

Stream B: Employment policy throughout the life cycle

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- *Barriers to women's employment (work-life balance)*
- *Youth – What has the Youth Opportunities Initiative achieved and what's next?*
- *Active Ageing – the labour market dimension*
- *Some cross-cutting issues*

Women employment (1)

- ***Strong economic case for gender equality***
 - Long-term and sustainable growth only if **all available resources/talents** are used
- ***Progress has been achieved but much remains to be done***
 - Significant reductions in employment gap
 - But **remaining large gaps** in hours worked and earnings
- ***Barriers go beyond work-life balance***
 - **Stereotypes**, attitudes and cultural values
 - Strong **occupational segregation**
 - **Undeclared/unpaid work**
 - **Glass ceiling**

Women employment (2)

- ***Family policies to promote high labour supply and fertility rates (both MEN and WOMEN)***
 - shared parental leave; flexible working time
 - affordable and quality formal childcare and elderly care
 - secure financing during fiscal consolidation
- ***Remove disincentives to entry, retention and return to work***
 - tax/benefit systems
 - job quality/precariousness
- ***Role of social partners***
 - workplace practices

Youth unemployment (1)

- **#1 challenge in Europe ? risk of lost generation**
 - almost 1 youth out of 4 **unemployed**
 - 8 million **NEET**
 - disproportionately affected by the crisis
 - facing increased risk of **long-term unemployment**
- **Crisis: even more difficult school-to-work transition**
 - For most **disadvantaged groups** (NEET; youth with immigrant background, low-qualified)
 - **Graduates** also face difficulties: prolongation of studies; increased mobility within Europe
 - More likely to be in **precarious situations** (short-term contracts; increased risk of social hardship)

Youth unemployment (2)

- ***Need for interventions in the short-term***
 - **ALMPs** focusing on training programmes
 - Increase **help for youth job seekers; Youth Guarantee**
 - Increase **social safety nets**
 - **Help for youth entrepreneurs**
- ***Longer-term support for youth employment***
 - Invest in **quality education** (with “true” internships)
 - Invest more on **apprenticeship** (Germany; Austria; Switzerland)
 - Invest more, including EU Funds, in “real stepping stone” **training and work experience** (Tuscany region)
 - **Specific measures** for most disadvantaged youth
 - [No discussion on **labour demand** for youth]

Active ageing (1)

- **Divergences of views : lively discussion**
- **YES :**
 - ageing good given low birth rates → maintains or increases labour force and **future living standards**
 - higher **older workers employment and employability** to finance welfare systems
 - work provides **social status** and income
 - **link** statutory retirement age to life expectancy
 - **eliminate** mandatory retirement age
 - **adjust** work environment to make it age-friendly
 - **value** experience

Active ageing (2)

- **YES BUT:**

- **discrimination** still exists; **contradictory public discourse**
- Much **more is needed** to increase OW employment (*flexible working hours; investment in life-long learning; improve quality of jobs; senior entrepreneurship; boost investment in white sectors*)

- **NO:**

- ensure OW have a job before raising pension age
- **early retirement** for arduous jobs
- increasing retirement age will **increase poverty** in old age if people leave early
- Remove tax incentives to third pillar
- **intergenerational solidarity** and better jobs
- **limited role for EU**

Some cross-cutting issues

- ***Interrelation between the three themes : the life course perspective***
- ***Lump of labour fallacy : making the size of the cake grow***
- ***Elderly care : making the most out of it***
- ***Is mobility of workers in Europe good or bad?***
- ***Jobs for Europe or Europe for Jobs ?***

THANK YOU!