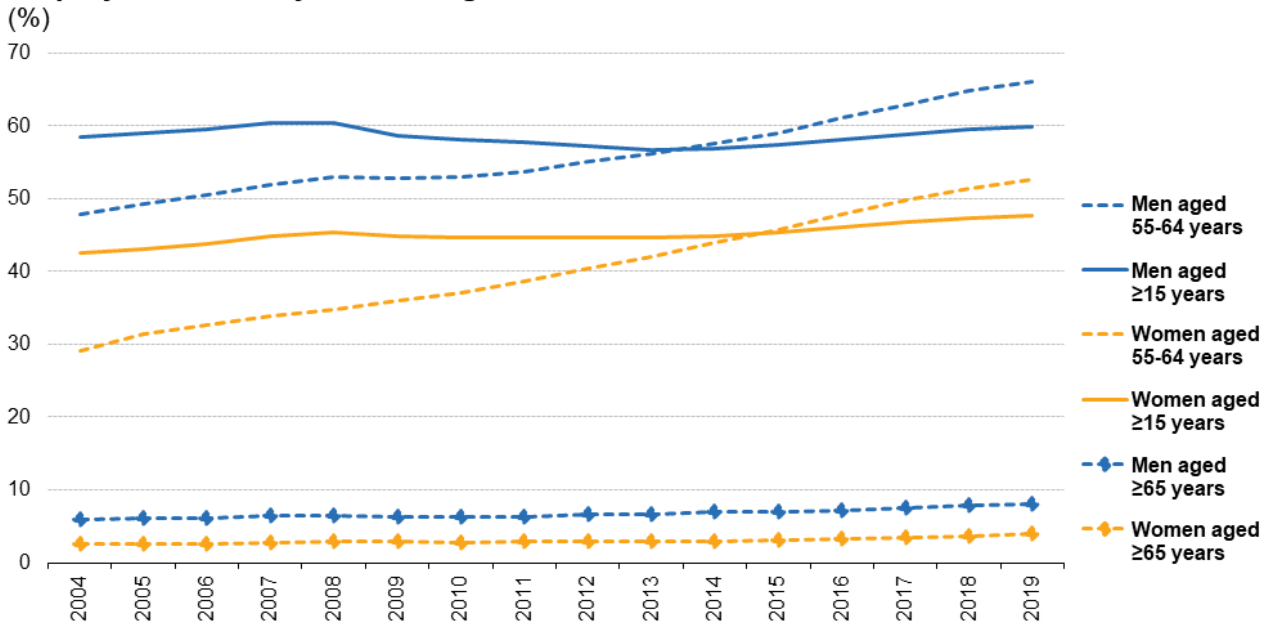
**Figure 1: Older persons in employment, by age class, EU-27, 2004-2019 (% of total employment) Source: Eurostat (lfsa\_egan)**

### One consequence of increasing longevity is people (having to) work more years before retirement

The EU-27 [employment rate](#)<sup>2</sup> for adult men (aged 15 years or more) stood at 59.9 % in 2019 while the corresponding rate for women of the same age was 47.7 %; note that this age range includes a high number of people who are still studying (and have yet to start their working lives) as well as a considerable number of retired people (who have already finished their working lives). In 2019, employment rates for men and women aged 55-64 years were higher, at 66.0 % for men and 52.6 % for women, than the average rates for all adult men and women. The most striking aspect of Figure 2 is the rapid pace at which employment rates for people aged 55-64 years increased between 2004 and 2019 (with little or no impact from the global financial and economic crisis); this was particularly notable in relation to the growing proportion of women in work.

<sup>2</sup>The employment rate is defined as the number of persons employed, expressed as a percentage of the total population (for any given age group).

## Employment rate, by sex and age class, EU-27, 2004-2019



Note: the indicator is defined as the number of people of a certain age who are in employment divided by the total population of the same age group. Breaks in series: 2005.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: ifsa\_ergan)

eurostat

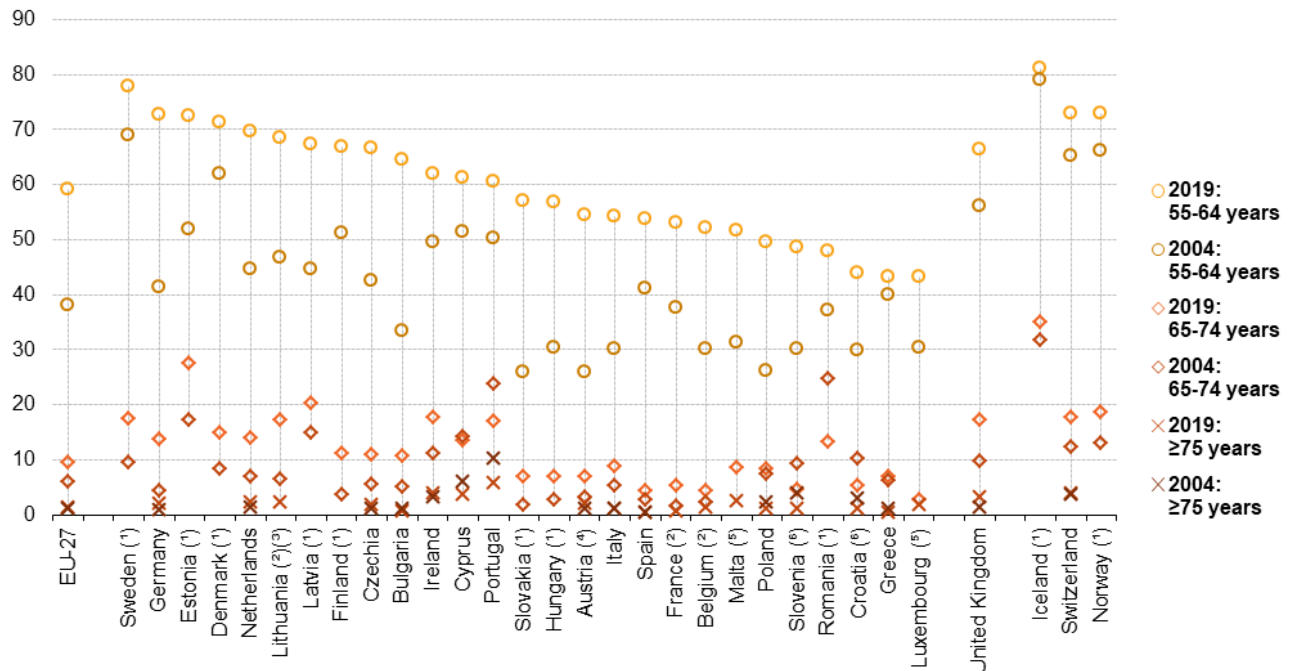
**Figure 2: Employment rate, by sex and age class, EU-27, 2004-2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (ifsa\_ergan)**

Figure 3 confirms this pattern of rising employment rates among people aged 55-64 years: between 2004 and 2019 employment rates for this age group increased in all of the EU Member States. In Slovakia and Austria, the employment rate for people aged 55-64 years more than doubled during the period under consideration. In 2019, employment rates among people aged 55-64 years were more than 70.0 % in Sweden, Germany, Estonia and Denmark, while at the other end of the range there were six EU Member States — Poland, Slovenia, Romania, Croatia, Greece and Luxembourg — where rates for this age group were less than 50.0 %.

One means to try to increase financial security in old-age is to work longer. Older people who delay their retirement earn more money, may accumulate additional pension rights and may be able to save some of the earnings or divert them to a private pension plan. Although low, a growing share of the EU-27 population aged 65-74 years continued to work. In 2019, more than one quarter (27.5 %) of this age group in Estonia were employed, while this rate was also at least 17.0 % in Latvia, Ireland, Sweden, Lithuania and Portugal.

## Employment rate, by age class, 2004 and 2019

(%)



Note: the indicator is defined as the number of people of a certain age who are in employment divided by the total population of the same age group.

(1) ≥75 years: not available.

(2) ≥75 years for 2004: not available.

(3) 65-74 years for 2004: low reliability.

(4) ≥75 years for 2004: low reliability.

(5) 65-74 years and ≥75 years for 2004: not available. ≥75 years for 2019: low reliability.

(6) ≥75 years: low reliability.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: ifsa\_ergan)

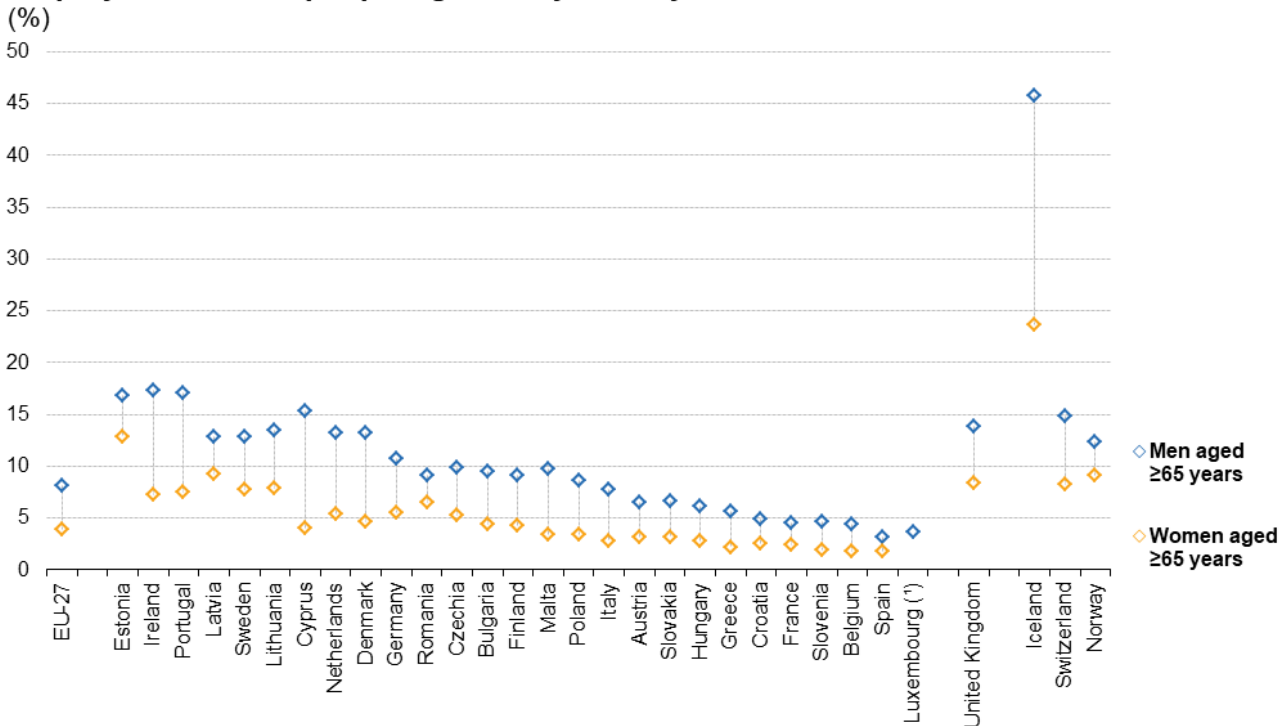
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**Figure 3: Employment rate, by age class, 2004 and 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (Ifsa\_ergan)**

Figure 4 shows employment rates for people aged 65 years or more. Across the EU-27, 8.1 % of men in this age group were employed in 2019, which was slightly more than double the corresponding share recorded among older women (3.9 %). This pattern — a higher employment rate for older men — was repeated in each of the EU Member States (note that data are not available for older women in Luxembourg). The gender gap in employment rates for older people aged 65 years or more peaked at 11.3 percentage points in Cyprus, while Ireland was the only other Member State to record a difference in double-digits.

Across the EU Member States, the highest employment rate for men aged 65 years or more was recorded in Ireland (17.3 %), closely followed by Portugal (17.1 %) and Estonia (16.8 %). The highest employment rate for women aged 65 years or more was recorded in Estonia (12.8 %), followed by Latvia (9.2 %).

## Employment rate of people aged ≥65 years, by sex, 2019



Note: the figure is ranked on the employment rate for the population (both sexes) aged 15-64 years. The indicator is defined as the number of men/women aged ≥65 years who are in employment divided by the total number of men/women of the same age group.

(\*) Women aged ≥75 years: not available.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: ifsa\_ergan)

eurostat

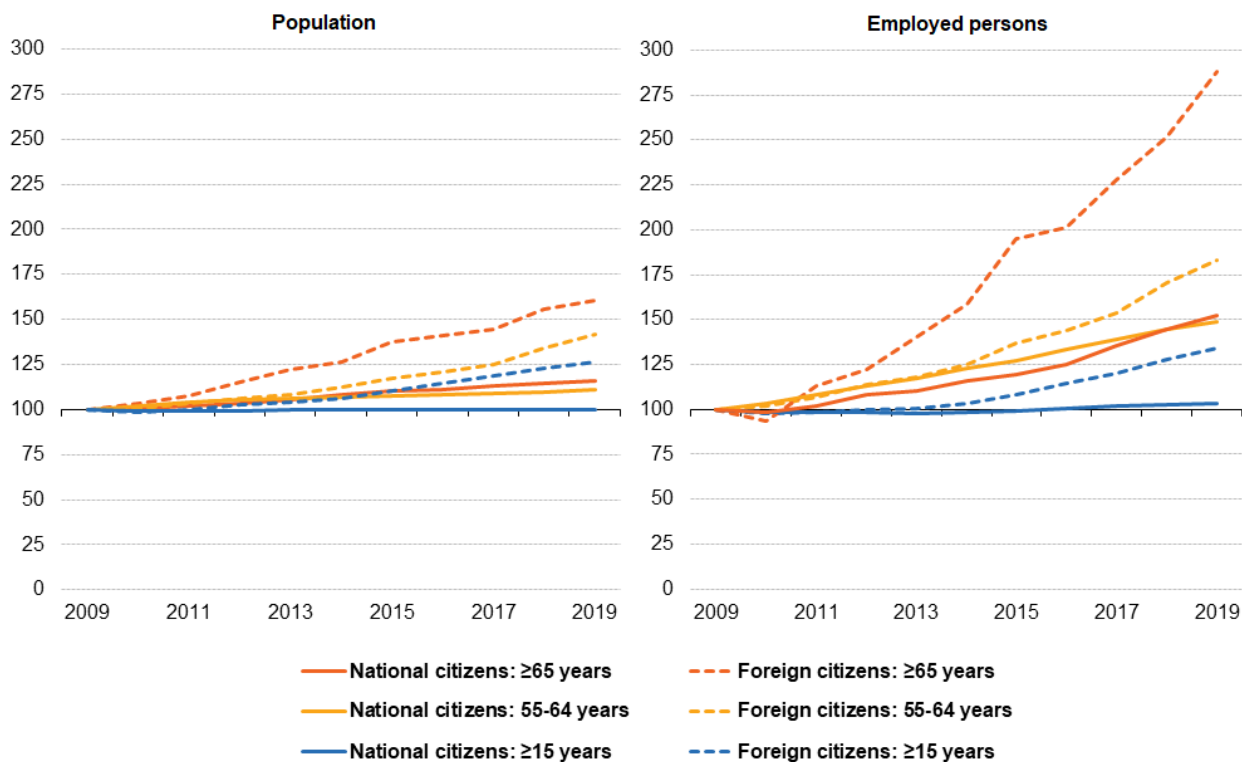
**Figure 4: Employment rate of people aged ≥65 years, by sex, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (Ifsa\_ergan)**

### There was particularly rapid growth in the number of older foreign citizens in employment

The first part of Figure 5 presents information showing EU-27 [population](#) developments by age and [citizenship](#). During the period from 2009 to 2019, the number of adults (defined here as people aged 15 years or more) who were foreign citizens living in the EU-27 increased at a much more rapid pace (up 26.6 % overall) than the number of [national citizens](#) (which was more or less unchanged; down 0.3 % overall). A closer examination reveals that the relative importance of older generations in both national and foreign citizens increased between 2009 and 2019; this was particularly the case for people aged 65 years or more.

The second part of Figure 5 presents similar data but for employment developments. During the period 2009 to 2019, the number of adults employed in the EU-27 rose at a somewhat faster pace than the number of inhabitants both for national and foreign citizens. The number of foreign citizens aged 55-64 years who were employed in the EU-27 rose by 83.3 % overall between 2009 and 2019, while the number of national citizens of the same age who were in employment increased by 48.9 %. Even higher rates of change were recorded among the relatively few people aged 65 years or more who remained in work, as the number of persons employed more than doubled for foreign citizens (up 188.0 %) and increased by 52.5 % for national citizens.

**Developments for the population and employed persons, by citizenship and age class, EU-27, 2009-2019**  
(2009 = 100)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: lfsa\_pganws)



**Figure 5: Developments for the population and employed persons, by citizenship and age class, EU-27, 2009-2019 (2009 = 100) Source: Eurostat (lfsa\_pganws)**

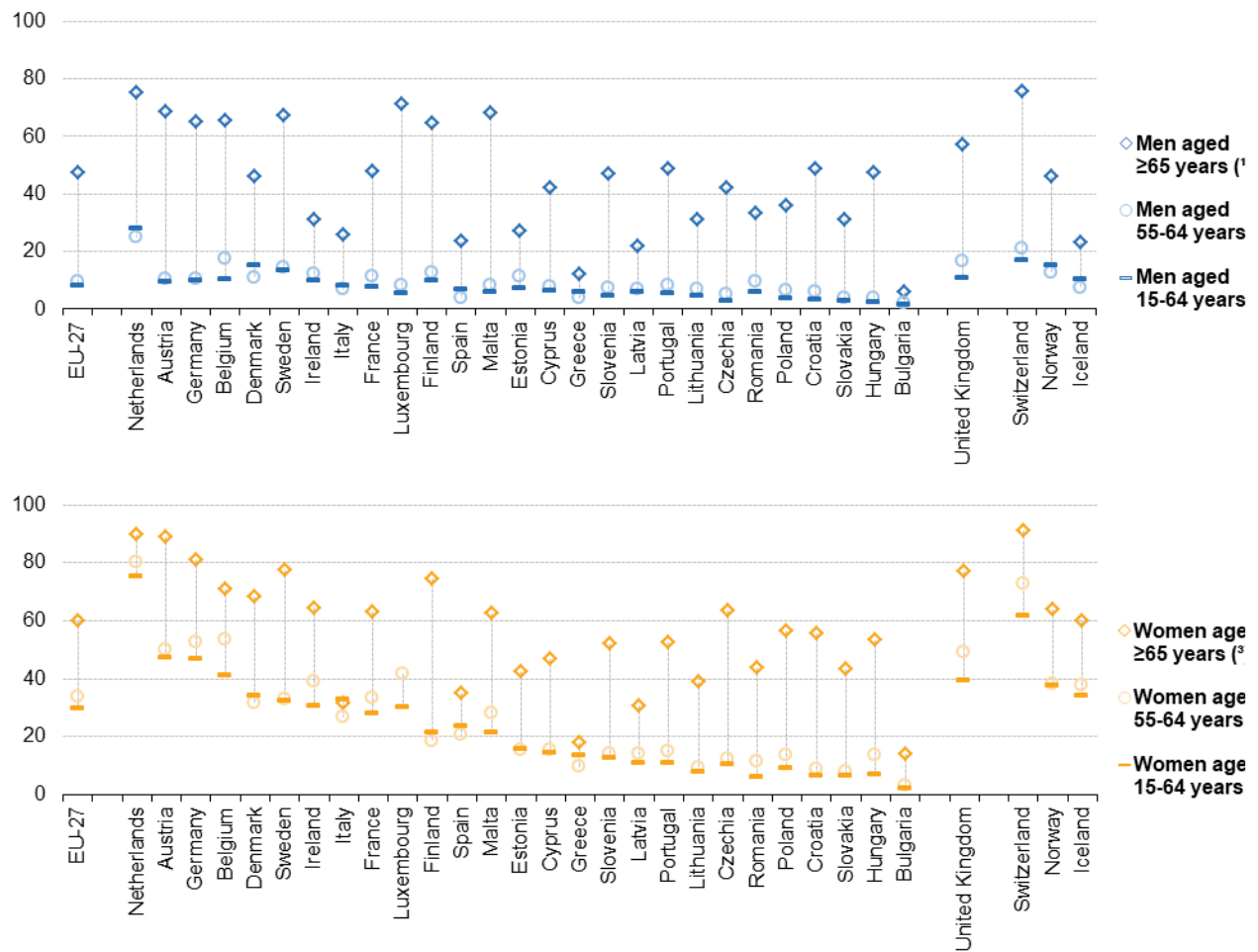
**More than half of the workforce aged 65 years or more was employed on a part-time basis**

While the information presented so far has highlighted the quite rapid transformation of EU labour markets driven by a growing number of older people in work, policymakers stress the need for these developments to continue. Employers can try to stimulate the supply of older people available for employment by improving working conditions; employees can also try to avoid an abrupt end to their working lives. Increasing numbers of older people are choosing a phased retirement (for example, moving from working full-time to 60 % or 50 % of their normal working hours before moving permanently into retirement), while other older people who do retire may subsequently take on a part-time job or become self-employed or a freelancer.

In 2019, almost one fifth (18.3 %) of the EU-27 workforce aged 15-64 years was employed on a part-time basis, with much higher shares for women (29.9 %) than for men (8.4 %). Figure 6 indicates the extent to which part-time work is common for older people and, in particular, the relatively high rates recorded among those people aged 65 years or more: in 2019, almost half (47.6 %) of all working men in this age group were employed on a part-time basis, while the share for older women was higher still, at 60.2 %. In approximately half (13 out of 27) of the EU Member States, more than 50.0 % of all older people aged 65 years or more who remained in employment were found to be working on a part-time basis, with this share exceeding 75.0 % in Austria and the Netherlands.

## Part-time employment, by sex and age class, 2019

(%)



Note: the figure is ranked on the share of part-time employment in total employment for the population (both sexes) aged 15-64 years.

(<sup>1</sup>) Bulgaria, Croatia and Slovenia: low reliability.

(<sup>2</sup>) Croatia: low reliability.

(<sup>3</sup>) Croatia, Cyprus and Slovenia: low reliability. Luxembourg: not available (due to very low reliability).

Source: Eurostat (online data code: lfsa\_effpt)

eurostat

Figure 6: Part-time employment, by sex and age class, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (lfsa\_effpt)

### More than two fifths of the workforce aged 65-74 years were self-employed

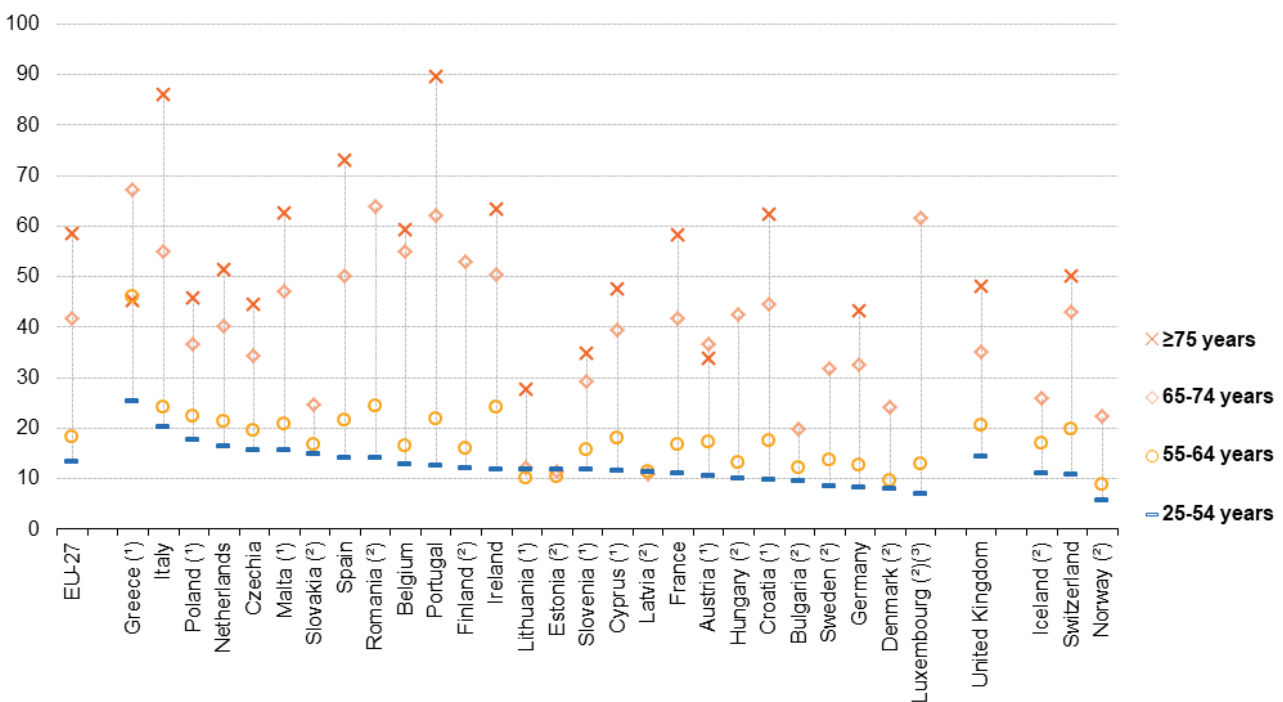
Self-employment can offer the flexibility to help some older people stay in work — for example, professionals such as accountants might become consultants, or teachers become private tutors or supply teachers. Whether by choice or resulting from a lack of other options, many self-employed people appear to retire later in life (or even not at all).

Figure 7 shows that in 2019 some 13.3 % of the EU-27 workforce aged 25-54 years were self-employed. This share was considerably higher for older people: 41.6 % of the workforce aged 65-74 years were self-employed, while this share reached 58.4 % for people aged 75 years or more. The self-employment share among people aged 65-74 years was close to two thirds in Greece, Romania and Portugal; this may be linked in part to a high proportion of this workforce being elderly farmers who continued to work, often on very small, family-based, subsistence farms. More than half of the workforce aged 65-74 years was self-employed in Luxembourg, Belgium, Italy, Finland, Ireland and Spain.



## Self-employment, by age class, 2019

(%)



(1) ≥75 years: low reliability.

(2) ≥75 years: not available.

(\*) 65-74 years: low reliability.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: ifsa\_esgan and ifsa\_egan)

eurostat

**Figure 7: Self-employment, by age class, 2019 (%) Source: Eurostat (ifsa\_esgan) and (ifsa\_egan)**

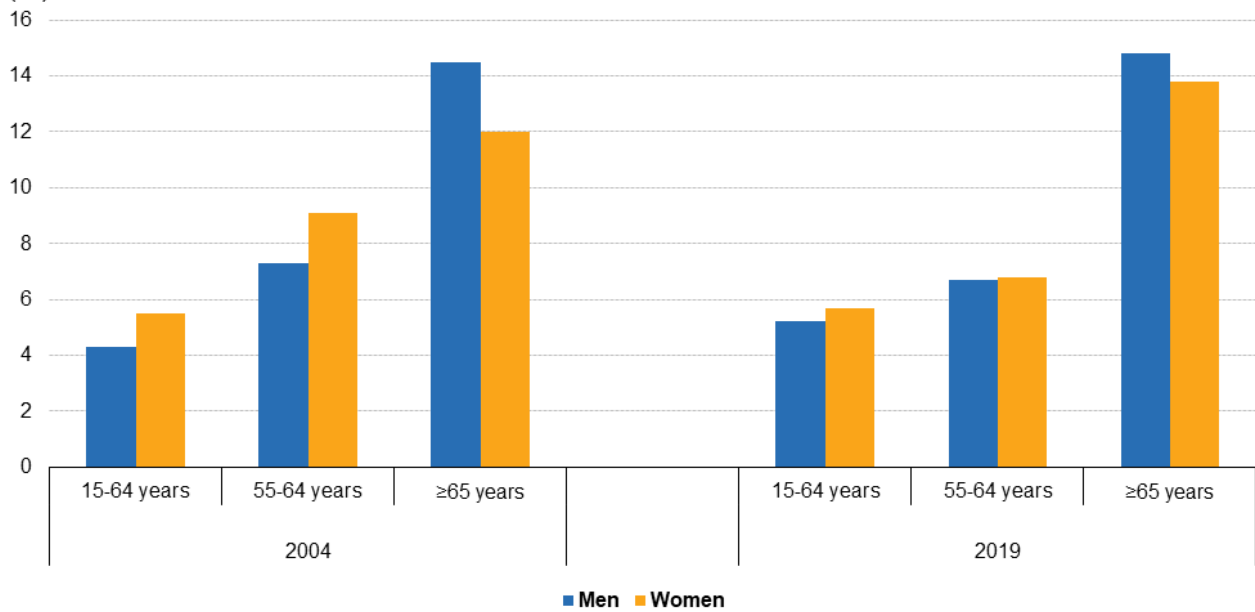
### One seventh of the workforce aged 65 years or more usually worked from home

Across the EU-27 in 2019, men and women aged 65 years or more were almost three times as likely to usually work at home as their colleagues aged 15-64 years (see Figure 8); note that these statistics cover the period immediately prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The share of employed men aged 65 years or more usually working at home was 14.8 %, marginally above the corresponding share for older women (13.8 %). Between 2004 and 2019, the share of the EU-27 workforce aged 65 years or more usually working at home (both men and women) increased marginally from 13.6 % to 14.4 %; this pattern was also repeated for the working-age population (defined here as those aged 15-64 years), as their share usually working at home rose from 4.8 % in 2004 to 5.4 % by 2019.



## Employed people usually working at home, by sex and age class, EU-27, 2004 and 2019

(%)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: lfsa\_ehomp)

eurostat 

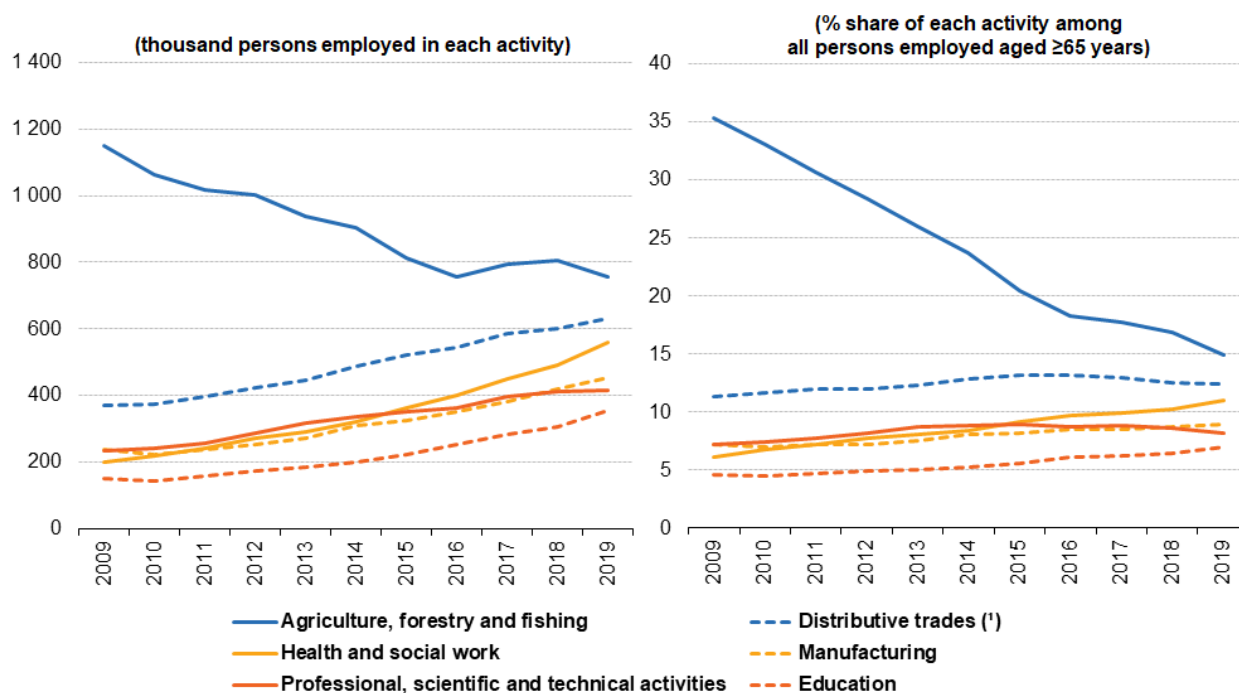
**Figure 8: Employed people usually working at home, by sex and age class, EU-27, 2004 and 2019 (%)** Source: Eurostat (lfsa\_ehomp)

### Focus on common jobs among older people

#### Agriculture, forestry and fishing was the largest employer of people aged 65 years or more

In 2019, approximately one seventh (14.9 %) of the EU-27 workforce aged 65 years or more — equivalent to some 755 000 people — was employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing. Despite a rapid contraction in their level of employment, these activities continued to be the largest economic activity — based on NACE Sections — in terms of the count of older people (aged 65 years or more) in employment. Figure 9 shows that the EU-27 agriculture, forestry and fishing workforce composed of older people contracted overall by 34.3 % between 2009 and 2019. This was in stark contrast to developments for the other five economic activities presented: for example, the number of older people employed in education and in health and social work more than doubled during the period under consideration.

## Employment of people aged ≥65 years, by selected economic activity, EU-27, 2009-2019



Note: the figure shows the six economic activities (at NACE Section level) in the EU-27 with the largest workforces composed of people aged ≥65 years.

The scales used for the y-axes are different.

(\*) Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: lfsa\_egan2)

eurostat 

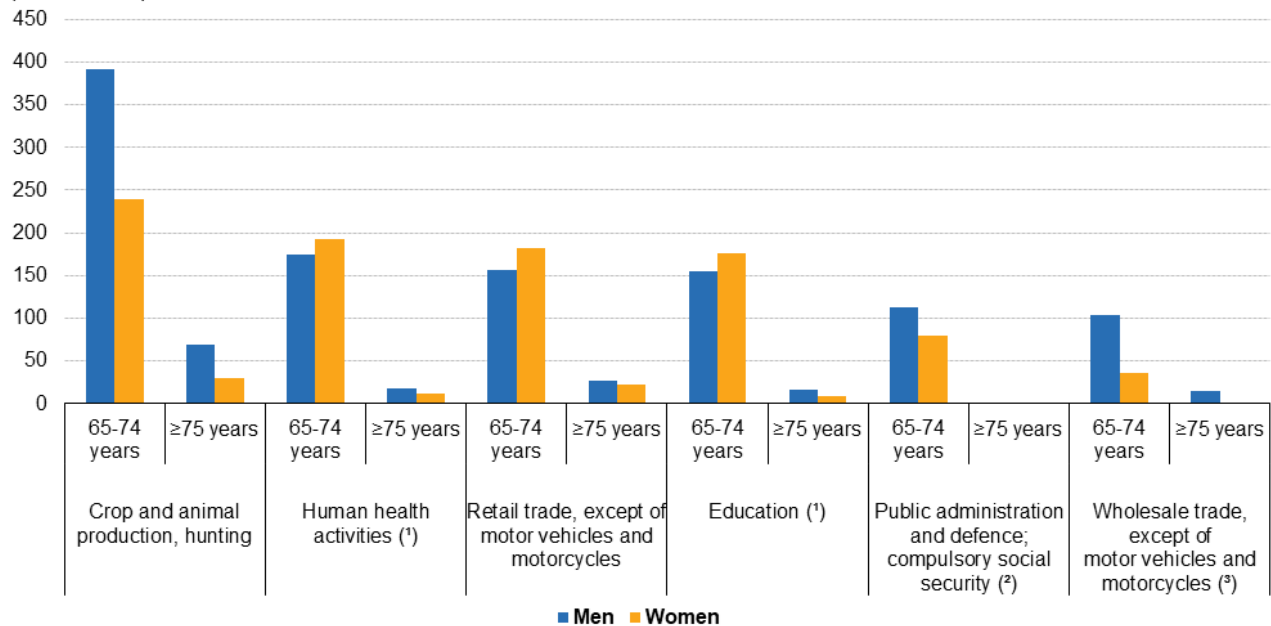
**Figure 9: Employment of people aged ≥65 years, by selected economic activity, EU-27, 2009-2019** Source: Eurostat (lfsa\_egan2)

Figure 10 shows a more detailed picture of the employment situation for the six economic activities — based on NACE Divisions — with the highest numbers of older people (aged 65 years or more) in their respective workforces across the EU-27. In 2019, crop and animal production and hunting (hereafter, agriculture) was the principal employer of older people in the EU-27, particularly among older men (aged 65-74 years). The three activities that followed in the ranking — human health activities; retail trade (except motor trades); education — each employed a higher number of older women (aged 65-74 years) than older men.

Figure 10 also provides information on the number of people who continued to work beyond the age of 75 years. In 2019, there were 97 800 people across the EU-27 aged 75 years or more working in agriculture, while the next largest workforce for this age group was the 49 100 people who worked in retail trade (except motor trades).

## Number of persons employed aged ≥65 years, by age class and selected economic activity, EU-27, 2019

(thousands)



Note: the figure shows the six economic activities (at NACE Division level) in the EU-27 with the largest workforces composed of people aged ≥65 years.

(\*) Women aged ≥75 years: low reliability.

(\*) Men and women aged ≥75 years: not available (due to very low reliability).

(\*) Women aged ≥75 years: not available (due to very low reliability).

Source: Eurostat (online data code: ifsa\_egan22d)

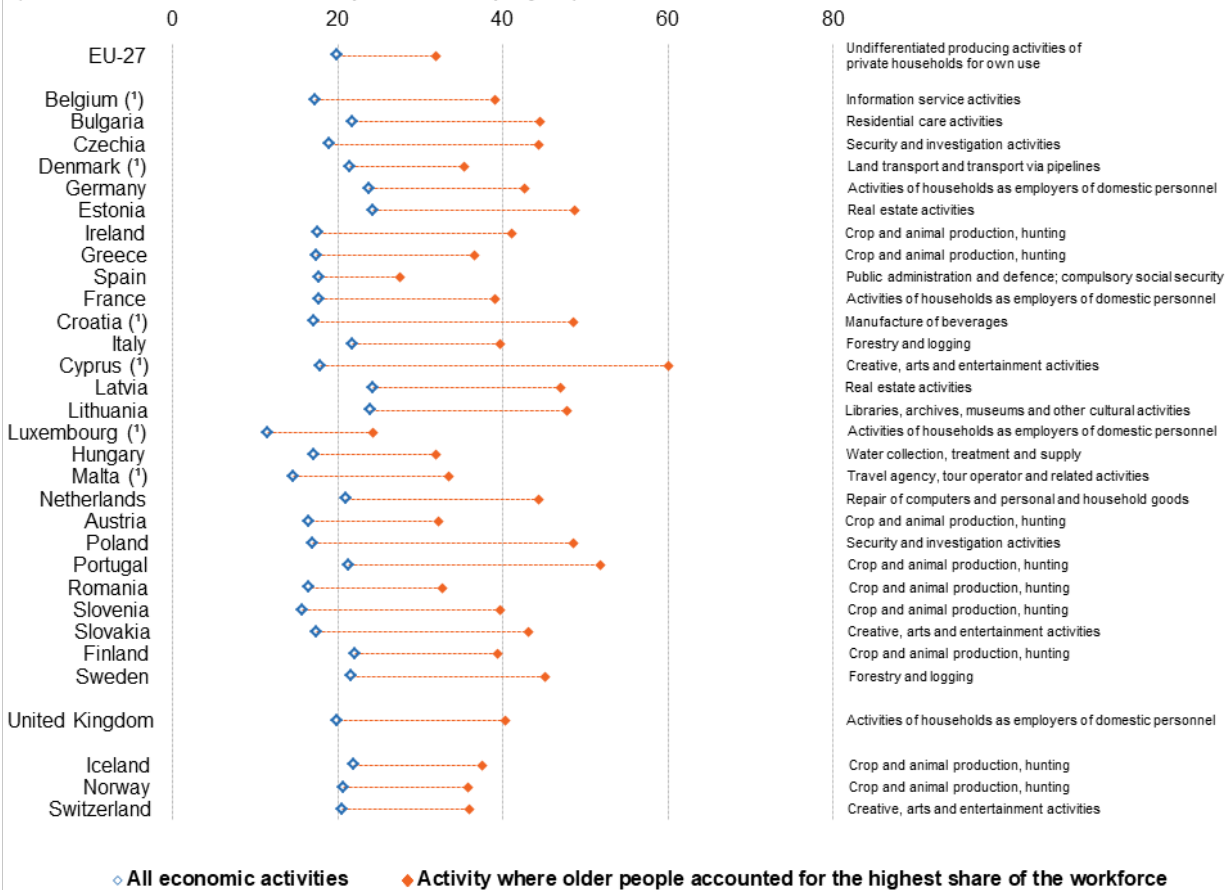
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**Figure 10: Number of persons employed aged ≥65 years, by age class and selected economic activity, EU-27, 2019 (thousands) Source: Eurostat (ifsa\_egan22d)**

In 2019, older people (defined here as those aged 55-74 years) accounted for almost one fifth (19.9 %) of the total number of persons employed in the EU-27. This share (rather than absolute number of workers) peaked, across NACE Divisions, within undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of private households for own use — where 31.9 % of the total workforce was found to be aged between 55 and 74 years, closely followed by activities of households as employers of domestic personnel (31.3 %) and agriculture (30.1 %).

Figure 11 shows which economic activities employed the highest shares of older people. In 2019, there were seven EU Member States where agriculture was the leading activity providing work to people aged 55-74 years: in Portugal, more than half (51.7 %) of the total workforce within agriculture was aged 55-74 years. However, there was one EU Member State where employment among older people was even more concentrated. Older people aged 55-74 years accounted for 60.0 % of those employed in creative, arts and entertainment activities in Cyprus.

## People aged 55-74 years in employment, 2019 (% share of total number of persons employed)



Note: the figure shows the economic activity (at NACE Division level) where older people aged 55-74 years accounted for the highest share of the overall workforce.

(\*) Activity where older people accounted for the highest share of the workforce: low reliability.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: ifsa\_egan2 and ifsa\_egan22d)

eurostat

**Figure 11: People aged 55-74 years in employment, 2019 (% share of total number of persons employed)**  
Source: Eurostat (Ifsa\_egan2) and (Ifsa\_egan22d)

### Duration of work for older people

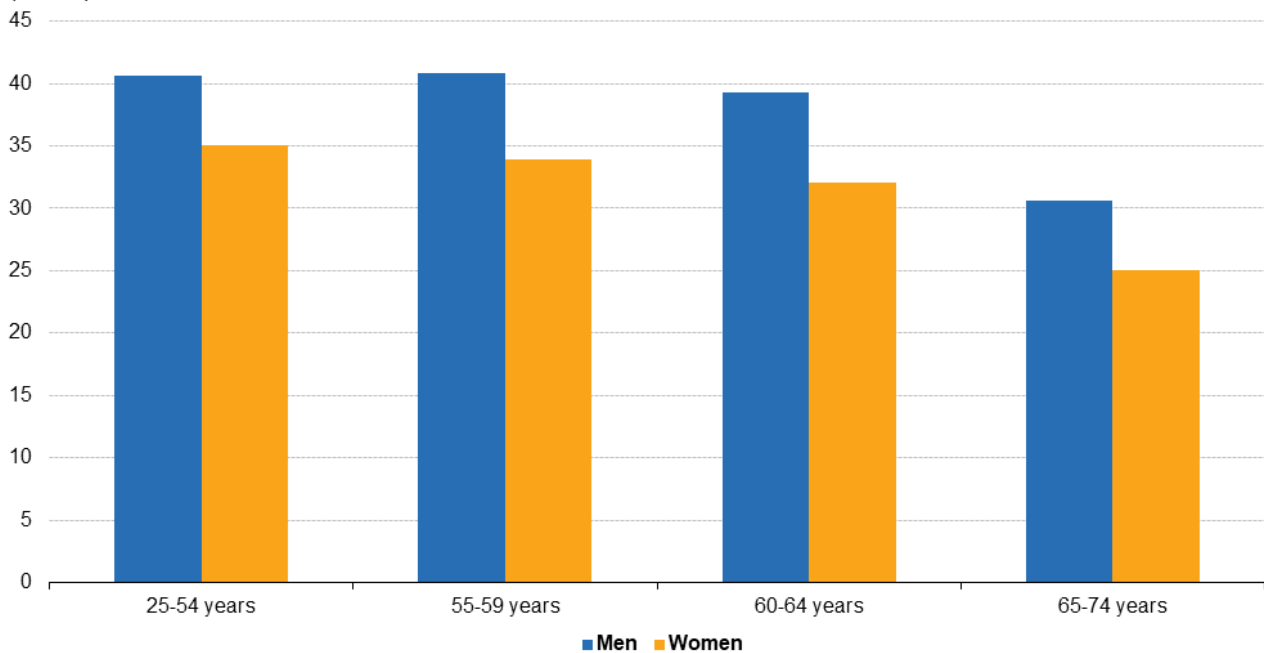
While employment rates for older people have risen in recent years, this does not necessarily mean their labour input has increased proportionally. Although a greater number of older people are remaining in the workforce for longer, many also reduce their number of hours worked (less hours each day, less days each week, or lengthier holidays).

#### Employed women aged 65-74 years spent an average of 25.0 hours per week at work

As people become older their average number of usual [working hours](#) declines, albeit by a relatively small margin up to the age of 64 years. Figure 12 shows that the largest reduction in average working hours was recorded for older men and women aged 65-74 years (by when a majority of the population had already retired), indicating that this age group was particularly likely to work on a part-time basis, by choice or necessity. In 2019, the number of usual working hours in the EU-27 averaged 30.6 hours per week for older men aged 65-74 years and 25.0 hours per week for older women of the same age.

## Usual weekly hours in main job, by sex and age class, EU-27, 2019

(hours)



Source: Eurostat (EU labour force survey)

eurostat 

**Figure 12: Usual weekly hours in main job, by sex and age class, EU-27, 2019 (hours)** Source: Eurostat (EU labour force survey)

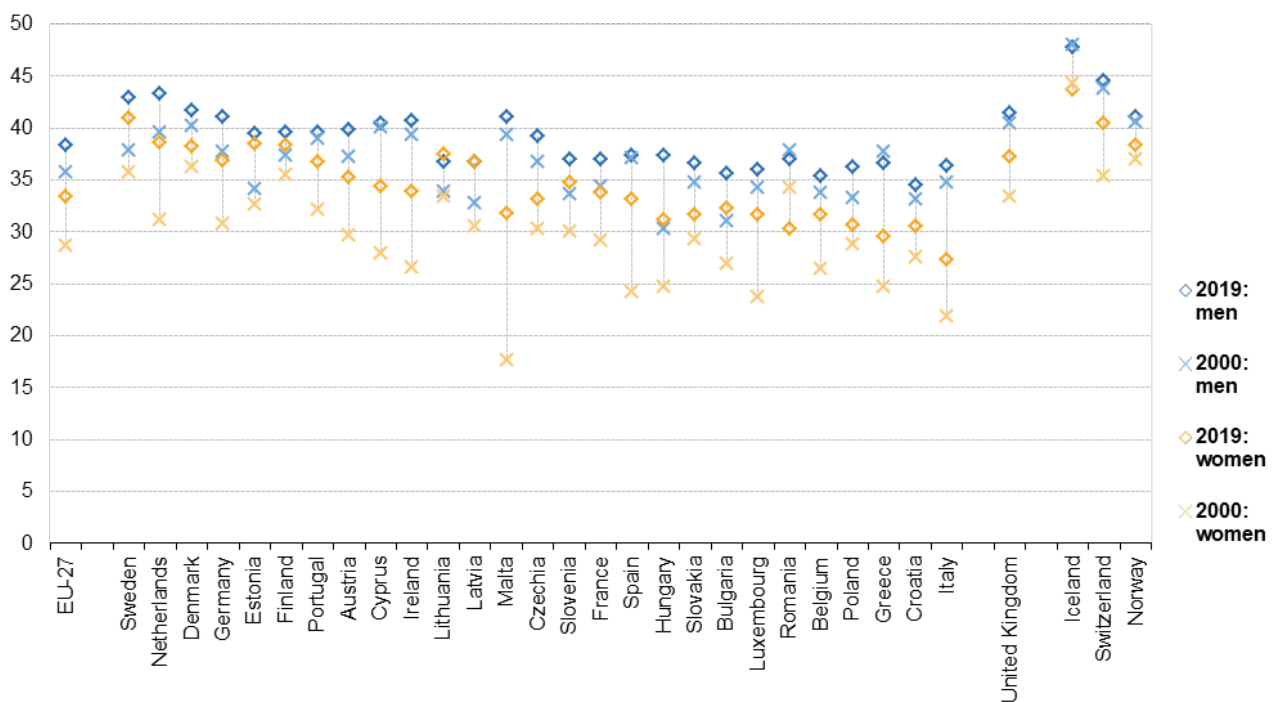
### The average duration of a man's working life was 4.9 years higher than that of a woman

The duration of working life (as shown in Figure 13) provides a measure of the average number of years for which people aged 15 years are expected to be active in the labour market throughout their lives (under the currently prevailing age-specific participation rates); this information can be used to monitor developments in relation to [early retirement](#).

In 2019, a man aged 15 years in the EU-27 could expect to be part of the [labour force](#) for 38.3 years, while the corresponding figure for a woman was 33.4 years; this difference may be largely explained by i) a higher share of women interrupting their careers to support the needs of family life as well as ii) different pension ages for men and women in some EU Member States. Young men in the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Malta, Ireland and Cyprus could expect to work for upwards of 40 years, while Sweden was the only EU Member State where young women could expect to work for this length of time. By contrast, young women in Italy and Greece could expect to be active in the labour market for less than 30 years.

Across the EU-27, the average duration of working life rose for men and for women between 2000 and 2019. The increase in the length of an average woman's working life was an additional 4.7 years during this period, while that for men was 2.5 years. This pattern of working for longer (additional years) was observed in the vast majority of EU Member States, the only exceptions being Romania (for both sexes) and Greece (for men only).

## Duration of working life, by sex, 2000 and 2019 (years)



Note: the duration of working life indicator measures the number of years a person aged 15 is expected to be active in the labour market throughout their lives. Ranked on the expected duration of working life for all persons (both sexes) aged 15 in 2019.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: lfsi\_dwl\_a)



Figure 13: Duration of working life, by sex, 2000 and 2019 (years) Source: Eurostat (lfsi\_dwl\_a)

## Opinions of older people concerning work-related issues

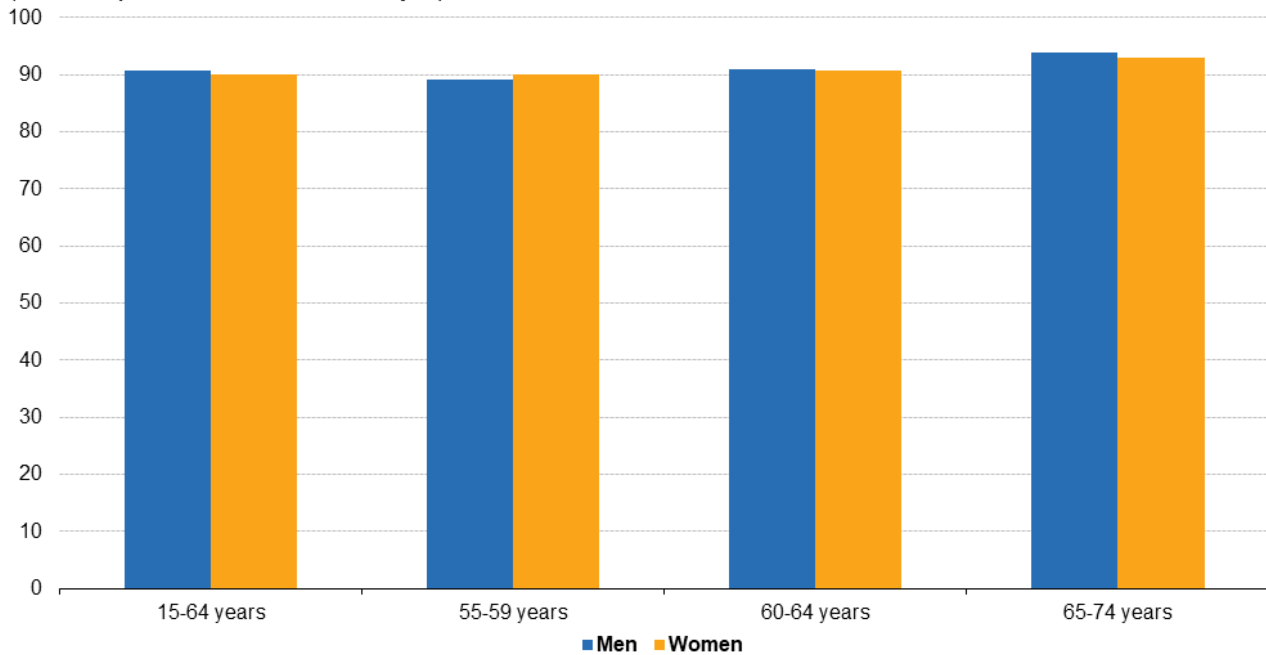
Policymakers have recognised that job satisfaction plays an important role in relation to active ageing, extending working lives. Alongside remuneration, job satisfaction can be linked to a wide range of other factors, including: working conditions, job security, support and recognition at work, or having the opportunity to learn new skills.

### Older people were more likely to be satisfied at work

In 2019, approximately 90 % of the EU-27 working-age population (15-64 years) were satisfied at work. Job satisfaction for older people (aged 65-74 years) was even higher, at 93.0 % for older women and 93.9 % for older men (see Figure 14).

## Job satisfaction, by sex and age class, EU-27, 2019

(% of respondents satisfied with job)



Source: Eurostat (EU labour force survey)

eurostat 

**Figure 14: Job satisfaction, by sex and age class, EU-27, 2019 (% of respondents satisfied with job) Source: Eurostat (EU labour force survey)**

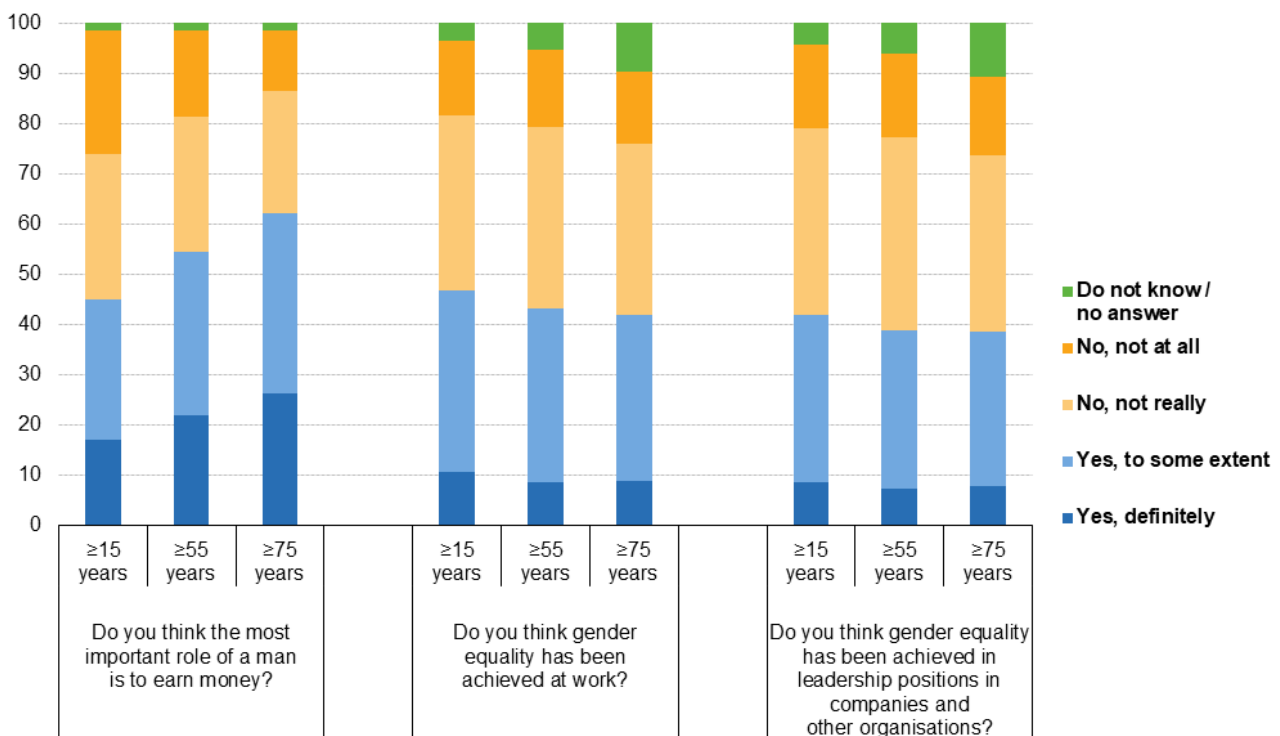
### Older people were more likely to agree that a man's principal role in life is to earn money

[Special Eurobarometer 465](#) provides information on attitudes concerning gender and work (see Figure 15). In June 2017, the share of the EU-27 population who thought that the most important role of a man was to earn money increased with age; some 62 % of the population aged 75 years or more agreed with this premise. Conversely, the share of the EU-27 population who thought that gender equality at work had been achieved fell (marginally) with age; some 42 % of the population aged 75 years or more agreed with this premise.



## Attitudes concerning gender and work, by age class, EU-27, June 2017

(% of respondents)



Note: estimates for the EU-27 made for the purpose of this publication based on Eurobarometer data.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: demo\_pjangroup) and Special Eurobarometer 465 — Gender equality 2017

eurostat

**Figure 15: Attitudes concerning gender and work, by age class, EU-27, June 2017 (% of respondents)**  
**Source: Eurostat (demo\_pjangroup) and Special Eurobarometer 465 — Gender equality 2017**

## Accidents at work among older people

Older people, like people in other age groups, suffer from workplace, traffic and domestic accidents. As older people account for a growing share of the EU's workforce and some very old people continue to work, some employers may face a range of emerging health and safety risks in the workplace.

### Although older people had fewer accidents at work, they were more likely to be serious or fatal

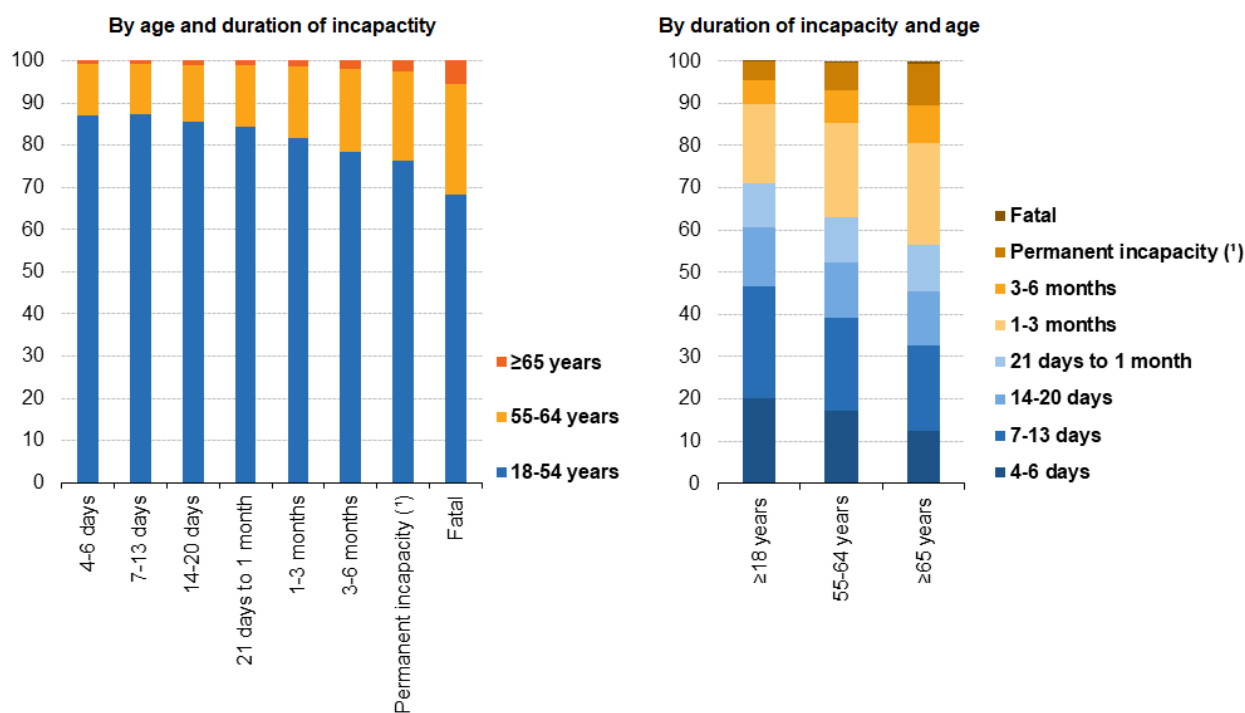
Figure 16 shows the share of total [accidents at work](#) by age and by severity (as measured by the average duration of incapacity). People aged 18-54 years accounted for a majority of the accidents at work in the EU-27, irrespective of the period of incapacity.

As the severity of an accident at work increases, so does the probability that the accident involves an older person. In 2017, the EU-27 workforce aged 55-64 years accounted for 12.1 % of all accidents at work that resulted in between 4 and 6 days of incapacity, while this age group had a 21.3 % share of accidents at work that led to permanent incapacity, and a 26.4 % share of [fatal accidents](#) ; a similar pattern of increasing shares (but all at a lower level) was observed for people aged 65 years or more.

An alternative picture is presented in the second half of Figure 16: it reveals that in 2017 approximately one quarter (26.5 %) of all accidents at work in the EU-27 resulted in 7-13 days of incapacity. By contrast, approximately one quarter (24.1 %) of all accidents at work among people aged 65 years or more resulted in 1-3 months of incapacity. Older people may be disproportionately affected by accidents at work as a result of various age-related disabilities, such as impaired vision, hearing and mobility (see [Chapter 2](#) for more information).

## Accidents at work, by duration and age class, EU-27, 2017

(%)



Note: the figure shows the proportion of accidents by age and by duration of incapacity (the length of time people were absent from work).(\*) Includes any accident that results in ≥183 days absence.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_mi02)

eurostat

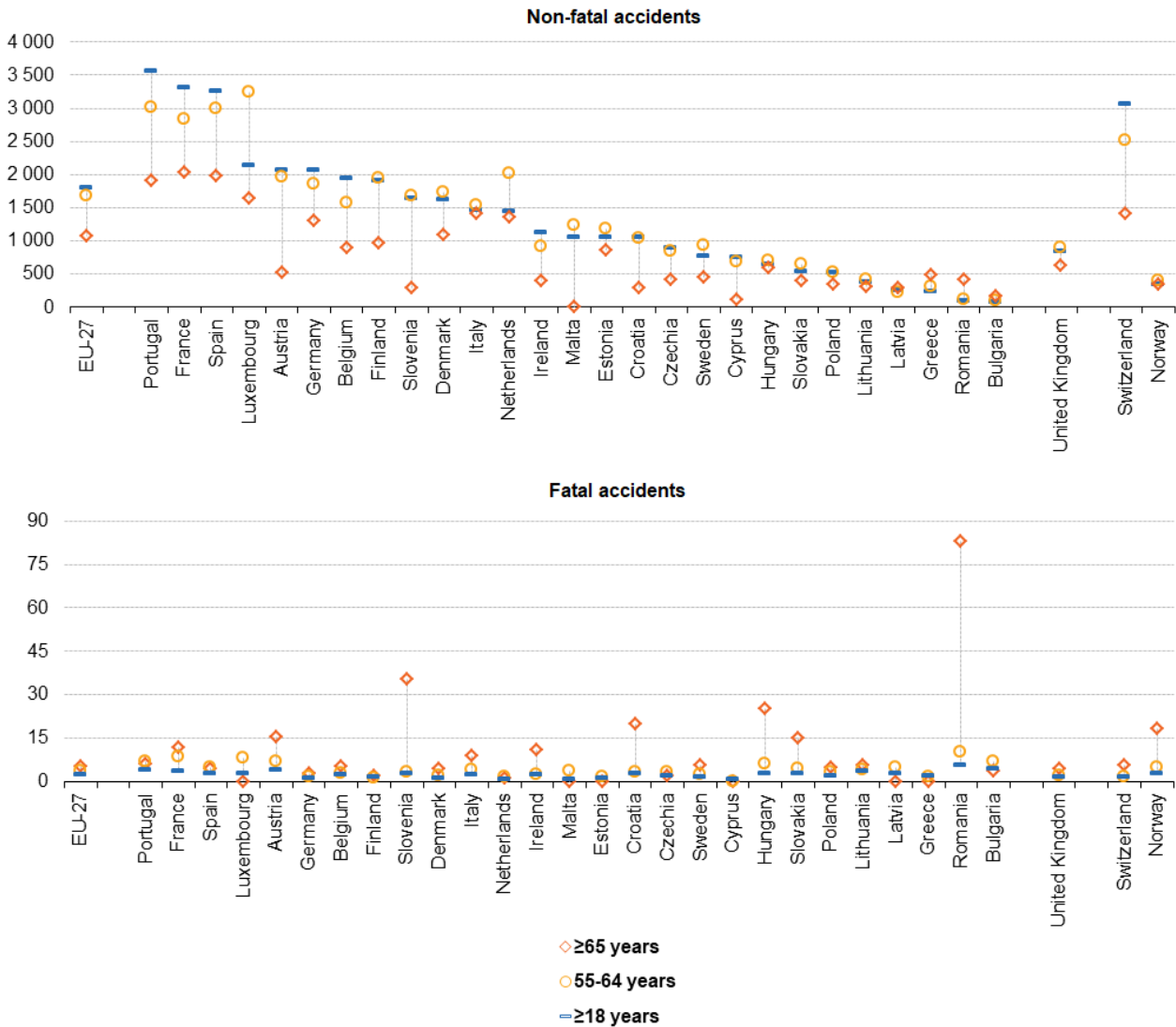
**Figure 16: Accidents at work, by duration and age class, EU-27, 2017 (%)** Source: Eurostat (hsw\_mi02)

In 2017, there were 1 801 non-fatal accidents per 100 000 working people in the EU-27<sup>3</sup>. Older people were less likely to have a non-fatal accident than their younger counterparts: 1 683 per 100 000 working people among those aged 55-64 years and 1 076 per 100 000 working people among those aged 65 years or more. However, as noted above, when older people did experience an accident, it was more likely to be serious or fatal. In 2017, there were 2.3 fatal accidents per 100 000 working people in the EU-27. Older people were more likely to have a fatal accident: 3.6 deaths per 100 000 working people among those aged 55-64 years and 5.1 deaths per 100 000 working people among those aged 65 years or more (see Figure 17). It should be noted that the likelihood of an accident at work, whether fatal or not, is strongly related to the nature of the work. Some economic activities have higher fatal accident rates than others and, as noted earlier, the older workforce tends to be concentrated in certain activities, particularly agriculture which has one of the highest rates in the EU-27 for fatal accidents at work.

<sup>3</sup>The information presented is based on an aggregate covering NACE Section A and Sections C-N.

## Number of accidents at work, by type of accident and age class, 2017

(per 100 000 working people)



Note: the figure is ranked on the ratio of non-fatal accidents at work per 100 000 inhabitants among persons aged  $\geq 18$  years. An accident at work is a discrete occurrence during the course of work which leads to physical or mental harm resulting in the victim spending at least four days absent from work. A fatal accident at work is defined as an accident which leads to the death of a victim within one year of the accident. The figure covers NACE Section A and Sections C-N. The scales used for the y-axes are different.

Source: Eurostat (online data code: hsw\_mi01)

eurostat

**Figure 17: Number of accidents at work, by type of accident and age class, 2017 (per 100 000 working people)**  
Source: Eurostat (hsw\_mi01)

### Older people moving into retirement

Most people in work will at some point start to think about their retirement. While early retirement might sound like a good idea, it is likely that an early exit from the labour force will have consequences for future income. Phased retirements promote a flexible transition into retirement, while retaining some of the financial and social benefits of working.

Table 1 provides information on statutory pension ages across EU Member States; the pensionable age was frequently found to be higher for men than women. In 2020, the lowest statutory pension age was 60 years in Austria and Poland (for women only), while the highest was 67 years in Greece (for both men and women). Table 1

also provides a subjective indication as to the age when people would ideally continue working and until what age they thought they could continue to do their current job; this information refers to a survey carried out during February-September 2015. Contrary to the general pattern observed for a majority of EU Member States, women in the Netherlands and Finland wanted to work until a later age than men.

**Statutory pension ages and average ages up to which people want to work, by sex, February-September 2015 and 2020**  
(years)

	Until what age do you want to work (as of February-September 2015)?		Until what age do you think you will be able to do your current job or a similar one (as of February-September 2015)?		Statutory pension age (as of 2020)	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Belgium	60.6	59.9	64.2	63.2	65 years	65 years
Bulgaria	59.9	58.2	63.9	62.0	66 years 6 months	66 years 6 months
Czechia	61.3	59.7	64.0	62.9	63 years 8 months	63 years 8 months
Denmark	64.3	63.7	67.6	66.4	66 years	66 years
Germany	62.4	61.5	64.6	63.7	65 years 8 months	65 years 8 months
Estonia	62.4	62.0	64.1	63.3	63 years 6 months	63 years 6 months
Ireland	62.2	60.2	65.5	64.4	66 years	66 years
Greece	60.1	58.0	62.0	61.0	67 years	67 years
Spain	60.9	60.3	63.8	63.2	65 years 10 months	65 years 10 months
France	60.3	60.0	63.4	62.2	66 years 7 months	66 years 7 months
Croatia	60.9	58.8	64.5	63.0	65 years	62 years 6 months
Italy	61.0	59.4	64.8	63.9	67 years	67 years
Cyprus	57.6	56.9	63.8	62.6	65 years	65 years
Latvia	60.4	58.5	66.3	65.5	63 years 9 months	63 years 9 months
Lithuania	61.0	59.5	63.1	62.8	64 years	63 years
Luxembourg	59.2	58.6	63.4	61.8	65 years	65 years
Hungary	60.1	58.3	62.1	61.0	64 years 6 months	64 years 6 months
Malta	59.1	56.2	62.6	61.7	63 years	63 years
Netherlands	61.6	62.3	67.7	66.6	66 years 4 months	66 years 4 months
Austria	59.9	57.5	63.7	61.8	65 years	60 years
Poland	58.6	57.3	63.2	62.4	65 years	60 years
Portugal	62.8	62.2	65.8	64.4	66 years 5 months	66 years 5 months
Romania	59.2	58.6	63.2	62.0	65 years	61 years 3-5 months
Slovenia	58.2	56.6	63.6	62.4	65 years	65 years
Slovakia	60.4	59.1	62.6	61.5	62 years 6-8 months	62 years 6-8 months
Finland	62.2	62.3	65.3	64.1	65 years	65 years
Sweden	63.3	62.8	68.0	67.1	65 years	65 years
United Kingdom	61.3	60.7	65.6	64.6	65 years 7-12 months	65 years 7-12 months
Iceland	:	:	:	:	67 years	67 years
Norway	65.4	64.1	67.1	66.0	67 years	67 years
Switzerland	:	:	:	:	65 years	64 years

Note: definitions of the statutory pension age vary across EU Member States. The figures presented refer to the national statutory pension age (the age at which people are entitled to an old-age pension). When the pension age is defined as a range, the top limit is presented.

Source: *Extending working life: what do workers want?*, Eurofound, 2017 and the Finnish Centre for Pensions (<https://www.etk.fi/en/>)



**Table 1: Statutory pension ages and average ages up to which people want to work, by sex, February-September 2015 and 2020 (years)** Source: *Extending working life: what do workers want?*, Eurofound, 2017 and the Finnish Centre for Pensions (<https://www.etk.fi/en/>)

**Almost one third of older people who continued to work while receiving a pension did so for non-financial reasons**

While some people frequently dream of their last day at work before being able to retire, others who already receive a pension continue working; note, this could be a survivors' pension (due to the death of a spouse). In 2012, more than one third (37.5 %) of people aged 50-69 years in the EU-28 who received a pension but continued working did so in order to have sufficient income; a further 14.6 % did so to have sufficient income and to establish/increase their future pension entitlements and 6.8 % did so uniquely to establish/increase their future pension entitlements (see Figure 17). As such, almost three tenths (29.2 %) of people in the EU-28 who received a pension and continued to work cited non-financial reasons for continuing to work (for example, job satisfaction).

**More than a quarter of people aged 55-64 years who were no longer in employment left their last job to take normal retirement**

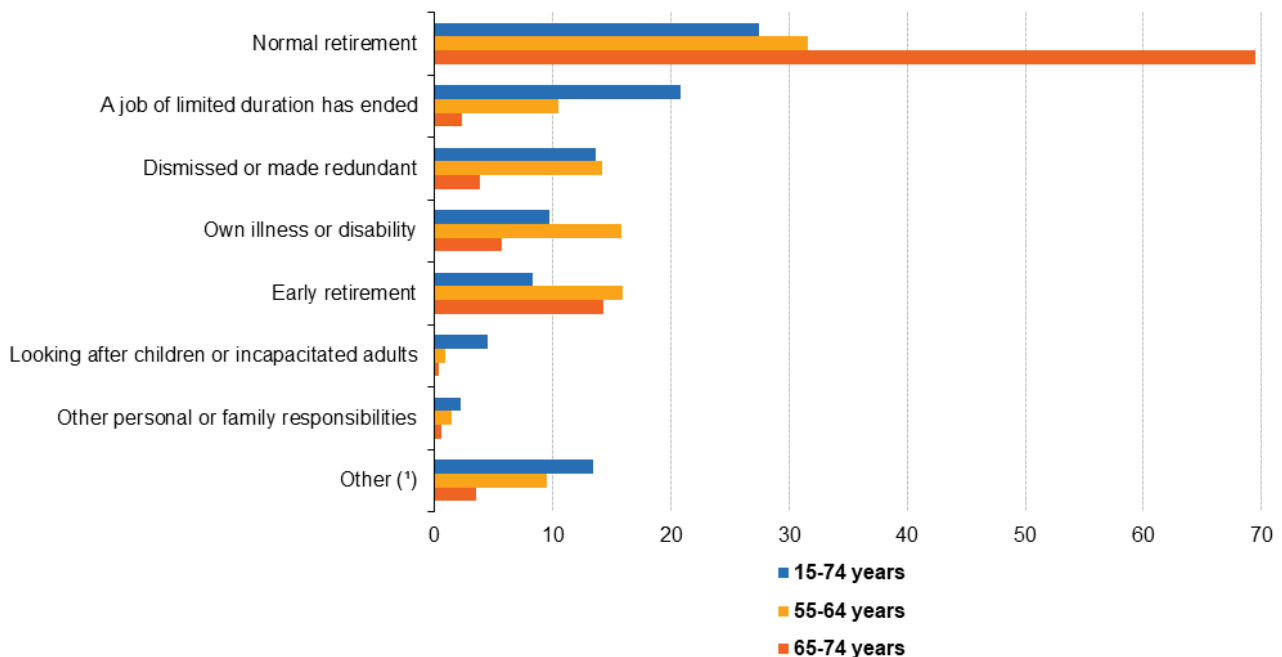
Figure 18 details information on the main reasons why people who are no longer in employment left their last job<sup>4</sup>. In 2019, more than one quarter (31.6 %) of the EU-27 workforce aged 55-64 years who were not in employment left their last job to take normal retirement, while a further 15.9 % did so to take early retirement, 15.8 % for reasons of

<sup>4</sup>As people may forget over time, this indicator is restricted to those people who had stopped work within the previous eight years.

illness or disability and 14.2 % because they had been dismissed or made redundant; these were the four most common reasons for leaving a job among people aged 55-64 years. Among people aged 65-74 years not in employment, more than two thirds (69.4 %) cited normal retirement and 14.3 % early retirement as the principal reason for leaving their last job.

### Main reason for people not in employment leaving their last job, by age class, EU-27, 2019

(% share of people not in employment having left their last job during the previous eight years)



Note: shares calculated from a total excluding people who did not answer.

(\*) Includes military service, education or training, and other reasons.

Source: Eurostat (EU labour force survey)

eurostat

**Figure 18: Main reason for people not in employment leaving their last job, by age class, EU-27, 2019 (% share of people not in employment having left their last job during the previous eight years) Source: Eurostat (EU labour force survey)**

### Source data for tables and graphs

- [Ageing Europe — working and moving into retirement: tables and figures](#)

### Other articles

#### Online publications

- [Ageing Europe — looking at the lives of older people in the EU](#)
- [Living conditions in Europe](#)

#### Categories of articles

- [All articles on employment](#)
- [All articles on accidents at work](#)

#### Individual articles

- [Labour force survey statistics — transition from work to retirement](#)

## Main tables

- [Employment and unemployment \(Labour force survey\) \(t\\_employ\)](#) , see:

LFS main indicators (t\_lfsi)

LFS series - detailed annual survey results (t\_lfsa)

LFS series - specific topics (t\_lfst)

## Database

- [Employment and unemployment \(Labour force survey\) \(employ\)](#) , see:

LFS main indicators (lfsi)

Employment and activity - LFS adjusted series (lfsi\_emp)

LFS series - detailed annual survey results (lfsa)

LFS series - specific topics (lfst)

LFS ad-hoc modules (lfsa)

- [Health \(hlth\)](#), see:

Health and safety at work (hsw)

## Dedicated section

- [Labour market, including Labour force survey \(LFS\)](#)
- [Quality of employment](#)

## Methodology

### Metadata

- [Employment and unemployment \(Labour force survey\)](#) (ESMS metadata file — employ)
- [LFS ad-hoc modules](#) (ESMS metadata file — lfsa)
- [2017 Self-employment](#) (ESMS metadata file — lfsa\_17)
- [Accidents at work](#) (ESMS metadata file — hsw\_acc\_work)

### Further methodological information

- [EU labour force survey](#)
- [Labour force survey — main concepts](#)
- [Health — information on data](#)

## External links

- [European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion — Policies and activities](#)
- [International Labour Organisation \(ILO\) — Decent work](#)
- [OECD — Better life index: jobs](#)