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GUIDELINE DOCUMENT AND TEMPLATE

WP2 – 2.1 Panel for experts

DEVELOPED BY CENTER ZA POSLOVNO USPOSABLJANJE GOSPODARSKA ZBORNICA SLOVENIJE (GZS CPU)

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1. Introduction

It has been known for some time that the population is ageing across the European Union. This is bringing major changes in the workforce and workers. Since all the countries of the European Union have been experiencing fewer and fewer births in recent years, they are consequently facing the problem of an ageing population. The countries (Germany, Finland, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Poland) participating in the Silver Grow Erasmus+ project have carried out a desk research on senior workers 50+. They answered to three questions related the senior workers and job market that we found important and relevant for identification of needed competencies, knowledge and skills for trainers/HR staff/career counsellors/instructors providing day–to–day consulting and training services in the enterprise/ employers and managers in the frame of the support of senior workers on the labour market.

Below we present the main findings for each country per question:

2. Situation of senior workers on the labour market

BULGARIA

In Bulgaria the number of living elderly people has risen from 16% in 2001 to 21% in 2020. In the group of elderly over 80 years the percent is almost doubled, from 3,4% in 2001 to 6% in 2020. Which means that the average age of a Bulgarian citizen has gone way up. The employment rate of senior workers in Bulgaria in the age group from 55 to 64, was 68,2% in December of 2022. While the number of senior workers in the December of 2011 was a record low with 44%, which means that Bulgaria is one of the countries with the biggest percent differences in the employment rate of senior workers in Europe.

FINLAND

In the last 10 years Finland has faced a dramatic change in the number of population. The only way Finland increases it' s own population is by immigration, since their birth rate is continuously decreasing. Although the cohort the Finland researched (20-64 years) was not optimal for this report their employment rate went from 70,3% in March of 2013 to 77,3% in the March of 2023.

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GERMANY

Germany is facing a shrinking labour supply, because a lot of people are starting to retire from working life. Because of the ageing of population labour force is shifting towards older cohorts. In the age group of 50-59 there were just under 14 million people of working age, with around 9 million of them working. The employment rate of senior workers from the age 55 to 64 in Germany rose from 62% in 2012 to around 72% in the year 2021, while the age group of 65-69 years went from 10% in 2011 to 17% in 2021.

POLAND

In Poland, the fertility rate is declining sharply, with a fertility rate of 1.33 in 2021, while the optimal fertility rate is between 2.1-2.15, suggesting that fertility is declining quite sharply. In Poland almost 2 million people are aged 60 or more, which means that every 5th Polish citizen is over the age of 60. The number of Polish senior workers has increased drastically over the last ten years, with 60,3% of workers between the age of 55-64 in the year of 2021, while the year of 2011 had only 35,3% of senior workers. Senior workers, that are aged over 65 also had a massive increase in employment, with 4,9% in the year 2011, while the year 2021 has 10,7%.

SLOVENIA

Slovenia is one of the countries with the 10 countries with the highest average age of population. Every fifth person in Slovenia is over the average age of 65. Almost a third of the population in Slovenia is retired with 630.063 out of 2.217.000 living citizens. The number of employed senior workers aged between 50 and 64 has been increasing drastically in the year 2011 it was 48,9% of employees and it grew to 66,4% till the year of 2021, while the 64+ senior workers have been the same through the last 10 years variating around 4%.

3. The employment rate of older workers in particular industries and industry with the biggest labour shortage

BULGARIA

In Bulgaria (2022), the three sectors with the most senior workers (age 50 to 64) were (in thousand people): Manufacturing with 210,2%, Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles with a 143,4% of senior workers and construction with 81,1% of senior workers in the sector. While the senior workers aged (65+) have the biggest employment in the industry of Human health and social work activities14,5%, Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles with a 12,1% and Manufacturing with 12% out of a 1000 people. In Bulgaria the biggest labour shortages are specified in the medicine and health care, followed by construction. The main shortages of medical staff refer to doctors for general practice and for hospitals, nurses, clinical, X-ray and medical laboratory assistants, paramedics and rehabilitators.

FINLAND

In Finland, specific data on older employees in different industries were not shown in the survey, but we can say that Finland is facing record numbers of older employees between 55-59 in 2022 with as much as 81.5%. In Finland out of the 15 biggest labour shortages 11 of them are specified in health care or social work practices, mainly nurses, other nurses, doctors in general practices and specialised doctors, psychologists, dentists, specialized social work experts, etc.

GERMANY

In Germany there is an above-average representation of senior workers in the sectors: Public administration with 29 %, Private households 40 %, and Other services 18 %, mining and energy 31 %, and (waste) water 28 %.In Germany the three most demanding sectors with senior workers were: technical trades: electrical installation, metalworking, plastics engineering, pipeline construction, welding technology, mechanical engineering; academic professions: medical personnel, mechanical engineering and vehicle construction, IT professions in software development; nursing professions and care of elderly people.

POLAND

In Poland the most employed industries with senior workers aged 50+ are Administrative and Support Service activities (45.5%), real estate activities (42.9%) and agriculture, forestry and

fishing (42.4%). While the biggest labour shortages of senior workers in Polish are in the sectors of construction, education, transport, catering and medical industries.

SLOVENIA

The sectors in which older workers (50+) are most present in Slovenia are: Manufacturing with 65.5% of workers per 1000 people, education with 34,8% of workers per 1000 people and wholesale trade and repair of motor vehicles with 26,9% of workers out of 1000 people. While the biggest labour shortages of senior workers that are presented in Slovenia are in the sector of administrative and support service activities, with the shortage of more than 200% of more open jobs than senior workers, working in the sector in the year of 2021.

4. Promotion of counselling services, programs or projects related to employment of senior workers

BULGARIA

In Bulgaria there are a lot of companies that are working on counselling services, programs or projects associated with the employment of senior workers especially on the national level. The most known are: Encouraging employers to employ unemployed persons aged 55 and over, Encouraging job openings for work-based training (dual training system), National Retirement Assistance Program, Encouraging the initiation of self-employment as a micro-enterprise, Encouraging the entrepreneurship of unemployed persons, Regional programs, Opportunity for employment and self-employment, Name of the project, Knowledge and Skills for Work, Workforce Adaptation Project, Succeeding Together, With new green and ecological knowledge and skills for new employment and Career centers.

FINLAND

In Finland there are some companies that are working on counselling services, programs or projects associated with the employment of senior workers. Here are some examples of the projects they mentioned: National Programme of Ageing 2030, WORK 2030, Engagement for Senior Employees, The Parliamentary Reform of Continuous Learning, The Reform of Continuous Learning, Programme for Digitalisation of the Continuous Learning and Digital and Population Data Services Agency (The Finnish Digital Agency).

GERMANY

In their report Germany mentioned a lot of “instruments” that are used for the (re)integration of senior workers into the labour market: Prevent unemployment, Tackle unemployment, Positive effects, Clearly negative effects, Integration subsidies for employers, Federal law: Participation Chances Law 2019, Promotion of further vocational training, Programme WeGebAU, Further offers from the Federal Employment Agency.

POLAND

Poland has a lot of different counselling services, programs or projects related to employment of senior workers. Their most known programmes ones are: Employee pre-retirement protection, Salary subsidy for people aged 50+, Incentive benefits for uniformed services, IKEA and the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, The "I can do IT" project at Bank BNP Paribas, Randstad Polska and the Job 50+ Program, Cemex and the Initiative for Employees 50+, Project: "In spite of the birth certificate - people aged 50+ and seniors on the labour market" , Research project "Work 60 plus" and A pilot project of the Labour Office of the Capital City of Warsaw "A good employee has no age", financed by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy.

SLOVENIA

As a small country Slovenia isn’t separated by different entities (national/regional/local) and the research could only be made for the national entity. With that they have a couple of projects that are helping senior workers get jobs or different skills: SeniorDela, Simbioza, Optius, Celovita podpora podjetjem za aktivno staranje prebivalstva (ASI) and Zavod za zaposlovanje.

5. CONCLUSION

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In conclusion, all the countries participating in the research are facing the same problems (ageing population, declining birth rates). As a result, all countries are experiencing an increasing number of older workers who still need to work, as the retirement threshold is rising and pensions are decreasing. The countries participating in the research show different results in terms of employment of sectors with older workers, although Manufacturing dominates in most of the countries. Most countries also face staff shortages in the health or social sector, especially for older workers. All countries are trying to empower, educate and generally offer their older workers as many opportunities as possible through various programmes, projects and consultancy to enable them to seek employment, as it is felt that employers are reluctant to recruit older workers and are mostly looking for younger workforce, since they suppose that older workers lack additional skills (IT, etc.). Therefore, countries work on promoting education and training of senior workers, employment of older people and gaining awareness of the importance of skilled senior workforce in the future.

The programmes mostly offer digital, environmental, business trainings for senior workers, which are identified as the skills that those workers mostly lack. Besides that, senior workers are facing with some common barriers in their everyday work life, like health problems, outdated computer skills, companies not wanting to employ older people, limited geographical mobility, family commitments, limited knowledge of foreign languages, limited motivation for education, lack of formal professional qualifications or no recognition of informal knowledge, skills and competencies.

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Annex 1

Bulgaria Desk Research

Developed by *Varna Economic Development Agency*

Findings from the desk research

1. **What 's the situation of senior workers on the labour market in your country?**

Describe the most relevant situations in your country (e.g. percentage of people 50 + employed and unemployed). Please also provide comparative data in relation to the last 10 years.

**Include charts to illustrate visually the provided data and write the references.*

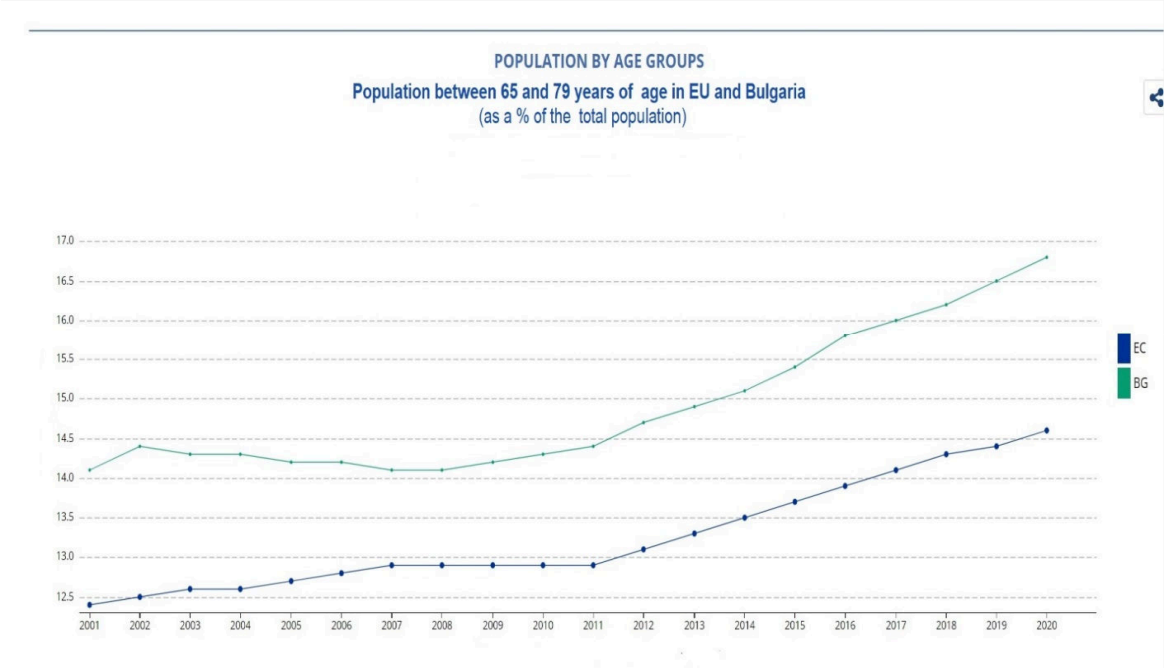
General overview

Like other countries in the European Union (EU), the Bulgaria's population is ageing. This is observed through the indicators' development of the elderly population, coefficient of age dependence (older ages) and median age of the population. The data show an increase in the share of the elderly (over 65). From 16% in 2001, they reached 21% in 2020 - an increase of 5 percentage points. In the group aged 80 and over, the share has almost doubled. From 3.4% in 2001, they reached 6% in 2020.

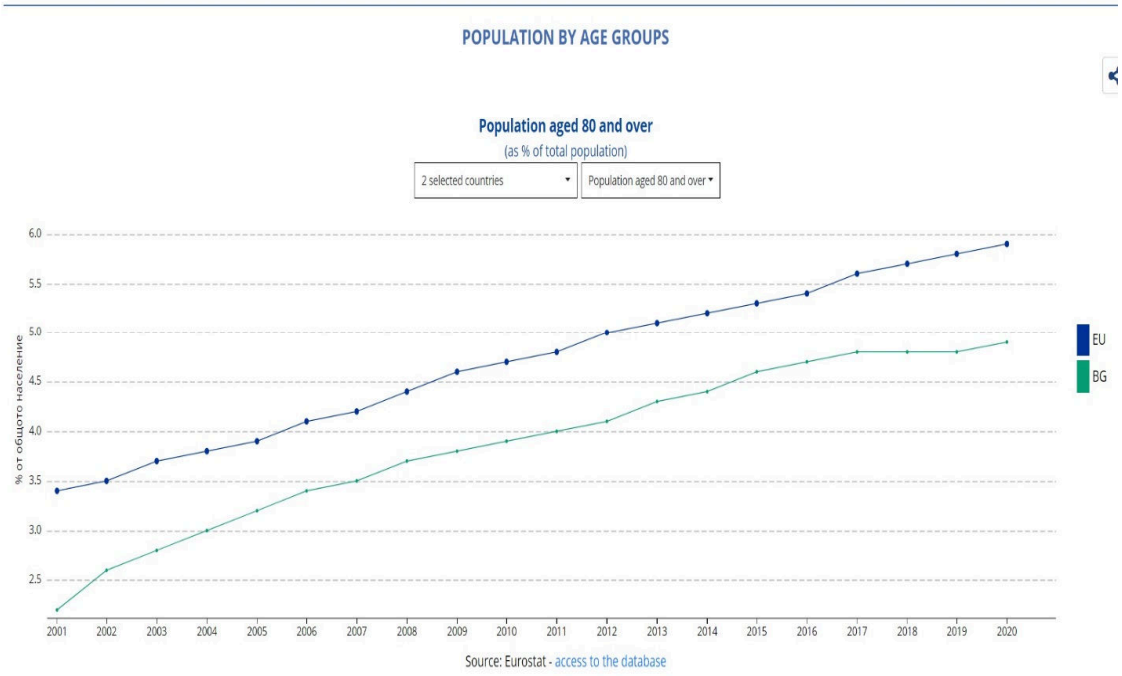
During the period 2001 - 2020, an increase in the share of persons aged 65 and over was observed in all Member States. For those aged 65 and over, Italy (23%), Greece, Finland, Portugal, Germany, and Bulgaria (22% each) have the highest shares.

Historically, the increase in the share of ageing population in the age group 65 - 79 as a percent of total population in Bulgaria and its comparison to the EU is presented in the next graph.

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The proportion of people aged 80 and over increased in all Member States between 2001 and 2020 too, except Sweden. In some of the Member States, this share has more than doubled, including for Bulgaria - from 2% to 5%.



Source: Demography of Europe, Visualized Statistical Data - 2021 EDITION, https://www.nsi.bg/demography2021/bloc-1c.html?lang=bg

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Declining birth rates, rising divorce rates, and increasing life expectancy are among the many factors changing demographics around the world. In fact, many countries are experiencing an overall aging population.

According to a 2019 World Bank study, Bulgaria is among the countries, which have the oldest populations. Just over 21% of Bulgarians are aged 65 and over, which contributes both to the general aging of the population and to one of the fastest depopulations in all of Europe. As a result of the death rate among the elderly and the flight of young people from the country, dissatisfied with corruption and poor life prospects, the population of Bulgaria, which in the 1980s was 9 million people, is expected to decrease to 5.4 million people in 2050.

According to the data of the National Statistical Institute (www.nsi.bg) , the total number of populations in Bulgaria at 31.12.2021 is counted to 6 447 710 people, of which 3 099 503 are men and 3 348 207 women.

As a part of the total number of population, the persons aged 55 and over comprise 2 414 135 people, including 1 029 409 men and 1 384 726 women. The distribution of population aged 55 and over in the country and for Varna region by age groups, sex, and place of residence is presented in the next table:

POPULATION IN BULGARIA AND VARNA REGION AGED 55+ TOWARDS 31.12.2022 BY LOCATION AND SEX

(number)

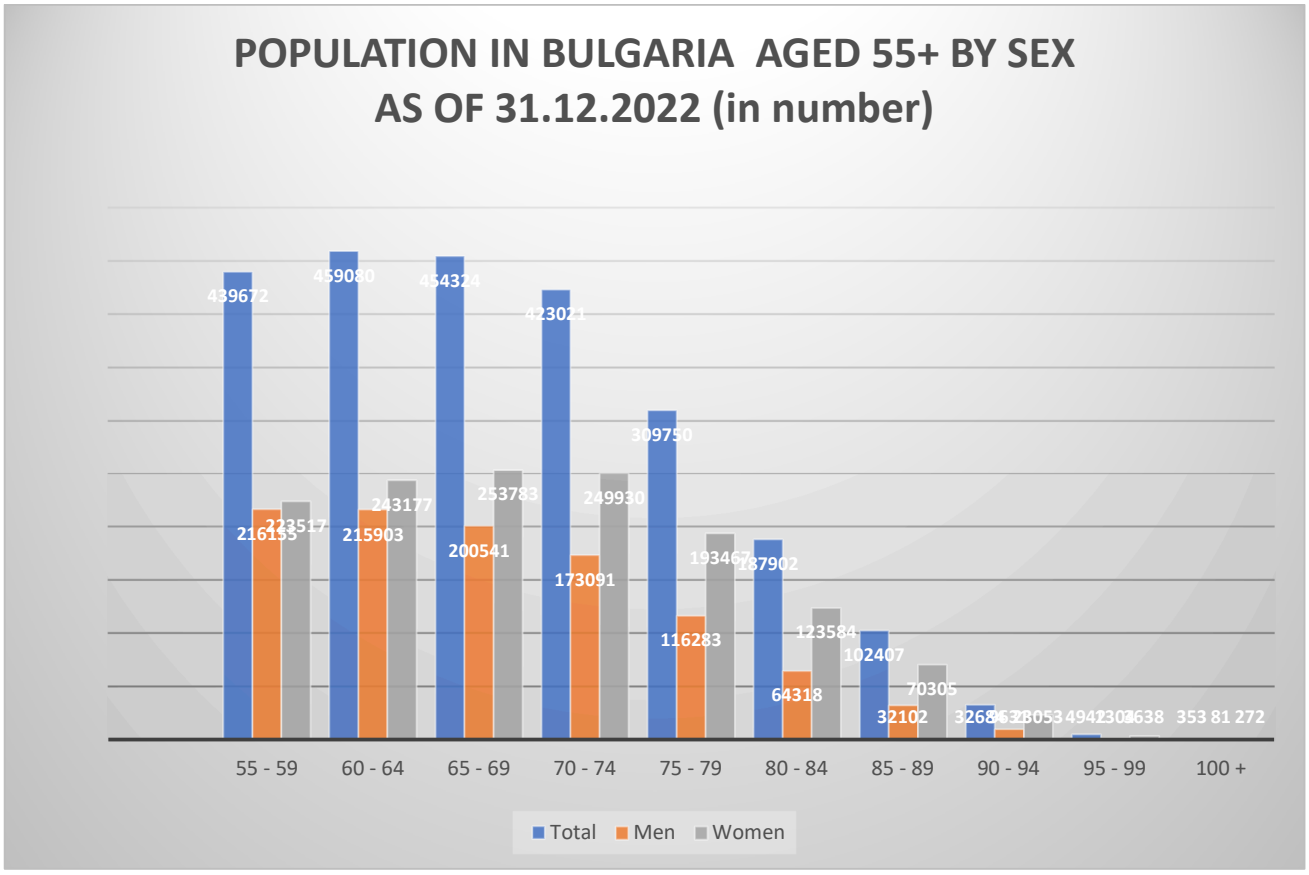
Regions Age	Total			In the cities			In villages		
	total	men	women	total	men	women	total	men	women
Total for Bulgaria	**2414135**	**1029409**	**1384726**	**1678008**	**700232**	**977776**	**736127**	**329177**	**406950**
55 - 59	439672	216155	223517	316634	152061	164573	123038	64094	58944
60 - 64	459080	215903	243177	326642	149416	177226	132438	66487	65951
65 - 69	454324	200541	253783	318417	136760	181657	135907	63781	72126
70 - 74	423021	173091	249930	291353	116697	174656	131668	56394	75274
75 - 79	309750	116283	193467	207370	76298	131072	102380	39985	62395
80 - 84	187902	64318	123584	122573	40809	81764	65329	23509	41820
85 - 89	102407	32102	70305	68545	20661	47884	33862	11441	22421
90 - 94	32684	9631	23053	22698	6559	16139	9986	3072	6914
95 - 99	4942	1304	3638	3524	915	2609	1418	389	1029
100 +	353	81	272	252	56	196	101	25	76
Total for Varna	**145772**	**61974**	**83798**	**118004**	**49191**	**68813**	**27768**	**12783**	**14985**
55 - 59	26687	12871	13816	21989	10462	11527	4698	2409	2289
60 - 64	27047	12629	14418	21996	10054	11942	5051	2575	2476

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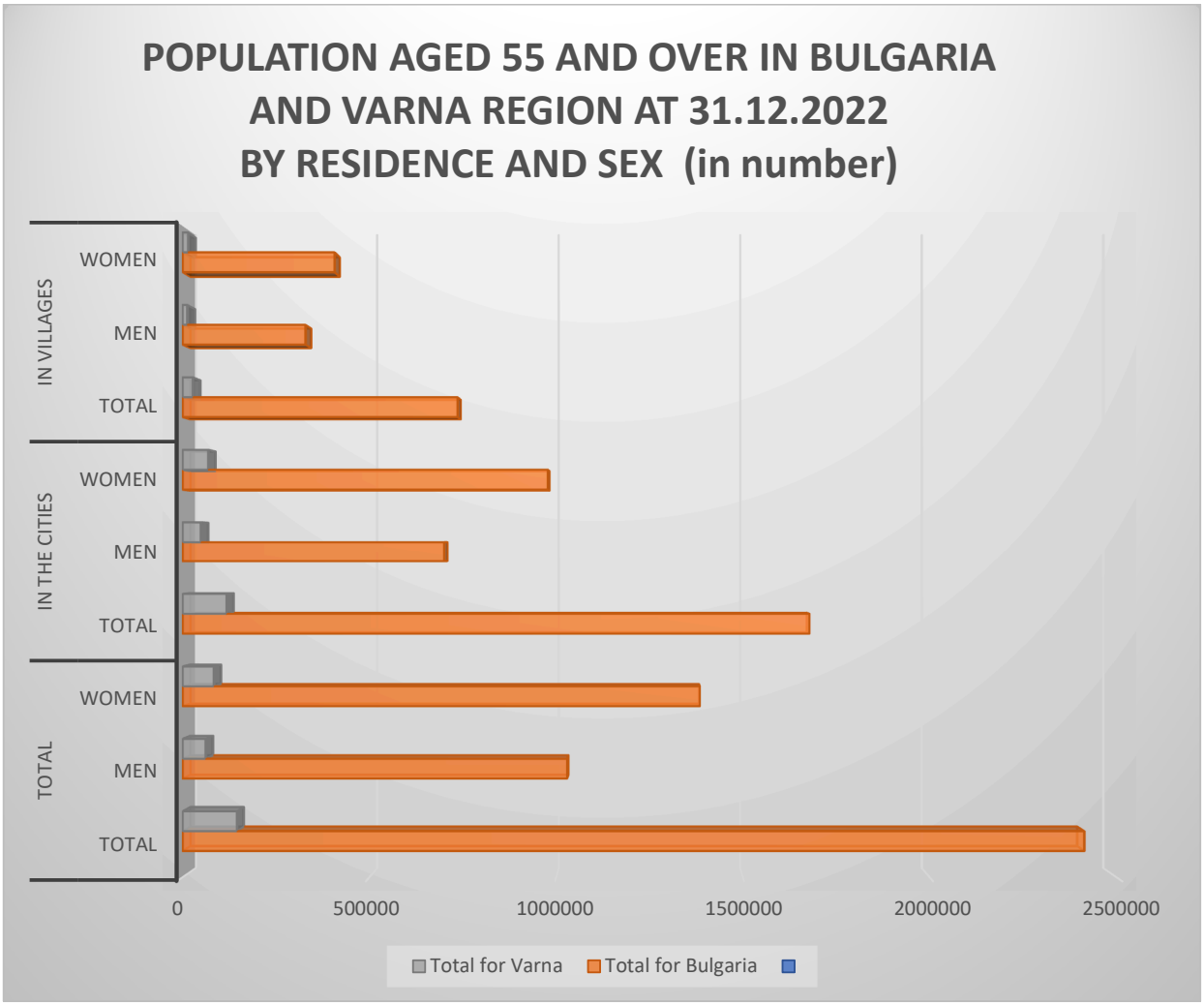
65 - 69	27839	12188	15651	22524	9656	12868	5315	2532	2783
70 - 74	25726	10574	15152	20697	8327	12370	5029	2247	2782
75 - 79	19039	7271	11768	15189	5644	9545	3850	1627	2223
80 - 84	11199	3943	7256	8965	3086	5879	2234	857	1377
85 - 89	5960	1836	4124	4784	1423	3361	1176	413	763
90 - 94	2007	601	1406	1636	487	1149	371	114	257
95 - 99	245	55	190	202	46	156	43	9	34
100 +	23	6	17	22	6	16	1	-	1

Source: National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria - www.nsi.bg

The following graphs visualized the population aged 55 and over by sex.

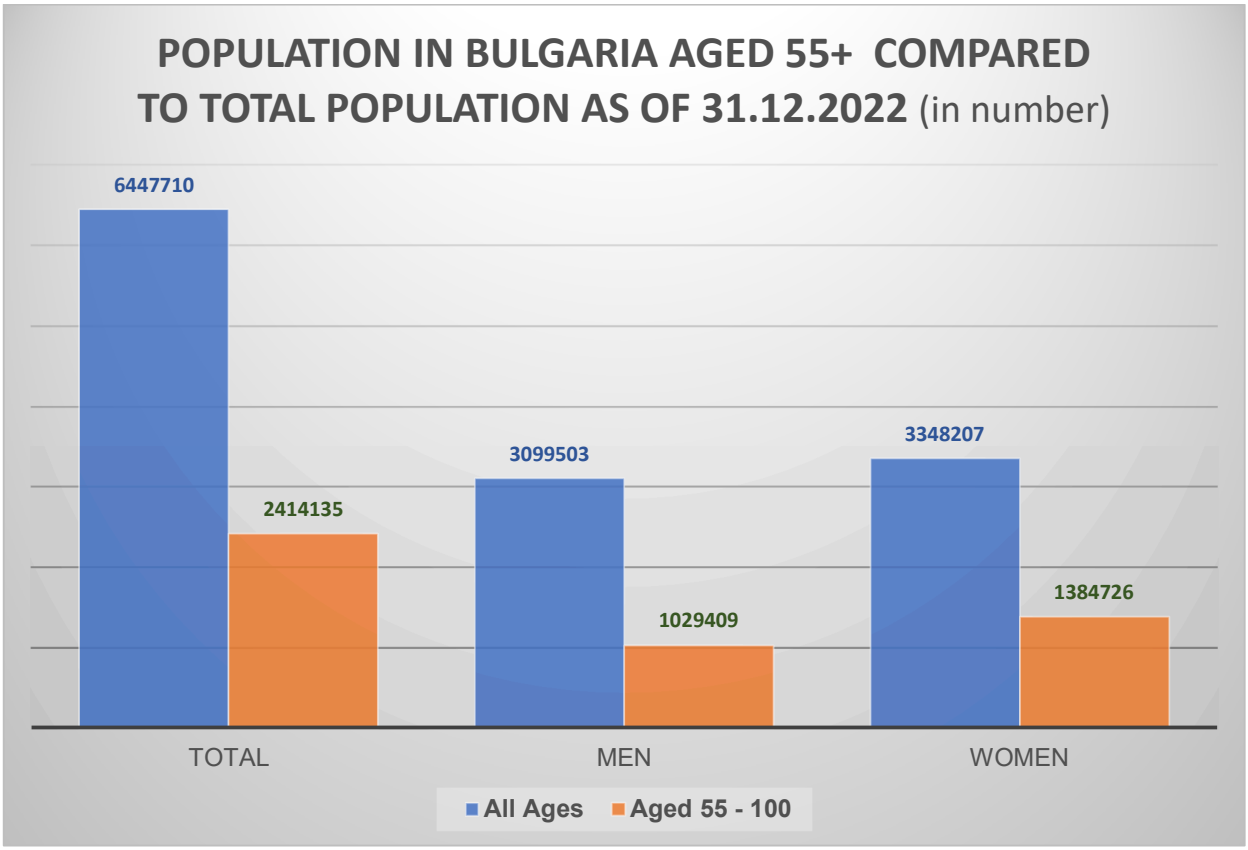


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The following graph provides visualization of share of ageing population (55 and over) compared to the Bulgarian population of all ages, including the share of men and women. In general, the share of women is higher than the one of the men both for the population aged 55 and over, and to the total population.

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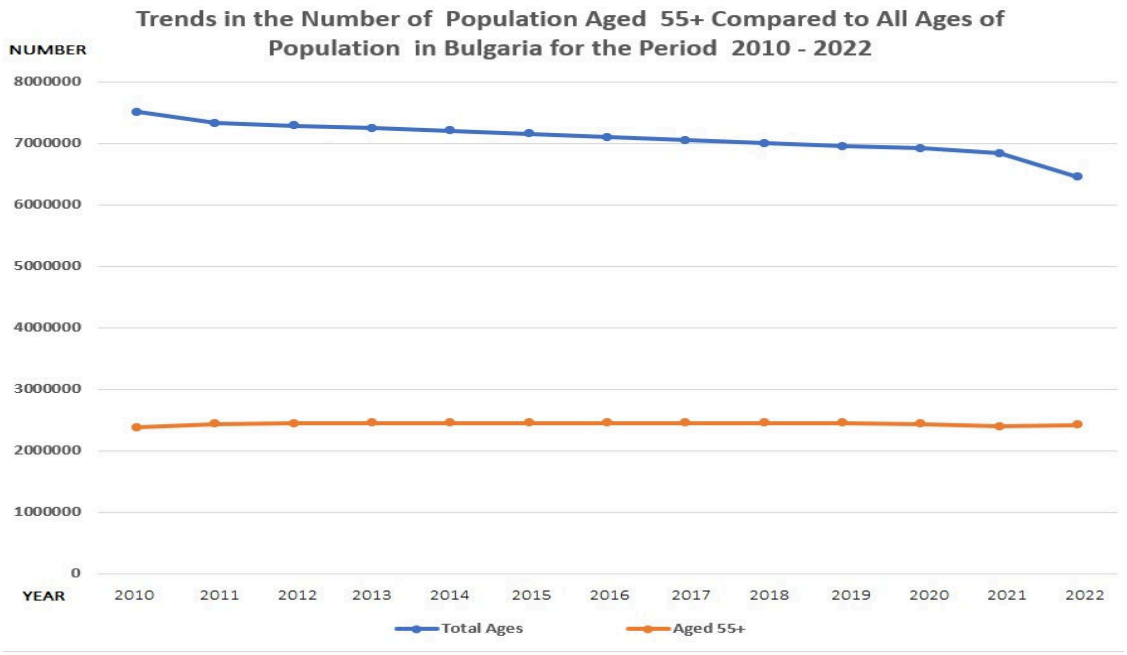


Source: National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria - www.nsi.bg

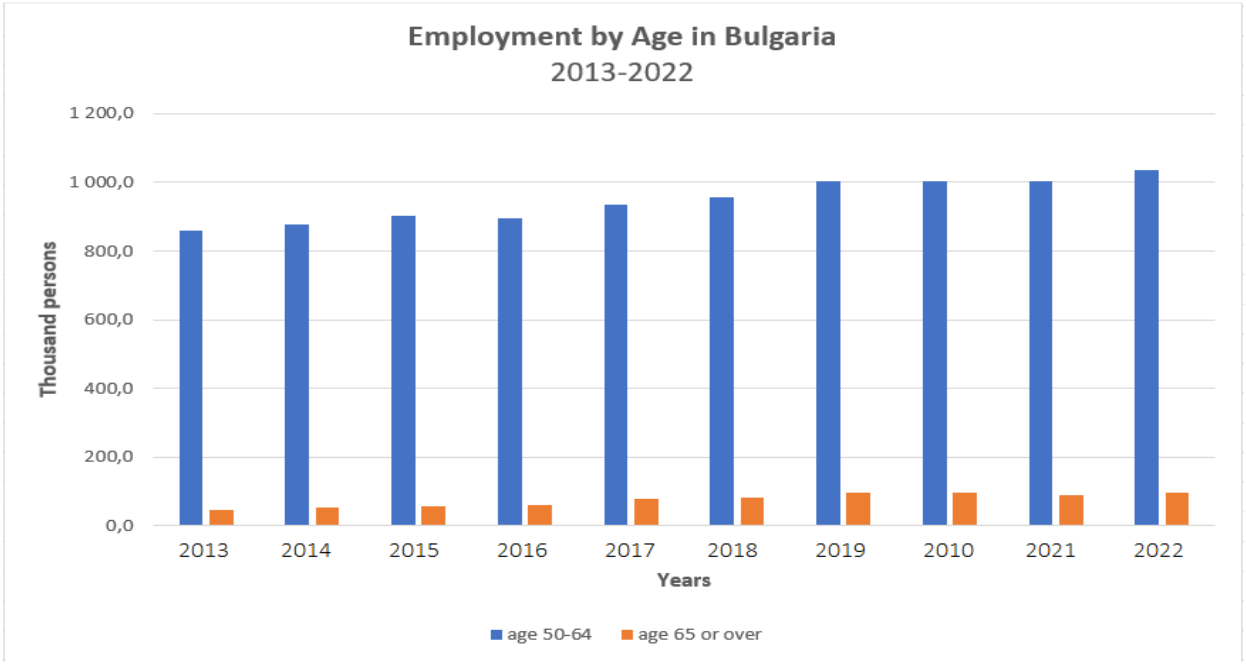
The age tendencies of population during the period 2010-2022 is towards decrease in the total number of population of all age groups with 14 % i.e. from 7,504,868 in 2010 it reaches 6,447,710 in 2022, which is equal to 1, 057158 people.

In the same time the tendencies in the number of population aged 55+ show an increase with 1, 74 % equal to 41, 229 people i.e. from 2372906 people in 2010 the number of ageing population increases to 2,414135 people. The source of information is the database of the National Statistical Institute in Bulgaria for the number of populations in the period 2010-2022 by age, sex, regions, and place of residence (cities/villages). These tendencies could be observed in the following graph:

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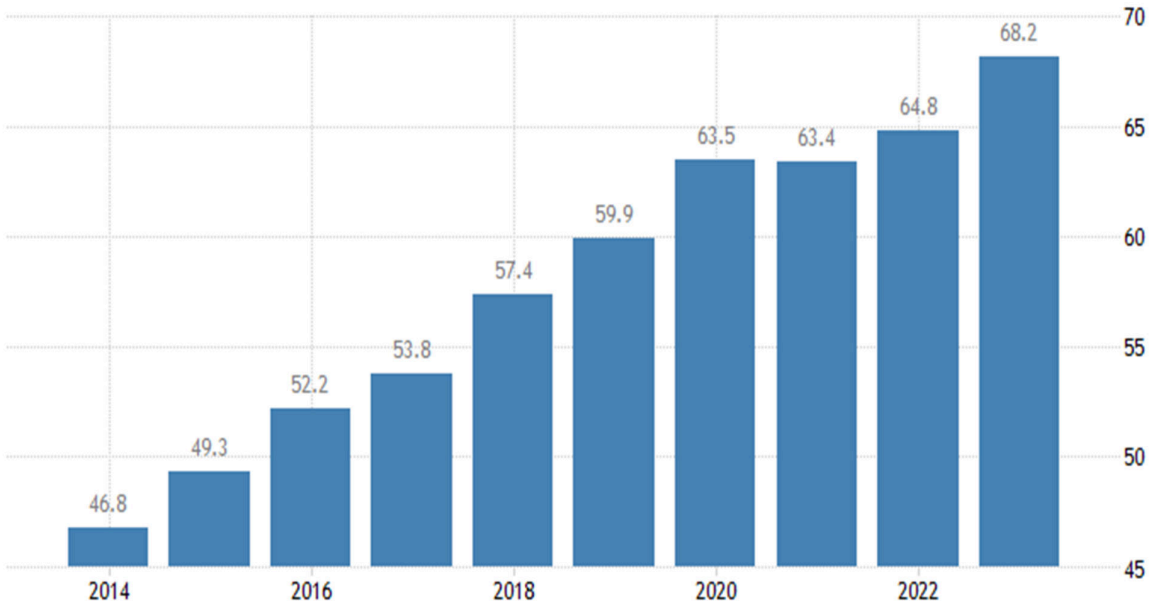
The tendencies of increased number of **population aged 55 and over** is related closely to the **employment tendency** for this group of the population for the period 2013 – 2022. The data in the next graph pointed out the tendency towards an increase in number of employment of aging populations aged 55 and over according to Eurostat data.



Source: Eurostat
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/LFSA_EGAN2__custom_6137913/default/table?lang=en

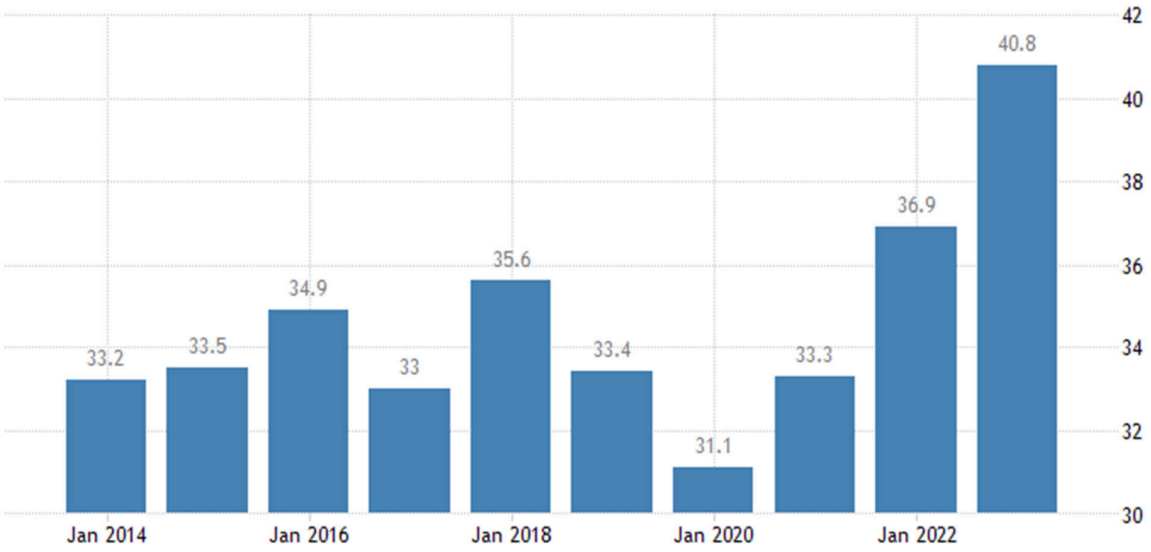
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Employment rate of older workers, age group 55-64 was 68.20% in December of 2022, according to the EUROSTAT. Trading Economics (https://tradingeconomics.com/bulgaria/employment-rate-of-older-workers-age-group-55-64-eurostat-data.html) provides the current actual value, an historical data chart and related indicators for Bulgaria - Employment rate of older workers, age group 55-64 - last updated from the EUROSTAT on May of 2023. Historically, Employment rate of older workers, age group 55-64 in Bulgaria reached a record high of 68.20% in December of 2022 and a record low of 44.00% in December of 2011.

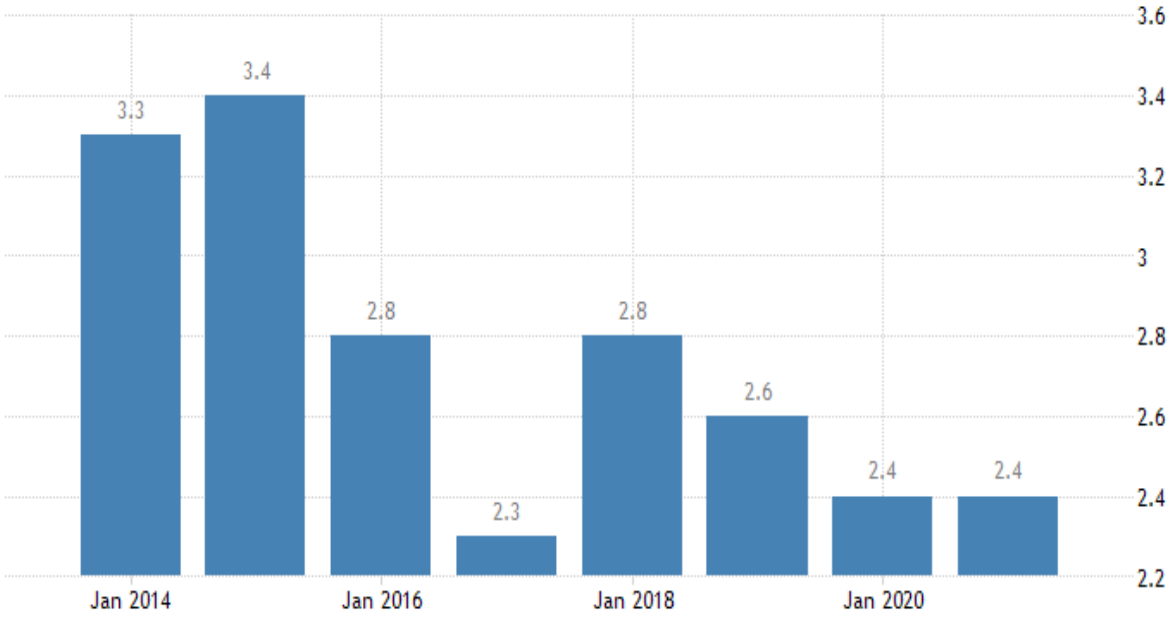


Source: Trading Economics
https://tradingeconomics.com/bulgaria/employment-rate-of-older-workers-age-group-55-64-eurostat-data.html

Employed women being in managerial positions: From 55 to 74 years was 40.80% in December of 2022, according to the EUROSTAT. Trading Economics provides the current actual value, an historical data chart and related indicators for Bulgaria - Employed women being in managerial positions: From 55 to 74 years - last updated from the EUROSTAT on May of 2023. Historically, the employed women being in managerial positions aged 55 to 74 years reached a record high of 40.80% in December of 2022 and a record low of 26.60% in December of 2010.

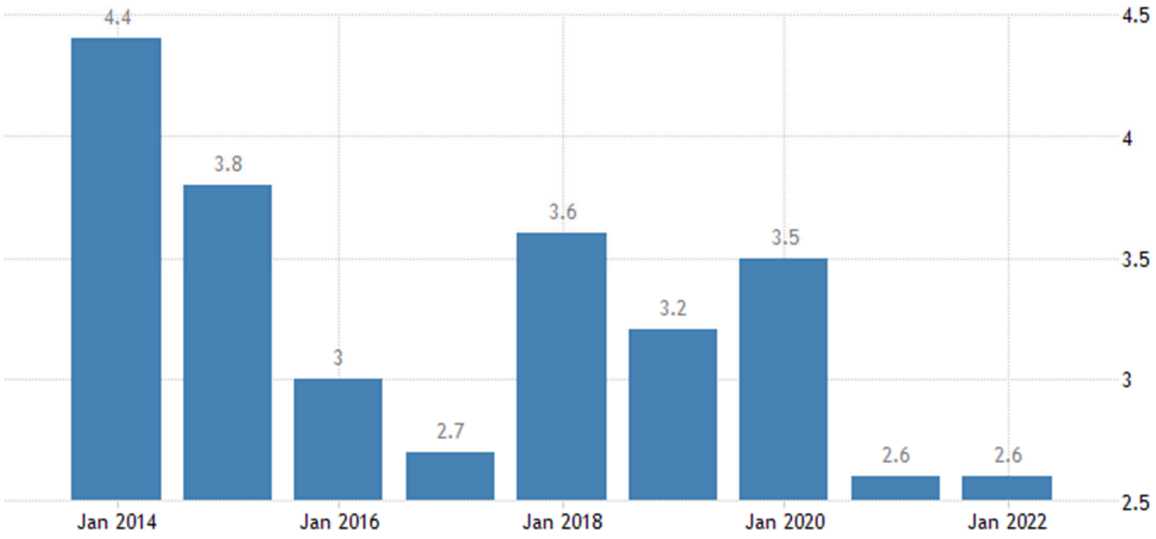


Persons employed part-time: From 55 to 64 years was 2.40% in December of 2020, according to the EUROSTAT. Trading Economics provides the current actual value, an historical data chart and related indicators for Bulgaria - Persons employed part-time: From 55 to 64 years - last updated from the EUROSTAT on May of 2023. Historically, Persons in Bulgaria employed part-time at age between 55 and 64 years reached a record high of 3.70% in December of 2009 and a record low of 2.30% in December of 2016.



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Employees with a contract of limited duration (annual average): From 55 to 64 years was 2.60% in December of 2021, according to the EUROSTAT. Trading Economics provides the current actual value, an historical data chart and related indicators for Bulgaria - Employees with a contract of limited duration: From 55 to 64 years - last updated from the EUROSTAT on May of 2023. Historically, Employees aged 55 to 64 years with a contract of limited duration reached a record high of 4.40% in December of 2013 and a record low of 2.60% in December of 2021.



2. **What is the employment rate of older workers in particular industries and which industry has the biggest labour shortage?**

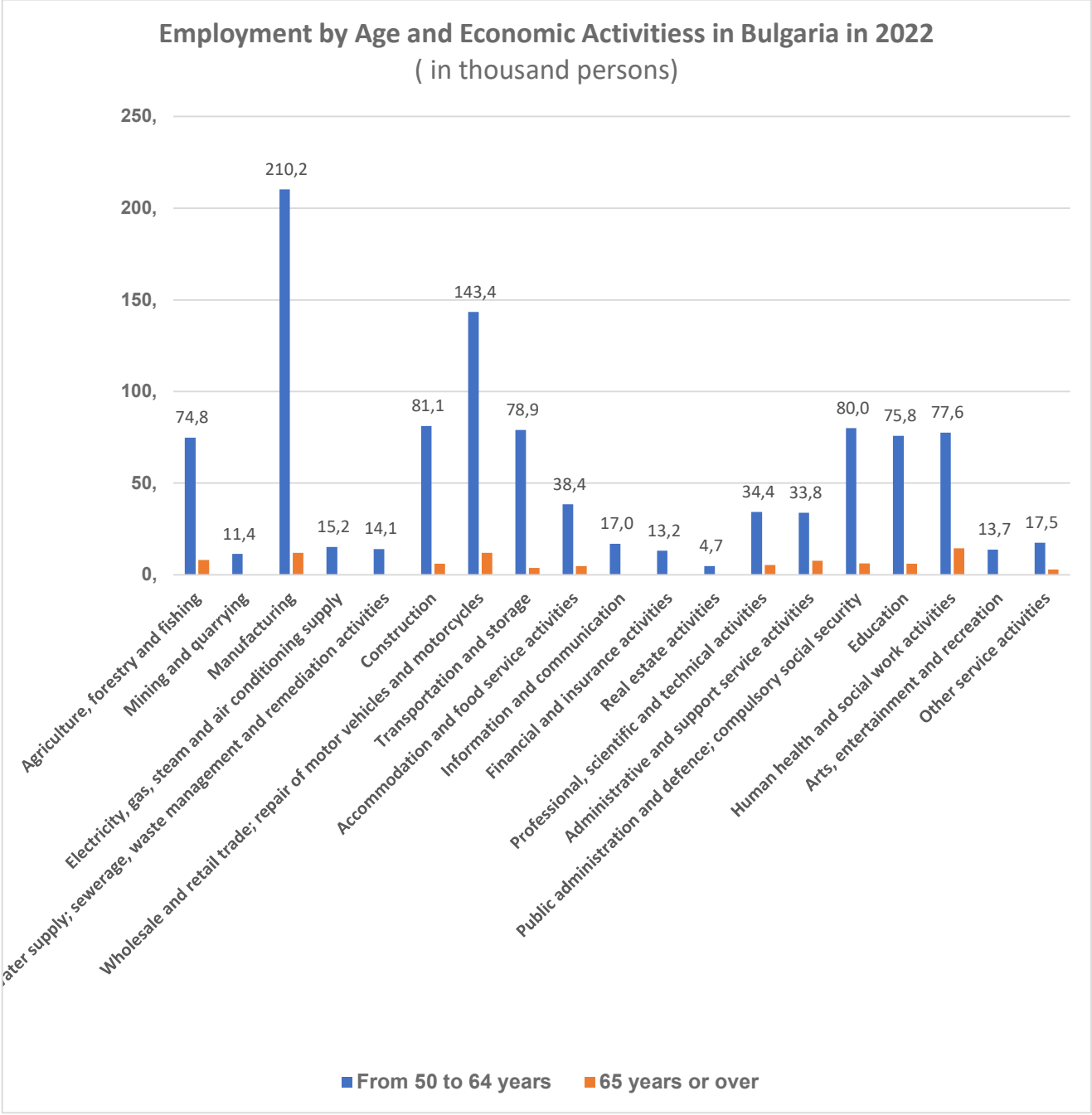
Please also provide comparative data in relation to the last 10 years.

**Include charts to illustrate visually the provided data and write the references.*

The higher number of **employed persons aged 50-64 in country's industries** in 2022 are in the sectors "Manufacturing", followed by the "Wholesale and Retail Trade". The employment of people aged 65 and over is highest in the sectors "Wholesale and Retail Trade" and "Human Health and Social Work activities". Some of the sectors showed a very low share of employment of aging population i.e. "Real Estate" activities, "Finance and Insurances", "Information and Communication", "Mining and Quarrying", "Electricity & Gas", "Art, Entertainment and Recreation", etc. The reasons for the biggest labor shortage of people aged 50 and over in these sectors is determined by the specificity of the sectors and the need for employees with physical fitness and/or specific professional qualities.

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The next graph demonstrates the employment of the older workers in country's industries in 2022:



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In Bulgaria the biggest labour shortages are specified in the medicine and health care, mainly the shortage of doctors for general practice and for hospitals, nurses, clinical, X-ray and medical laboratory assistants, paramedics and rehabilitators.

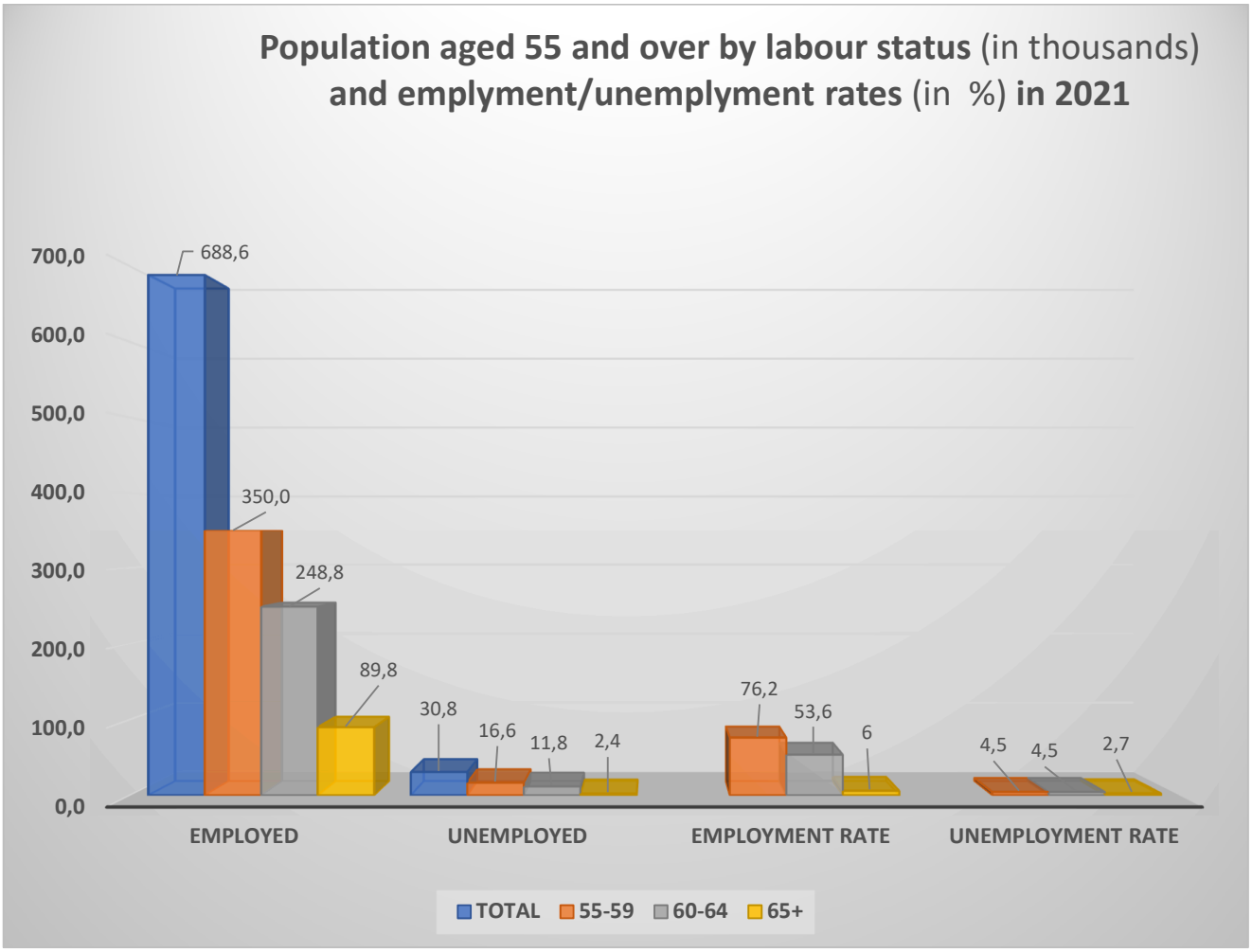
Besides medical staff, the builders are among the most sought-after specialists on the labor market in Bulgaria at the end of 2021, according to a survey of BTA correspondents conducted at the Regional Employment Services across the country. A shortage of doctors, builders, craftsmen and representatives of creative professions is observed in both the public and private sectors.

The labour shortage and demand by sector and professions is as follows:

- **Medicine & healthcare** (doctors - general practitioners and for hospitals, nurses, clinical, X-ray and medical laboratory assistants, paramedics and rehabilitators);
- **Construction (**builders, masonry-plasterers, concrete mixers, mechanics, excavators, drivers, welders, installers, mechanics, technicians, fitters, people for all auxiliary activities that serve construction and repairs);
- **Workers for the production sphere** (welders, locksmiths, cutters, machine operators, mechanics, electrical engineers and mechanical engineers);
- **Trade** (workers in retail outlets, sellers, hygienists);
- **Craftsmanship** and representatives of **creative professions**;
- **Personnel for agriculture**;
- **Teachers** (in mathematics, chemistry, physics and biology, as well as engineers to teach in vocational high schools);
- **Workers in the clothing, textile and footwear industries** (tailors, ironers, and machine operators).

Source: Expert.bg (https://www.expert.bg/macroview/marketplace/koi-sa-naj-tyrsenite-profesii-vyv-vsjaka-bylgarska-oblast-1667084.html)

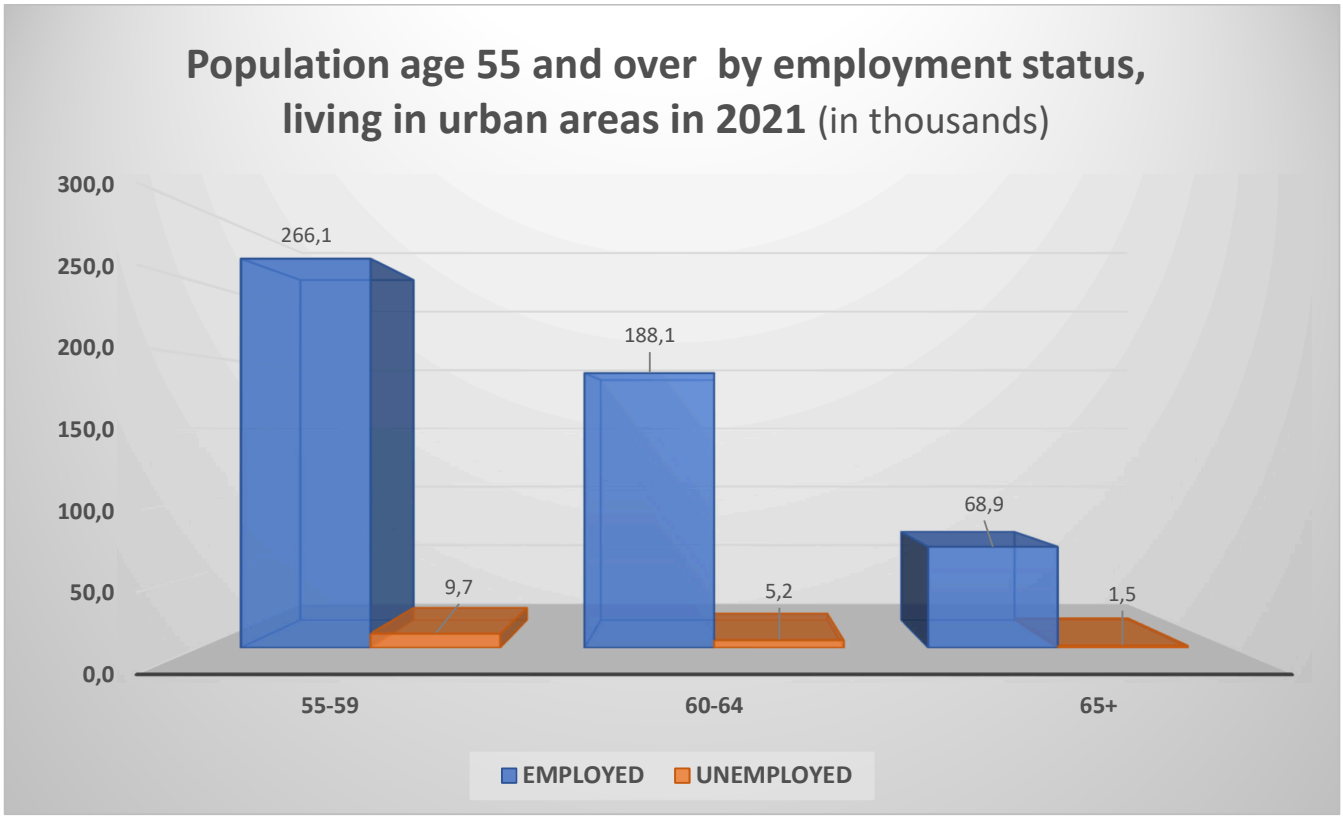
The next graph presents a picture of the employed persons aged 55 and over compared to unemployed persons from the same age groups as well as the employment and unemployment rate for 2021 in the country.

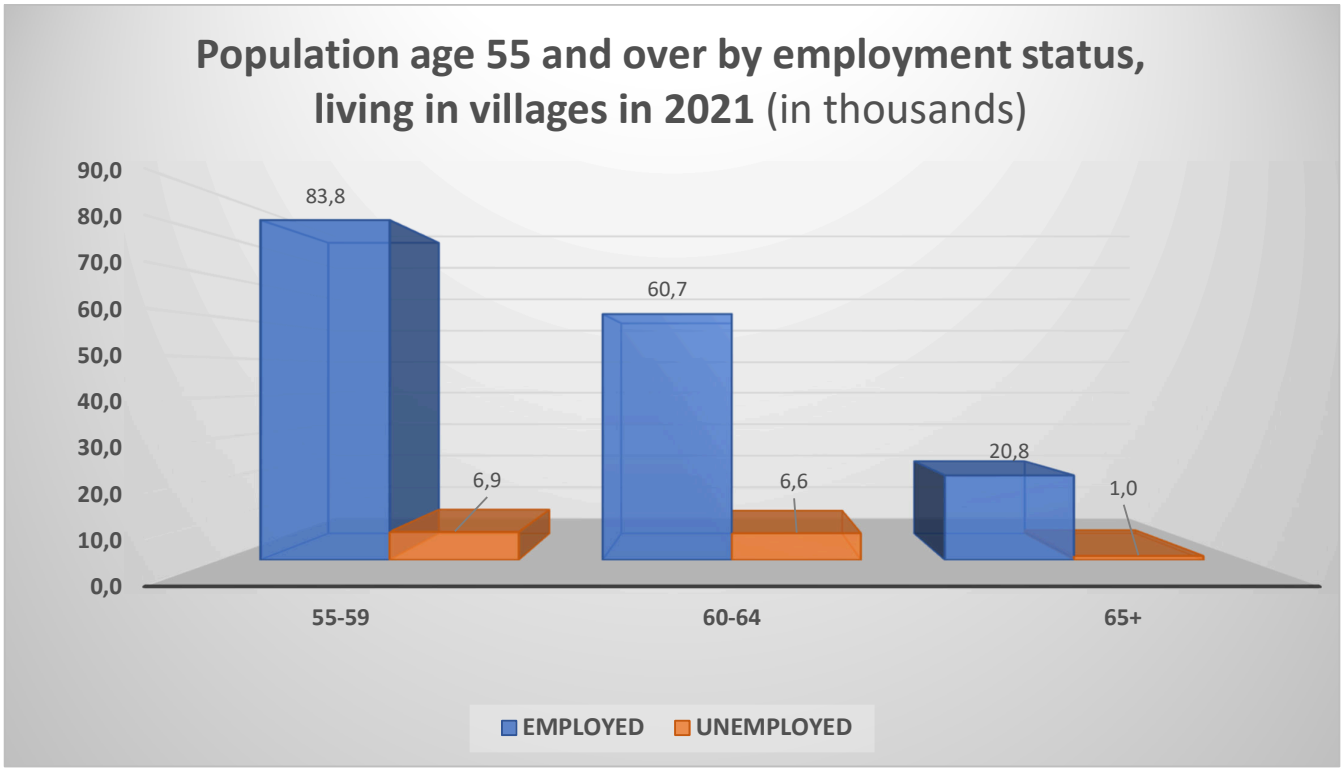


Source: National Statistical Institute of Bulgaria, Employment and unemployment – Annual data 2021 - www.nsi.bg

Most of the employed people aged 55+ lived in urban areas. The same is the tendency for unemployed people, except for the group of the unemployed aged 60-64. These tendences could be observed in the next two graphs:

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By the indicator **"Occupational class"** the number of the employed persons aged 55 and over is highest in the profile "Service and sale workers" – 111,1 thousands people, which matches with the figures in the graph "Ageing population by economic activities". The next higher numbers (in thousands) of employees aged 55 and over are in the classes "Professionals" (110.1), "Plant and machine operators" (83,2), and "Crafts and related trade workers" (82,8). These data also match the findings of industries with highest level of employment of population aged 55 and over i.e. the manufacturing and trade.

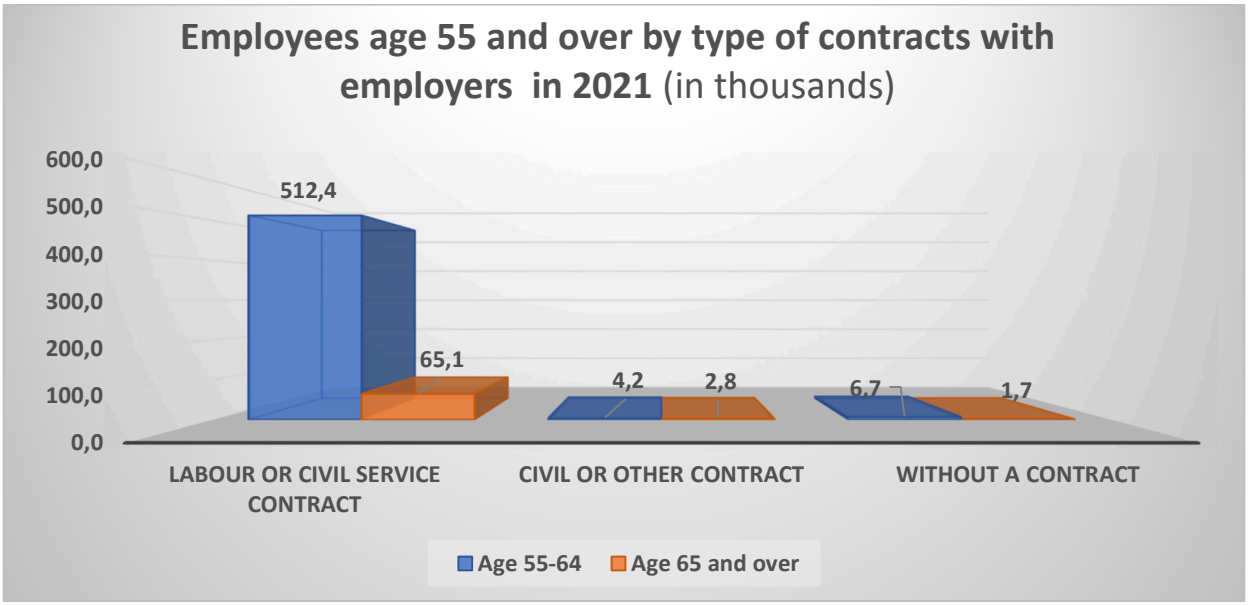


As to the **type of contracts** concluded with the employers by the employees aged 55 and over, the share of labor or civil service contracts is the highest for both observed age groups – 55-64 and 65 + compared to the civil or other contracts. This findings are realistic in the light of the retirement perspective of people aged 55-64 who prefer working on labor contracts to meet the pensions' requirements for work experience and income.

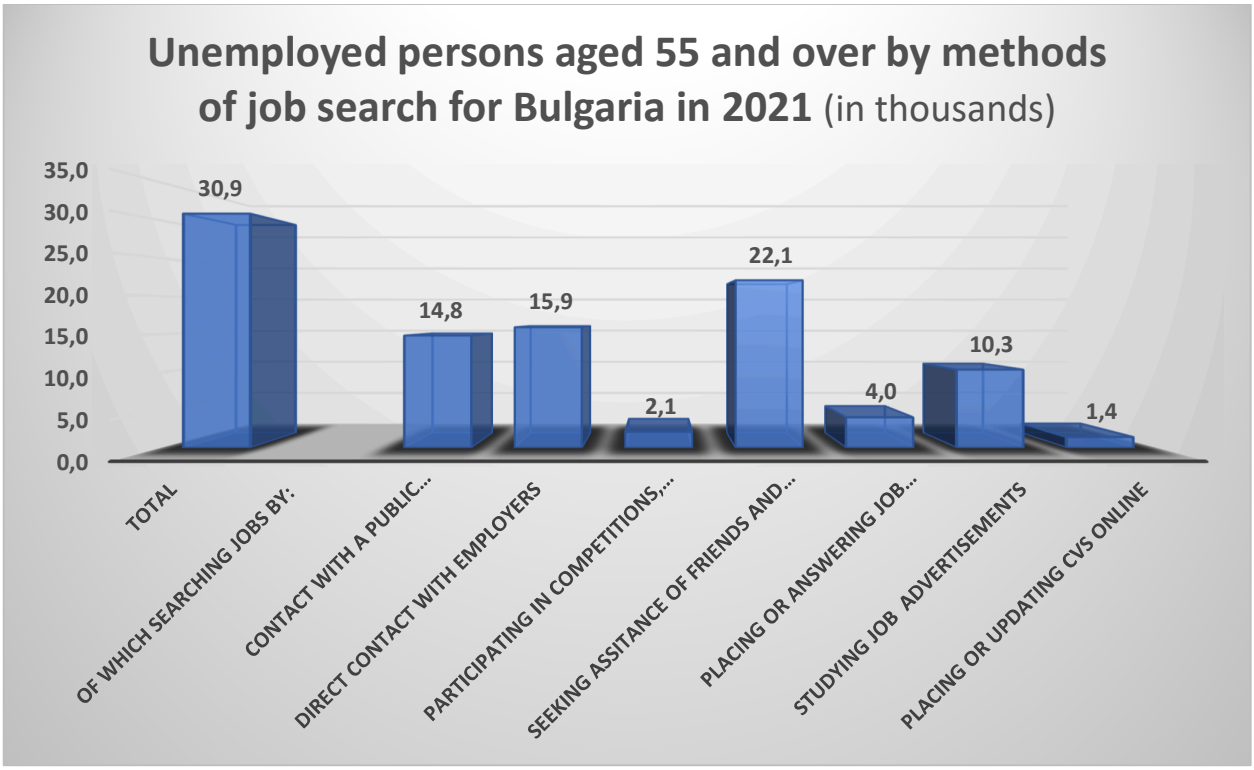
There is a very small number of people of the two aged groups that stated to work without a contract.

The data for the type of contracts are shown in the next graph:

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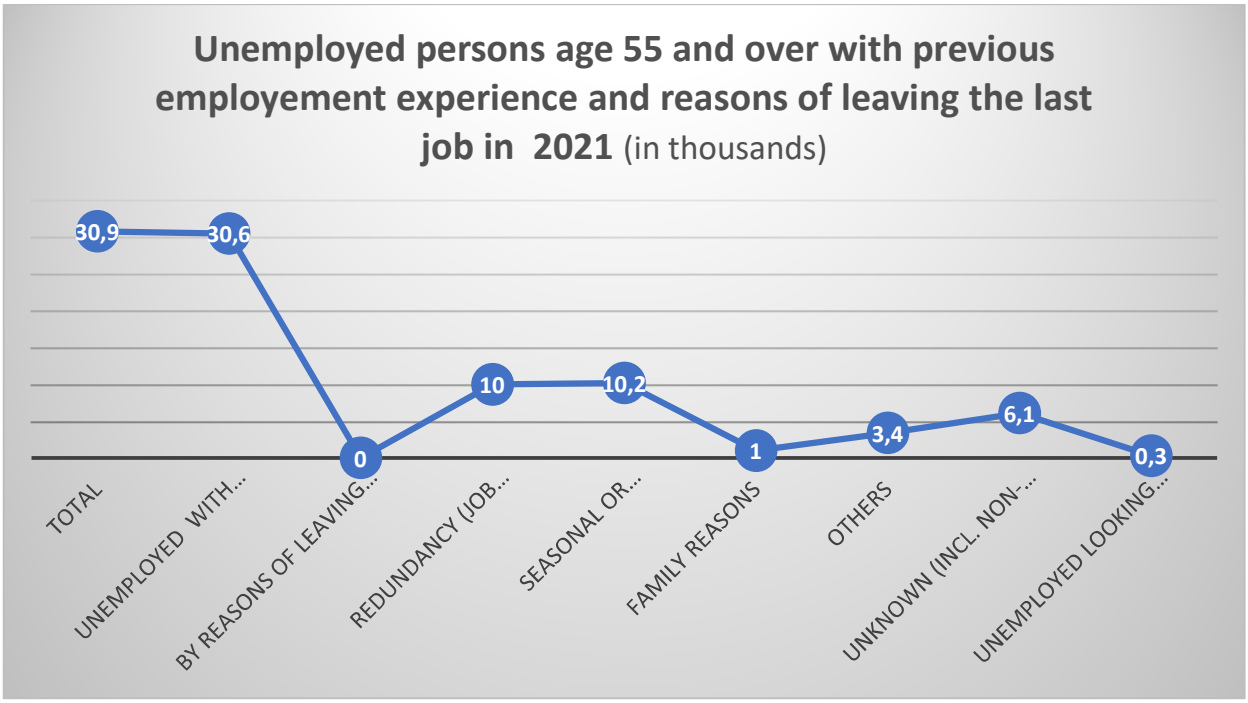


When searching for a job, the unemployed people aged 55 and over usually turn to friends and relatives for assistance – 22,1 thousands of all people age 55 and over. Another **preferred way to seek assistance by unemployed people aged 55 and over** is to make a direct contact with employers or to contact the public offices for employment services. This is viewable in the graph below:



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Reasons to leave the jobs: Part of unemployed persons aged 55 and over with previous employment experience have to leave the last job for different reasons. Among them the two main reasons reported are "Seasonal or temporary job has ended" - 10,2 thousands of unemployed persons aged 55 and over, and "Redundancy (Job losers)" – 10 thousands. There is a small number of unemployed people – 0,3thousands who are looking for their first job. This was presented in the next graph:



To help unemployed people aged 55 and over to overcome the consequences of restructuring or reduction of economic activity due to the pandemic situation, the green deal, and others, the government in the country introduced a variety of measures, programs, and projects through the national Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labor and Social Works. Part of these measures are presented in the next section.

3. **Is there any promotion of counseling services, programs or projects related to employment of senior workers adapted in various entities in your country *(national/regional/local level)?***

Please provide the following information:

- ✓ Name of counselling services/programmes/projects
- ✓ Leading institution

- ✓ Short description
- ✓ National/regional/local level

Name of the program	**Encouraging employers to employ unemployed persons aged 55 and over**
Leading institution	Bulgarian Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
Short description	The main goal of the program is provision of employment for unemployed persons over 55 years of age for a period of 12 months. The target audience are unemployed persons over 55 years of age. For each employed unemployed person, for the time during which he was employed, but no more than 6 months, funds are provided to the employer from the State Budget for payment of monthly gross salary and the mandatory insurance contributions. The employer has to disclose workplaces in which, in the last three months, the employer has not released workers and employees employed in workplaces for the same positions in which the unemployed persons are employed and has kept them for no less than 12 months. The employer has to conclude an employment contract with the unemployed person for a period of not less than 12 months. The employer may appoint consecutively more than one unemployed person referred by the Labor Bureaus to the open job.
National/regional/local level	National level

Name of the program	**Encouraging job openings for work-based training (dual training system)**
Leading institution	Bulgarian Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
Short description	The main goal of the program is provision of training through work (dual training system) to unemployed persons for a period of up to 18 months, among them unemployed people aged 50 and over. For every unemployed person, who meets the admission criteria announced by the training institutions, the employer is provided with funds from the State Budget for remuneration for time actually worked , and additional remunerations in minimum amounts

	according to the Labour Code, the Social Security Code , and for basic paid annual leave; the mandatory insurance contributions for the account of the employer; additional labour remuneration for the mentor whom the employer has assigned to train in the work process the unemployed person, and for the training institution, which in partnership conducts training through work (dual system of training).
National/regional/local level	National level

Name of the program	**National Retirement Assistance Program**
Leading institution	Bulgarian Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
Short description	The main objective of the program is to provide support for the transition from unemployment to work and retirement for unemployed persons over 58 who are actively looking for work and are registered with the Labor Bureaus in the country. The direct project objectives refer to: • Providing full-time or part-time employment, for a period of not less than 3 months and not more than 24 months, to unemployed persons over 58 years old, registered in the Labor Bureaus. • Support for the transition from unemployment to work and retirement of persons from the target group. • Reducing social tension and ensuring employment for a group of unemployed people in a disadvantaged position on the labor market.
National/regional/local level	National level

Name of the program	**Encouraging the initiation of self-employment as a micro-enterprise**
Leading institution	Bulgarian Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy

Short description	The program aimed at encouraging the unemployed, including persons aged 50 and over, to start an independent economic activity as a micro-enterprise. The target audience includes unemployed persons registered in Labor Bureaus with an approved business project for independent economic activity as a micro-enterprise. The program subsidies for the unemployed person cover the costs incurred to start the independent economic activity, included in the business project, in the amount of up to BGN 4,000; additional monthly amounts for social security contributions paid for the "Pensions" fund, the Social Insurance Institution and the National Health Insurance Fund, on the minimum amount of the monthly insurance income for self-insured persons; training funds for the acquisition of a professional qualification in the subject of the independent economic activity and/or its management according to the approved business project, in the amount of up to BGN 300; the costs for used external consulting services and/or accompanying services, within the scope of the contract, in the amount of up to BGN 500, are reimbursed.
National/regional/local level	National level

Name of the program	**Encouraging the entrepreneurship of unemployed persons**
Leading institution	Bulgarian Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
Short description	The main goal of the program is towards encouraging the unemployed, including persons aged 50 and over, to start a business for the production of goods and/or services on their own or together with other persons. The target audience are unemployed people registered in the Labor Bureaus with the right to unemployment compensation, with an approved business project for independent economic activity to produce goods and/or services. The persons who have entered into a contract to start an economic activity to produce goods and/or services independently or with other persons.

	Subsidies for the unemployed person include: a one-time sum of money, instead of cash compensation for unemployment; subsidies for a person who has concluded a contract to start activity with another person. An additional amount of BGN 2,840 is provided on the condition that the person provides employment under the approved business project to another unemployed person without the right to unemployment compensation. The program also provides up to BGN 1,000 for qualification in the subject of business activity and/or its management according to the approved business project. The costs for using external consulting services and/or accompanying services, within the scope of the contract, in the amount of up to BGN 500, are reimbursed.
National/regional/local level	National level

Name of the program	**Regional programs**
Leading institution	Bulgarian Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
Short description	Regional employment programs are an important tool of employment policy through which local organizations and communities can solve problems in local labor markets by opening new jobs for unemployed persons from vulnerable groups, including for unemployed people age 50 and over. With the adopted changes to the Employment Promotion Act and the Regulations for the Implementation of the National Labor and Employment Act and with a view to developing regionalization, a new approach to the development, approval and financing of regional employment programs has been introduced, in which the regional employment authorities play a significant role. The main objective of the regional programs is to increase employment, reduce unemployment and increase the quality of the labor force in the regions. In 2022, the Minister of Labor and Social Policy approved 28 regional programs - 1 in each area. Under the programs, it is

	planned to provide subsidized employment to unemployed persons from the target groups, and they will have the opportunity to start working full-time or part-time, for a period of 3 to 6 months.
National/regional/local level	National level

Name of the project	**Opportunity for employment and self-employment**
Leading institution	Bulgarian Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
Short description	Main goal of the project is to provide an opportunity to meet demand and supply in the labor market through training in the conditions of post-pandemic challenges to the economy. Target groups included among others Unemployed people over 50 years of age without qualification and low level of education, including with qualifications not sought by employers as well as fired persons because of restructuring or reduction of economic activity due to the pandemic situation, the green deal, etc. Activities include inclusion in training of unemployed persons in training in a key competence and in part of a profession or to acquire a degree of professional qualification in professions requested by employers - project partners.
National/regional/local level	National level

Name of the project	**Knowledge and Skills for Work**
Leading institution	Bulgarian Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
Short description	The main project goal is to provide support for the restoration of employment, through training of unemployed persons to acquire knowledge, skills and competences sought by employers. Target audience include among others unemployed over 50 years of age without qualification and with low general education; with a qualification not sought by employers.

	The project activities include training of unemployed persons in a key competence and in part of a profession or to acquire a degree of professional qualification in professions requested by employers - project partners.
National/regional/local level	National level

Name of the project	**Workforce Adaptation Project**
Leading institution	Bulgarian Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
Short description	The aim of the project is to carry out supporting activities to stabilize the functioning of the labor market in the new conditions. The idea is to develop human capital to meet the needs of the economy and to be able to quickly adapt to changes in the demand for labor, caused by both pandemic conditions and the introduction of new technologies. Target groups include unemployed persons released as a result of the epidemic situation; long-term unemployed; unemployed without professional qualification; unemployed over the age of 50; inactive persons willing to work, including discouraged persons; unemployed persons with registration from 6 to 12 months. Activities refer to training of unemployed persons in key competence and in part of a profession or to acquire a degree of professional qualification in professions requested by employers - project partners.
National/regional/local level	National level

Name of the project	**Succeeding Together**
Leading institution	Bulgarian Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
Short description	The main objective of the “Succeeding Together” project is to reduce the discrepancies between the demand and the supply of labor in order to support the process of overcoming the new challenges on the labor market related to the emergence of the

	Covid-19 pandemic, ensuring sustainable jobs in the real economy and improving the quality of the labor force by providing the opportunity for unemployed and inactive persons from the most vulnerable groups in the labor market to acquire new knowledge and skills. Target groups among others include persons released as a result of the epidemic situation, unemployed over 50 years of age, and inactive people willing to work, including discouraged persons. Activities refer to providing training of unemployed persons in a key competence and in part of a profession or to acquire a degree of professional qualification in professions requested by employers - project partners.
National/regional/local level	National level

Name of the project	**With new green and ecological knowledge and skills for new employment**
Leading institution	Bulgarian Employment Agency at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy
Short description	The project aims to ensure a rapid transition of unemployed persons to employment by presenting training packages with the aim of increasing their suitability and adaptability for subsequent employment and preparation for future changes in the labor market through acquisition of digital, green, and environmental skills. Target audience include dismissed persons due to restructuring or reduction of economic activities as a result of a pandemic situation, green deal, etc., unemployed over 50 years of age without qualifications and with low general education, with qualifications not sought by employers, etc. Activities refer to inclusion in training of persons in part of a profession or to acquire a degree of professional qualification in the professions "Computer operator", "Forestry worker (forestry activities)", "Construction assistant", "Ecologist" with a specialty "Ecology" and environmental protection; "Educator's assistant", "Nurse", "Social assistant" with a specialty in "Supporting children".

National/regional/local level	National level

Name of the program	**Career centers**
Leading institution	Regional Employment Service Directorates at the Bulgarian Employment Agency (Ministry of Labor and Social Policy)
Short description	10 career centers at the "Regional Employment Service" Directorates have been established and are already functioning. They are located in Sofia, Montana, Lovech, Ruse, Varna, Burgas, Haskovo, Plovdiv, as well as in the Central Administration of the Employment Agency in the capital city Sofia. They were implemented under the project "Career Development of Employed Persons", BG051PO001-2.2.02 "Services for the Development of a Flexible Labor Market" of the Operational Program "Development of Human Resources". Their main goal is to help employed and self-employed persons improve their career development through professional counseling and guidance. The functions of the career centers are the provision of up-to-date information on the labor market, opportunities for professional development, providing guidance and counseling services for choosing a career, organizing, and conducting seminars, meetings with employers and "Career Days".
National/regional/local level	National level

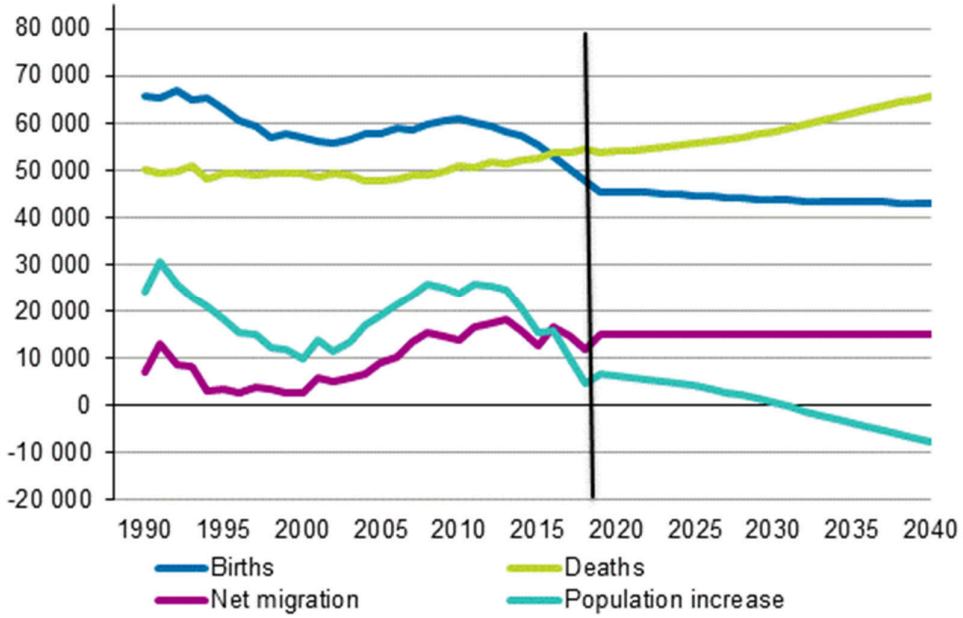
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Annex 2

Finland Desk Research

1. **What ‘s the situation of senior workers on the labour market in your country?**

During the last 10 years Finland has faced a rather dramatic change in the number of population. The birth rate is continuously decreasing and the only way to increase population seems to be immigration. Statistics of Finland describes the development by the following diagram:[1]



As during the last years the employment rate has been rising among the 20-64 year cohort from 70.3 % (in March 2013) to 77.3 % (in March 2023) and the unemployment rate has during the same period of time been decreasing from 8.3 % to being currently 6.6. %[2] Finland has faced an unforeseen situation where the labour force seems to be shrinking due to the decline of number of population indicating simultaneous labour shortage in private companies and public sector. The labour shortage covers now almost all the branches and all regions, shown in the survey by MEE[3]. By implication, e*xtending the number of labour force* has now become a key national policy strategy.

[1] https://www.stat.fi/til/vaenn/2019/vaenn_2019_2019-09-30_tie_001_en.html

[2] https://www.stat.fi/tilasto/tyti

[3] https://www.ammattibarometri.fi/?kieli=en

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In this context the significance of senior workers is increasing. On the top of the labour shortage the life expectancy is increasing (being in 2022 78.6 years among the men and 83.8 years among the women)[4], retirement age[5] has gone up (the expected retirement age has risen from 61.1. years in 2016 to 62,2 years in 2022). Also the willingness of senior workers to extend their employment (according to different surveys 20%-40%[6] would like to continue in working life on the condition that working arrangement would be flexible*). Thus, there now is a great potential to bridge the senior workers' own interests with the societal need for labour force enlargement*.

All these developments now take place in a working life that is rapidly changing affecting also senior workers and, on the other hand, enabling senior workers to contribute to working life development more generally by first enhancing the sustainability of careers, second - by integrating their interests and strengths, third-by adopting the idea continuous learning and fourth - by sustaining their employability and integrating work and other spheres of life, identified as the 4 key elements[7] of sustainable careers[8]. Thus, it is obvious that today there is a growing challenge to build services that enable the negotiation process also at the individual level between the individual needs and the societal and organisational needs.

2. What is the employment rate of older workers in particular industries and which industry has the biggest labour shortage?

In recent years the employment rate of older workers has been rapidly growing in Finland. The employment rate 55-59 old was record high 81,5 % in 2022. Also the employment rate for the age group 60-64 went up to 60.7 %. The following graph describes the historical trend form the year 2000 on[9]:

[4] https://www.stat.fi/uutinen/kuolleisuuden-nousu-poikkeuksellista-elinajanodote-laskee-vuonna-2022-eniten-60-vuoteen

[5] https://www.etk.fi/en/research-statistics-and-projections/statistics/effective-retirement-age/

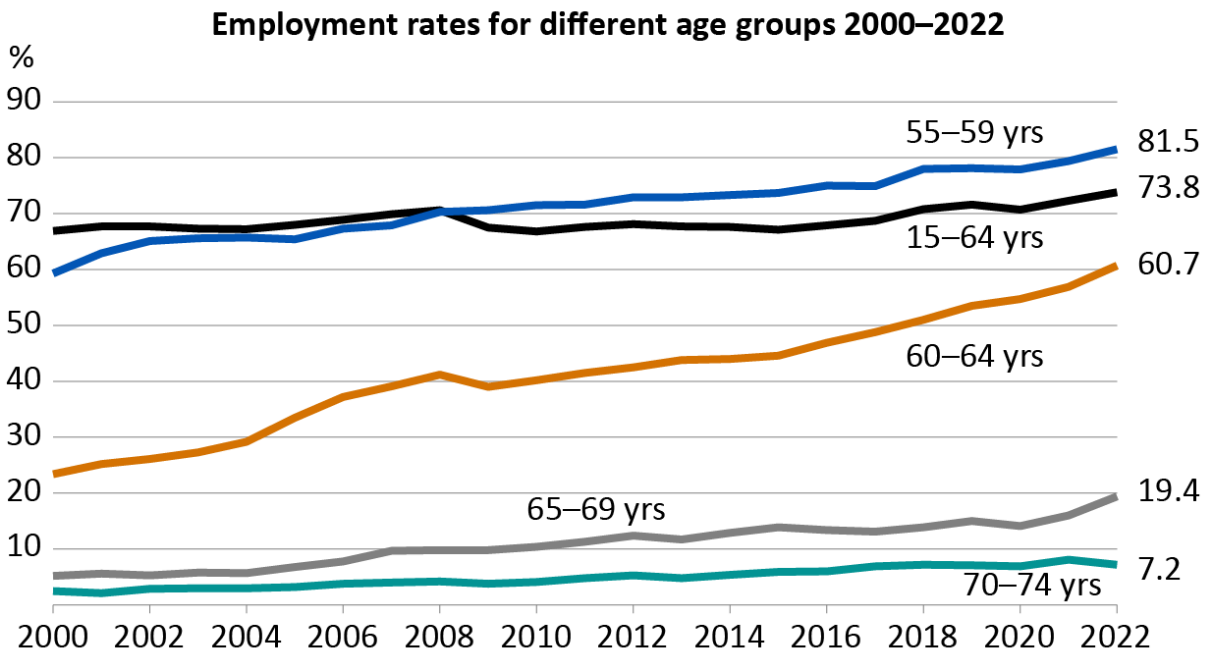
[6] e.g. https://www.elo.fi/fi-fi/uutiset/2022/joka-viides-elakkeensaaja-olisi-jatkanut-tyoelamassa-pidempaan?

[7] Valcour, M. (2015). Facilitating the crafting of sustainable careers in organizations. In A. De Vos & B. I. J. M. Van der Heijden (Eds). *Handbook of Research on Sustainable Careers* (s. 20−34). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

[8] Kokkinen, L. (2020). HYVINVOINTIA TYÖSTÄ 2030-LUVULLA SKENAARIOITA SUOMALAISENTYÖELÄMÄN KEHITYKSESTÄ. Työterveyslaitos.

[9] https://www.etk.fi/en/research-statistics-and-projections/statistics/effective-retirement-age/

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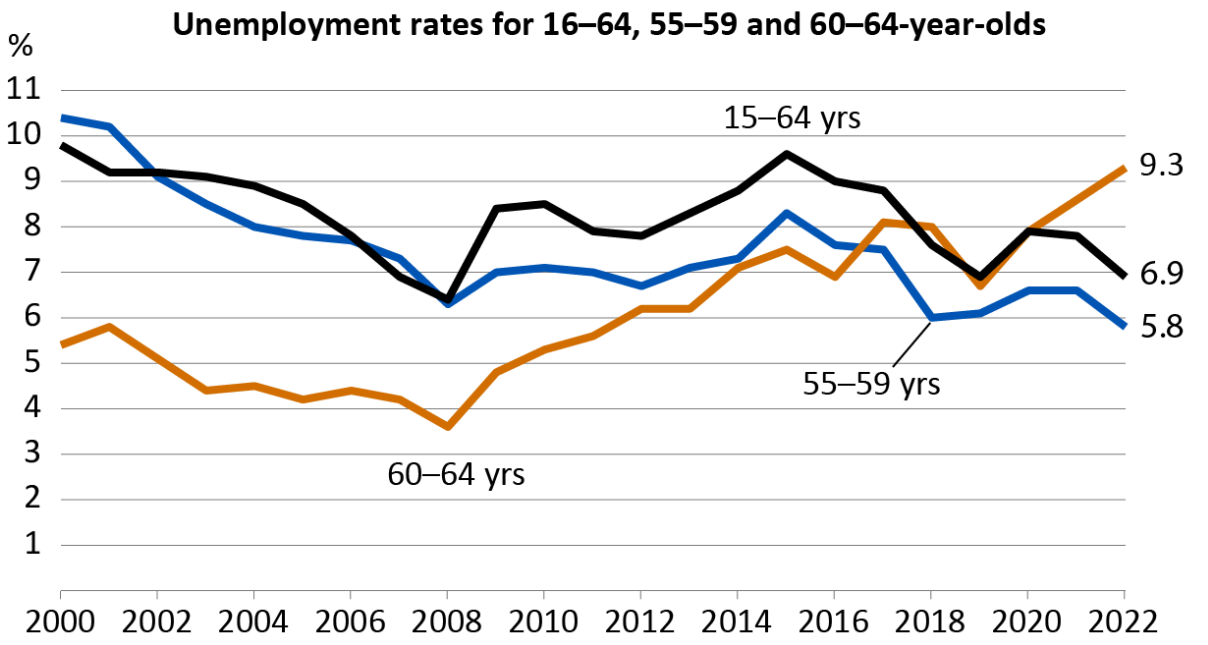


Source: Official Statistics of Finland (OSF): Labour force survey, ISSN=1798-7830. Helsinki, Statistics Finland

Figure: Finnish Centre for Pensions

What comes to the unemployment rate in the older cohorts it is a generally known fact that it is affected through the years by the ups and downs of the economic development in general. Even in 2022 it is obvious in the age group 60-64 years while the historical trend among the 55-59 is indicating a consistent decline in unemployment, demonstrated in the following chart:

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Source: Official Statistics of Finland (OSF): Labour force survey, ISSN=1798-7830. Helsinki, Statistics Finland

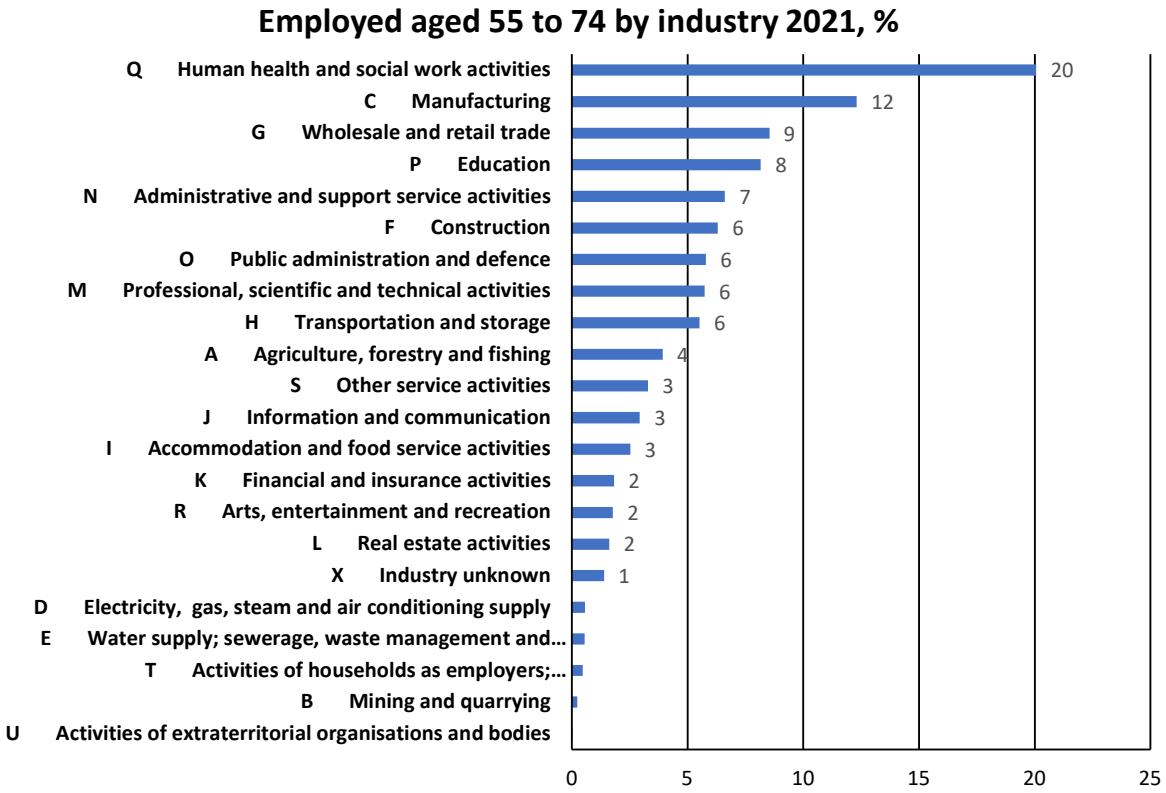
Figure: Finnish Centre for Pensions

However, the unemployment rate among the 60-64 has now in March 2023 decreased in relative terms by 7 %.[10]

Analysed the employment rate by industries we get the following distribution.

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ycvbgdCGHm6MfFhKCb1J1cjkaAdBKSea?usp=share_link)

10 https://www.temtyollisyyskatsaus.fi/graph/tkat/tkat.aspx?ssid=230505113823260&lang=en&top=2&sub=22#



Source: Employment statistics

Compared to the industries with most serious labour shortage indicated by Ammattibarometri[11] it is noteworthy that out of the 15 "top" profession in this regard 11 of them are heath care or social work professions like practical nurses, other nurses, doctors in general practice and specialised doctors, psychologists, dentists, specialized social work experts etc.).

In the recent report by MEE[12] it is estimated that there is a need for 200000 more health care workers in Finland by the year 2035. Thus, it is obvious that health care and social work stands clearly out as the most serious branches of labour shortages although it should be noted that also in other branches the number of job seekers per vacancies has dropped radically already from the year 2027 on.[13]

Thus, it is obvious that there are both vocational (and also regional) mismatches among the labour demand and labour supply the labour market policy now has to address. It might

[11] https://valtioneuvosto.fi/documents/1410877/104583605/Ammattibarometri_2_2022.pdf/ac0c6da7-3288-8fda-7561-acb8c8bc6150/Ammattibarometri_2_2022.pdf?t=1667285333023

[12] https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/162852/TEM_2021_02_t.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

[13] https://labore.fi/julkaisu/tyovoimapula-tyovoimakapeikot-ja-avoimien-tyopaikkojen-laatu-12-ammattiryhman-tarkastelu/

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perhaps be argued that the core of the current labour market policy is advancing the vocational and regional transitions to meet the challenges of the labour shortage of the economy. One piece in this puzzle is extending the labour force among the elderly employees.

3. **Is there any promotion of counseling services, programs or projects related to employment of senior workers adapted in various entities in your country *(national/regional/local level)?***

In Finland career counselling services in the public Employment Offices are produced for all citizens, not only for unemployed. Besides dealing with local Employment Offices, clients can use net services in searching jobs, training possibilities and different employment services. They can also start their official client process in the Employment Office and create their own employment/training plans on the web. Now there are not public guidance services targeted especially for 50+ clients. Actually majority of clients have been unemployed (2019 62 %), 50 + clients only 17,5 %.[14] TEM has only now started to make steps to develop the counselling production by improving the targeting of services for the seniors and making them more visible and more available for the seniors.

Most programs and projects targeted for 50 + workers concern age management, late-career support, work well-being, continuous learning and digital skills, including guidance and training. These programmes have a strong connection to employment and employability of seniors. The Finnish government 2019-2023 started to invest strongly to different programs on the sustainability of careers:

The aim of **National Programme on Ageing 2030**[15] is about improving workers' work ability and extending of careers, especially in senior services. According to the programme anticipation for aging will be started in the middle age and it will continue through a transition phase to retirement. The aim is to create various solutions and flexibilities by which more extended careers are ensured and ageism in working life is prevented.
To the challenges in seniors' performance and workability are partly answered by the Work and Work Well-being Programme **WORK 2030**[16]. The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health implemented the WORK 2030 programme 2020-2022 in co-operation with the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, labour market organizations and other working life players. The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health **(FIOH)**[17], a multidisciplinary research and specialist organization focusing on well-being at work, research, advisory services and training, is responsible for the operational implementation of the programme, continuing to utilize and disseminate its results. New operating methods were developed together with more than 9000 workplaces, their managers and experts. Innovations, experiments and research were encouraged. Co-creation at workplaces and in different sectors is at the core of this program. The ideas and insights gained during the programme period have been compiled into the following five solutions that improve workplace wellbeing and productivity and are essential also for older employees' career support: boosting trust, increasing dialogue, enabling co-learning, releasing creativity and developing leadership. During the programme numerous guidelines and tools have been released for workplaces to develop their operations. These include future dialogue designed for sectors and workplaces, Fast

[14] https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/162117/TEM_2020_15.pdf
[15] https://stm.fi/en/older-workers
[16] https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/161451
[17] https://www.ttl.fi/en

Expert Teams, a peer learning network, tools for measuring and developing creativity, and a starting kit for tomorrow's leadership.[18]

Age management projects have been generated by **The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH).** It has a large co-operation network with enterprises and public organisations that have started to deploy new methods in late-career management like supporting confidence in seniority skills; recognizing their valuable occupational experience, strengths, and skills; demonstrating their experience in their work community; sharing their experience with their younger colleagues and handling changing situations at work and their career.

"Engagement for Senior Employees" -program consists of solution focused peer group coaching of 50+ workers and coach training, usually produced in net. The coach training is targeted to HR-personnel, managers, experts in occupational health care and other professionals working with personnel. The effectivity of the method has been proved by research.[19] [20]

FIOH and the pension provider VARMA[21] have created **" Immediate supervisors supporting working careers in ageing working life "** -projects[22]. The aim of the projects is to enhance supervisors' skills in late-career leadership. The project consists of developing resource-based peer group-training for supervisors and testing its efficacy. The training and coaching strengthens supervisors' skills to understand the special features in late careers, support seniors in renewing their skills and options, discuss career possibilities and workability, tailor organisational practices for engaging seniors and supporting their workability. The training also promotes co-operation between different age groups and sharing tacit knowledge. The training is mainly executed in virtual groups, using also workbooks /journals. These project providers have a large clientele in private and public organisations.

The Parliamentary Reform of Continuous Learning[23] responds to people's lifelong need for upskilling and reskilling. The reform promotes learning in working life, creates a service system for continuous learning and increases equity of participation. The vision and the goal of the reform is the following: Everybody develops his/her learning during the career, so that development at work, employing to new tasks and proceeding on the career path would be possible. The reform of continuous learning is not age-specific, but it targets activities to those who have less education (like seniors).

The reform includes different operations:

Availability and effectivity of foresight knowledge are improved and on this basis work life relevant and targetable teaching delivery are created.

- Outreach activities are intensified, supporting and low threshold trainings for under-represented groups (like 50+ workers) are increased.
- Guidance and mapping skills/abilities and learning needs are developed by revealing skills. This improves allocation and effectivity of training investments.

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[18] https://stm.fi/en/-/the-work2030-programme-identified-five-solutions-for-a-successful-working-life

[19] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/334275103_Enhancing_late-career_management_among_aging_employees_-_A_randomized_controlled_trial

[20] https://www.julkari.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/132436/Tyon_imua_uran_seniorivaiheeseen_loppuraportti_2017.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

[21] https://www.varma.fi/en/

[22] https://www.ttl.fi/en/research/projects/immediate-supervisors-supporting-working-careers-in-ageing-working-life

[23] https://okm.fi/en/continuous-learning-reform

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The coordinators of continuous learning work in the regional **Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment** having a pivotal role in implementing the national programmes. They have intensive co-operation with educational institutes, employment services and other service providers, enterprises, municipalities and other stakeholders.
The Reform of Continuous Learning includes important subprojects also for 50 + workers, for example:

1 Working Group on Identification of Competences[24]

Ministry of Employment and the Economy and Ministry of Education and Culture appointed 2021 The Working Group on Identification of Competences is a part of the implementation of the Sustainable Growth Programme for Finland. The working group creates tools and methods for identifying competences acquired outside the official education system, for example at work. The working group presents proposals for expanding the framework for qualifications and other competence modules, as well as preliminary proposals for developing competence-based badges, descriptors and the visibility of skills and competences, and proposals for national principles for identifying competences.

Personalisation of studies and degrees has been for years a key issue in adult education making studies more attractive for adults who have dropped out of their studies in the past but acquired competences in work and free time. Identifying skills and competences means that people identify, express verbally and make visible the skills and competences they have obtained in one way or another, to themselves and to the society. In this way existing skills can be utilized better, transfer phases in careers will become more fluent and accuracy/relevance/pertinence of the training will improve.

The Reform of Continuous Learning includes developing micro-credentials and a national Open Badge System for adults' basic skills that enable the acquisition of learning needed in employment without completing a full qualification programme. This will make also updating seniors' competence much easier.

The Service Centre for Continuous Learning and Employment's (SECLE) was established 2021 for concrete implementation of the Continuous Learning programme. The centre is a separate organisational unit under Ministry of Economic affairs and employment (MEE) and Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC)[25]**.**

The service centre analyses the competence and labour market needs of working life:

- finances education and training intended for working-age people
- develops information, advisory and guidance services
- supports regional and other cooperation
- participates in the work to develop a digital service package for continuous learning.

SECLE has made new innovations in methods for identifying and recognising skills and tacit knowledge, for example outreach work aiming to encourage particularly workers without vocational education to participate training. The service providers recruited by SECLE map enterprises' skill needs and support employees by group guidance to identify their own skill needs and means for competence improvement.

24
https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/164492/VN_2022_74.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
25 https://www.jotpa.fi/en/main/:language/en?PHPSESSID=5mpt7s4bgu5jk0ejm76b59kfel.

SECLE arranges annually Reveal Your Skills Campaign Week in co-operation with numerous organisations and communities [26] The goal of the week is to help people and communities to identify and share their skills, as well as to open the topic up for public discussion. SECLE has created to its platform numerous tools for skill identifying.[27]

SECLE has also produced a survey ”What working-age people think about continuous learning”.[28]

2. **Programme for Digitalisation of the Continuous Learning[29]**

The programme 2020-2023 includes a digital service package for continuous learning to build services that support individuals' educational and career choices, upskilling and reskilling, and the matching of demand for labour and education with supply.

The Digital service package of the continuous learning consists of

1. Integrating intelligent electric services like mapping and identifying skills and competences, supporting guidance tools and searching education and training supply.

2. Information pools like competence pool, education supply pool, job information pool and labour market information pool

The service package gathers and produces data to meet the needs of employers, education and training providers, service providers and the authorities. In addition, the programme will use and improve existing digital services and information resources, especially Job Market Finland and Studyinfo. The Studyinfo website is being expanded in order to provide as many education and training options as possible through a single service point. Development, with funds from the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility, will continue in 2024 and 2025, by which time most of the new services should be launched. The aim is that people can by new services more easily map their situation and get information about training and job possibilities as well as guidance to support decision making.

Digital and Population Data Services Agency (The Finnish Digital Agency), DDV[30], launched on the 1st of January 2020, promotes the digitalisation of society, secures the availability of data, and provides services for the life events of its customers. The development of digital support for citizens is a permanent service of the DDV. Among others, The Agency develops national digital support and coordinates the operation of the digital support network that includes organisations and communities offering free guidance for seniors, like SeniorSurf[31]) under VTKL – The Finnish Association for the Welfare of Older

[26] https://www.jotpa.fi/fi/ajankohtaista/osaaminen-nakyviin/

[27] https://www.jotpa.fi/fi/ajankohtaista/osaaminen-nakyviin/tyokalut/

[28] https://www.jotpa.fi/fi/julkaisut/?get_page=fileviewer&file=https://www.jotpa.fi/openfile/MTY3MzI3MDQ2NF9IYWFzdGF0dGVsdXR1dGtpbXVzX01pdMOkX3R5w7Zpa8OkaXNldF9paG1pc2V0X2FqYXR0ZWxldmF0X2phdGt1dmFzdGFfb3BwaW1pc2VzdGFfMjAyM19zYWF2dXRldHRhdmEucGRm

[29] https://vm.fi/documents/10623/30029448/Digiohjelman+toimintasuunnitelma+2022.pdf/e8f2b1d5-2e20-0b22-8131-635baf64c5b1/Digiohjelman+toimintasuunnitelma+2022.pdf?t=1646754956663

[30] https://dvv.fi/en/digital-and-population-data-services-agency

[31] https://seniorsurf.fi/english/

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Adults[32]SeniorSurf and DDV provide material for organisations, volunteers and seniors and arranges workshops for starting digital guidance.

The contents of digital support may vary from guidance on e-services use to installing applications and starting to use them. Forms of digital support:

- **remote support:** chat, telephone or video support, unmanned service points
- **face-to-face support:** service points, peer support and support at home. Voluntary digiguides are available, for example, at Guidelocation map put together by SeniorSurf.
- **training:** online training, adult education centres, courses

[32] (https://vtkl.fi/in-english

Annex 3

Germany Desk Research

Developed by *[Institut für angewandte Beratungswissenschaften GmbH]*

Findings from the desk research

1. **What ‘s the situation of senior workers on the labour market in your country?**

Describe the most relevant situations in your country (e.g. percentage of people 50 + employed and unemployed). Please also provide comparative data in relation to the last 10 years.

German employers face a shrinking labour supply as the baby boomers start to retire from working life. Additionally, the age structure of the labour force is shifting towards older cohorts. This has considerable consequences for companies. Skilled workers are becoming scarcer and workforces older.

It is difficult to assess scientifically how and to what extent the labour and goods markets will react to the shortage. However, it can be expected that labour scarcity will be a severe challenge for many companies, especially for those that are growing rapidly and/or may already have a relatively old workforce and as a result the need for replacements.

Germany is currently looking for around 1.2 million workers, two-thirds of whom are skilled workers (only the figures for jobs reported to the Federal Employment Agency; the real demand is probably much higher). The demand will increase in the medium term due to demographic change and further economic growth.

At the same time, the number of long-term unemployed is around 1 million. Experts estimate that Germany needs about 400,000 immigrants per year to maintain the labour force potential. But we do not see this as the only solution: rather, in our view, the reserves in the country must be activated more strongly, which includes above all strengthening the companies in age management.

Besides demographic change, the reasons for the tight labour market for skilled workers are the increasing number of young people with secondary school degrees and following university studies. At the same time, there is a lack of skilled workers with completed vocational training (especially in the dual system: combination of vocational school and in-company training).

By region, the states in the south of Germany are particularly affected by the shortage of skilled workers.

Senior workers in particular often have extensive specialist knowledge and many years of operational expertise. The skilled labour potential of senior workers (55-64 years) is between 600,000 and 1.1 million by 2025. The labour force participation of the elderly in Germany has been above the European average for some time and has risen strongly in recent years, especially among women. However, men are also more frequently employed after the standard age limit than women.

Of the approximately 53.5 million people of working age (15-65 years), 33.7 million are employed subject to social security contributions. Even today, the older age groups are much more

than the younger ones: In the 50-59 age group there were (2020) just under 14 million people of working age, 9 million of them employed. In the 20-29 age group, on the other hand, there were only 9.5 million people of working age, of which 6.0 million were employed.

Although all regions in Germany are affected by ageing employment, there are considerable regional differences. Regional differences can be observed: a) the migration of younger workers from East Germany to West Germany and b) the tendency of younger workers to prefer urban regions to rural regions.

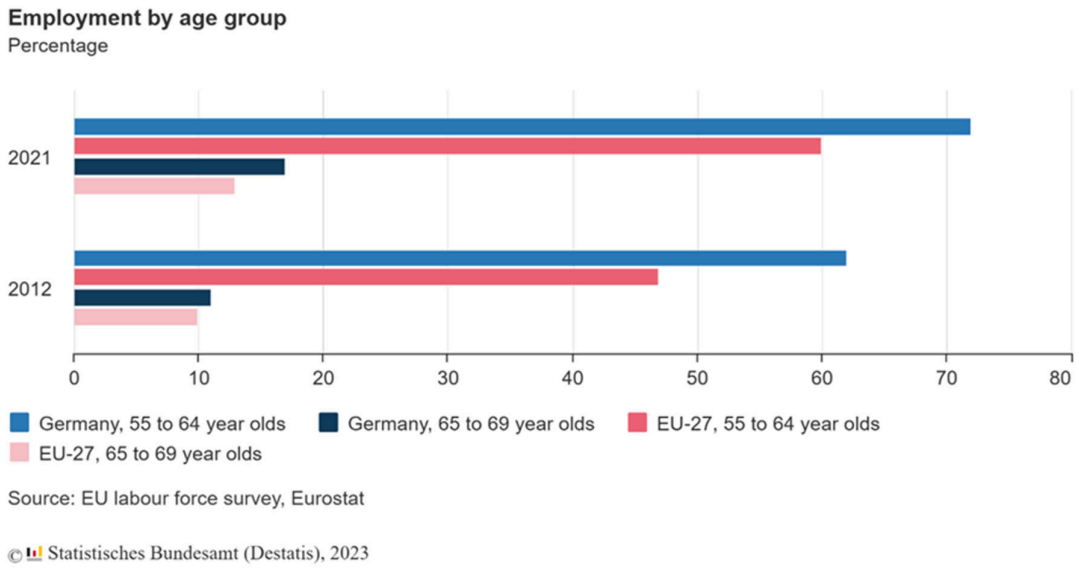
The labour force participation rate of 55-65-year-olds has risen more strongly in the past 10 years than that of 15-65-year-olds overall. Employment subject to social insurance contributions (employment rate) of older people has also risen significantly.

Compared to the rest of Europe, the employment rate of older people in Germany is above average: employment of 55-64-year-olds in Germany is around 72% (2021), the EU average is around 60%. But older people are still more affected by unemployment than the average.

unemployment than the average; however, unemployment rates are increasingly converging towards the lower overall rate.

However, the chances of older unemployed people to find a new job have not improved significantly over the last 10 years. Older people are therefore still disadvantaged.

To cope with the skilled labour shortage, stronger labour force participation of older people is discussed, among other things. More and more older people are in employment in Germany and the European Union (EU). The employment rate of the 55 to 64-year-olds in Germany rose markedly within ten years from 62% in 2012 to just under 72% in 2021. In the same period, the employment rate of the 55 to 64-year-olds in the EU was up from 47% to 60%.



In the last 10 years, the labour force participation of 60-64-year-olds increased from 44% (2011) to 61% (2021) and also that of 65-69-year-olds from 10% (2011) to 17% (2021). But

there are differences: The highly qualified are more likely to be in work in old age than the less qualified; moreover, the proportion of over 55s in shortage occupations (STEM, care, mechatronics-electronics) has been increasing since 2012.

The extent to which the increased employment of older skilled workers is possible depends largely on the age management of the individual companies. This involves the age-appropriate design of work, improvement of the work-life balance, greater involvement in continuing education (especially with regard to digitalisation), active health management, an age-related gratification system and age-mixed work groups.

Demographic change in Germany is not only shifting the age structure of the total population. It is also influencing the age structure of the current 53.5 million working-age working-age population between 15 and 64 years of age - and thus the age structure of the 33.7 million employees subject to social insurance contributions.

Even today, the older age cohorts are much more heavily populated than the younger ones. In 2020, for example, there were in the age group between 50 and 59, i.e. those born between 1961 and 1970, there will be 13.3 million people of working age and 9.1 million people in employment. Among the 20 to 29 age group, i.e. the birth cohorts from 1991 to 2000, there were 9.5 million people or 6.0 million people in employment.

2. **What is the employment rate of older workers in particular industries and which industry has the biggest labour shortage?**

Please also provide comparative data in relation to the last 10 years.

An important indicator of the need for skilled workers in the various occupational groups is the number of vacancies. The following graph roughly shows the number of vacancies (i.e. the jobs offered by the companies/organisations) for qualified skilled workers.

Professional groups with the most job offers on the first labour market in Germany (March 2023); Source: Federal Employment Agency, @Statista 2023	
Transport/ Logistics	63.000
Sales professions	55.000
Medical health professions	51.000
Mechatronics, energy and electrical professions	51.000
Machine and vehicle technology professions	49.000
Metal production, processing, metal construction	46.000
Professions in business management and organisation	43.000
Driving of vehicles and transport equipment	39.000
Education and social professions	37.000
Tourism, hotel and restaurant professions	29.000

In Germany, the age structure has changed significantly in recent years in many areas where there is a shortage of skilled workers. For example, almost a quarter (24%) of the workforce in scientific and technical STEM professions, almost a quarter (24%) were aged 55 or older in 2021.

In 2012, the figure was still 17%. A similar picture emerges in nursing: here the share of the 55-plus age group rose from 15% to 23% within ten years. In the mechatronics, energy and electrical occupations, the proportion of older employees rose from 17% to 22%.

Three professional groups are currently most in demand in Germany:

1. technical trades: electrical installation, metalworking, plastics engineering, pipeline construction, welding technology, mechanical engineering.

2. academic professions: medical personnel, mechanical engineering and vehicle construction, IT professions in software development.

3. nursing professions and care of elderly people

The proportion of older employees (55-65-year-olds) across all sectors, at 22%, is largely in line with the distribution across all age groups.

However, if one looks at the individual sectors, there are below-average proportions, especially in the "Information and communication" (15 %), in the "hotel and restaurant industry" (17 %) as well as in the "qualified business services" (18 %) and in the "skilled trades" (17 %); business services" (18 %) and "other services" (18 %).

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There is an above-average representation of older people in "Public administration" (29 %), "Private households" (40 %), and "Other services" (18 %); "mining and energy" (31 %), and "(waste) water" (28 %).

Older employees subject to social security contributions by economic sector (2021); in %	
Agriculture/Forestry/Fisheries	28
Energy supply	26
Trade	20
Information/communication	15
Other U-services	21
Health	22
Private households	40
Mining	31
Water/Waste	28
Transport, storage	22
Finance/Insurance	23
Public administration	29
Arts/Entertainment	21
Extra-territorial organisations/corporations	40
Manufacturing industry	24
Construction	20
Hotels and restaurants	17
Qualified U services	18
Education	22
Other services	25

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However, in the last ten years, there have been significant increases in the number of older people in all sectors of the economy.

The strongest increases were recorded in the fields of "Information and communications", "health and social work" and "skilled business services". In these sectors, the number of employed 55 to under 65-year-olds has more than doubled in each of the last ten years.

With regard to the distribution of older people (55-65-year olds) among occupations, activities in the field of "management and organisation" are at the top with 14 %. These include employees in the largely female-dominated secretarial occupations and occupations in personnel processing, which is reflected in a share of women of almost two-thirds.

In addition to the "medical health professions" with a share of almost 7 %, "transport professions", "sales occupations" and "education and home economics occupations", each with 6 % also have a high priority among older people. With the exception of “transport and logistics occupations”, where the proportion of women is just under one-third. these occupations are predominantly carried out by women, with shares of 80 % and more.

3. **Is there any promotion of counseling services, programs or projects related to employment of senior workers adapted in various entities in your country *(national/regional/local level)?***

   Please provide the following information:

   - ✓ Name of counselling services/programmes/projects
   - ✓ Leading institution
   - ✓ Short description
   - ✓ National/regional/local level

Keeping older workers in employment or reintegrating them into the labour market are essential tasks, especially of active labour market policy. Mandl et al. (2018) presented a comparative study for the EU.

Instruments for the (re)integration of older workers into the labour market

(cf. Mandl et al. 2018, p. 30)

Prevent unemployment:

Focus on workers

- Making early retirement less attractive
- Take care of physical and mental health
- Skills development
- Career guidance

Focus on employers

- Safeguarding employment
- Promote flexible forms of work
- Financial support for vocational training
- Promoting the recognition of informally acquired skills

Tackle unemployment:

Focus on workers

- Consider physical and mental health
- Skills development
- Promoting geographical mobility
- Employment subsidies
- Career guidance
- Placement of workers in suitable jobs
- Outplacement services
- Public employment programmes
- Promotion of independence

Focus on employers

- Combating stereotypes and age discrimination
- Placement in suitable jobs
- Employment subsidies
- Employment promotion
- Support for social entrepreneurship

It was also found that overall policies and strategies in the EU countries tend to be anticipatory in their approach to prolonging employment. In contrast, operational instruments are more focused on measures for the older unemployed, and only one third on prevention.

Counselling and placement services for older jobseekers are usually provided by Public Employment Services (PES). Individual action plans based on profiling, career counselling and job search methods are prioritised.

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However, the diverse activities do not all have the same effectiveness. The following list shows the success of the various measures (Mandl et al. 2018, p. 48):

Positive effects

- Measures against ageism and stereotyping; however, a long-term approach to real cultural change is needed.
- Reduction of the work phase in the last phase of employment to sustainably secure working life in certain occupations (for example: occupations with high physical strain or health hazards).
- Early intervention and individual case management to address health problems.
- Longer-term learning in the workplace.
- Reduce incentives for older workers to retire earlier or remain in unemployment.
- Regular intensive individual counselling for older workers with holistic counselling approaches (profiling, identification of training needs and placement support).
- Networking and exchange of experience between older workers.
- Comprehensive support packages for practical experience and theoretical training units, for employment promotion and counselling (including networking).
- Timely intervention, if possible, from the first report of employment problems.
- Rather ambivalent effects
- Dismissal rules for older workers may well cause problems for the new recruitment of unemployed older workers.
- Subsidised work for older people can also have negative signalling effects.
- State support programmes have positive short-term integration effects on the labour market, but do not seem to offer sustainable solutions.
- Legally prescribed job search activities have some positive effects for the labour market integration of older unemployed people, but after some time alternative forms of dismissal form out of this.

Clearly negative effects

- Isolated training measures, especially in the form of short-term theoretical training for low-skilled older unemployed.

- General guidance that is not oriented towards the specific situation of older workers.

Interesting here are the views of companies in Germany regarding the special conditions for hiring people aged 50 and over (Czepek, Moczall 2017). Among the reasons for hiring, "special knowledge and skills" are by far in first place, followed by "only without or with only minor health restrictions". This is followed at a distance by "not after a long period of unemployment", "only with wage cost subsidies".

From the point of view of the companies, sensible measures to improve the employment opportunities of people aged 50 and over are above all

1. Wage subsidies to employers upon recruitment
2. State subsidies for further education
3. Flexible retirement (paid by the state)
4. Performance-related pay
5. Flexible retirement (paid by the employer)
6. Relaxation of the protection against dismissal
7. Wage subsidies to employers on a permanent basis
8. Employer gives working time for further training
9. Occupational health management
10. Further training measures (paid by the employer)

On the positive side, concessions in terms of wages hardly play a role for companies when recruiting new employees.

Overall, the companies report that they are mostly satisfied with the newly hired older workers. However, it cannot be overlooked that the recommendations for sensible measures to improve the employment opportunities of older workers focus on financial benefits from the state.

But when it comes to actually hiring workers aged 50 and over, work experience and willingness to work part-time play a significant role.

Another study in Germany shows how job placement specialists in the public employment service (Federal Employment Agency / BA) assess the opportunities for vocational integration of older people (Homrighausen, Wolf 2018).

According to the survey, almost all employment agencies believe that older people have specific barriers that make new employment difficult. These include

1. Health restrictions
2. Too little or outdated computer skills
3. Various reservations among the companies towards older people
4. Limited geographical mobility (especially for women)
5. Restrictions due to family commitments (especially for women)
6. Excessive wage claims
7. Too little knowledge of foreign languages
8. Limited motivation for education
9. Outdated or lack of formal professional qualifications.

The facilitators see the following as important instruments for effective support

- Intensive personal counselling
- Financial support for companies in the integration of older people
- Advice for companies on the topic of older workers

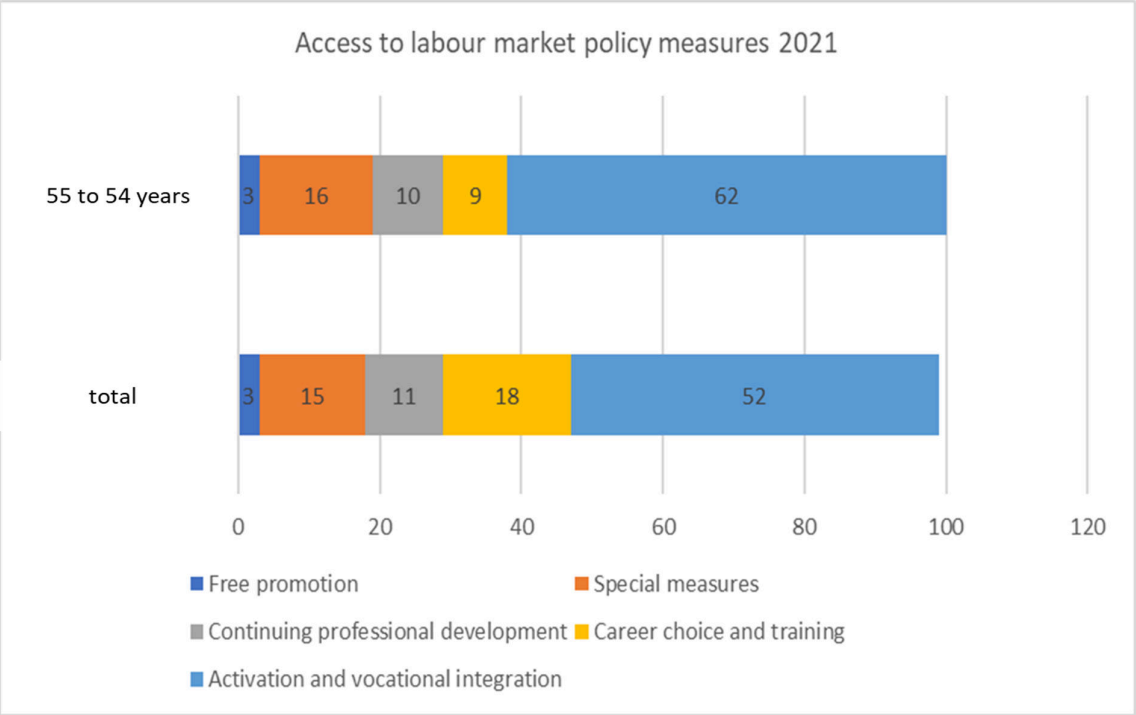
It is also recommended - at least for those over 55 - that wage subsidies be paid directly to the companies.

Older people in active labour market policy measures

In the last years before the Corona pandemic, about 400,000 people aged 55 to under 65 started labour market measures each year. As a result of the measures to contain the Corona pandemic, their number fell by about one third to 265,000 in 2020. As in previous years, the decline in the number of older people entering measures was about the same as the change in the number of people entering measures overall. In 2021, slightly more older people entered measures than in the previous year; a decline was still recorded across all age groups - albeit to a much lesser extent than in the previous year. The share of older people in all entries into labour market policy measures has levelled off at around 10 per cent. Measured against their share of all unemployed (over 20 per cent), however, older people are clearly

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underrepresented in participation in support measures.



In the course of the last few years, there have only been minor changes in the use of the various instruments. The importance of measures for activation and occupational integration has decreased: in 2021, 62 percent of older people entering measures had this goal; in the years 2012 to 2016, it was still over 71 percent. In contrast, the relative importance of continuing vocational education and training has increased; the share of entries into corresponding measures has risen by more than five percentage points to nine percent in the last ten years. One of the reasons is an increased share of employee qualification after the Qualification Opportunities Act came into force in January 2019. Although the share among older people is still below that across all participants, the gap has narrowed. With the Participation Opportunities Act, the share of employment-creating measures has also risen significantly again and stood at 16 per cent, after having fallen to 12 per cent in the meantime.

If one compares the use of support instruments for older people with the access to measures across all age groups, noticeable differences become apparent. Naturally, older people are practically not represented in measures for career choice and vocational training. On the other hand, their share of persons who receive support through an employment-creating measure or through activation and vocational integration is above average.

The activation rate puts the number of participants in measures in relation to the number of unemployed and thus makes a statement about the extent to which groups of people who could potentially have participated in a labour market policy measure were activated and

actually benefited from support. Across all age groups, the number of participants in measures declined more strongly than unemployment until 2013, so that the activation rate fell. In the group of 55 to under 65-year-olds, where the activation rate is lower anyway, falling numbers of participants in measures were offset by rising absolute numbers of unemployed until 2013, so that the activation rate also fell continuously. From 2011 to 2015, it almost halved to 11 per cent. Since then, there has been an increase in activation rates across all age groups as well as in the 55 to under 65 age group. However, this trend was stopped due to Corona: on the one hand, measures could not take place to the usual extent due to the containment measures, on the other hand, the number of unemployed has increased significantly.

The most important programmes to promote older people in the labour market are briefly characterised below. The Federal Employment Agency (Bundesagentur für Arbeit) is responsible for implementation at national and regional level.

Integration subsidies for employers

Objectives:

Support measure designed to make it more attractive to hire older workers, among other things. The programme was introduced on 1 May 2007. Support is given to workers who are having a hard time on the labour market.

Contents:

Employers who take on an employee can receive a subsidy from the Federal Employment Agency towards the employee's wages. The integration allowance can be up to 50 % of the salary to be considered. The integration subsidy is paid for a maximum of twelve months and up to 50 % of the salary. For employees who have already reached the age of 50, there are extended support options. These can be subsidised for up to 36 months at a rate of up to 50 % of pay. This is intended to compensate for the underperformance of the recruited employee.

Federal law: Participation Chances Law 2019

Objectives:

Support for employers: re-integration of elderly unemployed people.

Contents:

Two target groups:

- Persons who have been unemployed for two years and longer; employer receives around 1,350 euros per month per person (max. for 2 years)

- Persons who have been unemployed for at least 6 years within the last 7 years ("social labour market"); employer receives about 1,750 euros per month per person (max. for 5 years)

The employees receive accompanying coaching. Priority is given to the following jobs: Building services, social and domestic work, office work, horticulture, trade and sales, transport/logistics.

Success: Employers are very satisfied with these instruments. The employment agency describes this instrument as very effective for the re-integration of older unemployed people into the labour market.

The condition for the integration subsidy is the obligation to be kept in employment. This means that employees must be regularly employed by the employer for at least as long as the employer has received the integration subsidy. Unemployed persons over 50 can only be supported through the integration subsidy if they have been unemployed for at least six months and have received unemployment benefit or Arbeitslosengeld II.

Promotion of further vocational training

Objectives:

Improve placement opportunities for unemployed people. The funding is independent of age and is thus also available to people over 50.

Contents:

Application to the employment agency or job centre. If the further training is approved, various costs can be assumed, including course costs, travel costs, childcare and costs for any necessary accommodation outside the home. Since 1 August 2016, there has also been a financial motivation to successfully participate in CET: the CET bonus (1,000-1,500 euros). Conditions: CET must last at least two years and be completed in a certified vocational training field.

The Employment Agency decides individually for each case if CET will be financed. It considers the applicant's skills, work history and personal requirements such as suitability and mobility. Other crucial factors are the capacity of the regional labour market and the willingness for mobility.

Programme WeGebAU

Objectives:

Promotion of continuing vocational training for low-skilled and older workers in companies to counteract the shortage of skilled workers and to strengthen existing labour relations. The

prerequisite for funding is in any case an existing employment relationship that will continue for the duration of the measure.

Contents:

The measure in each case must be longer than four weeks and be carried out by a certified external organisation. Employees who are older than 45 and have neither a vocational school degree nor a university degree or similar are particularly welcome to apply for support.

Funding level: For employees who have reached the age of 45, the employment agencies pay up to 75% of the course costs. The remaining costs are borne by the company and/or the employee.

Employees receive an education voucher for the support. This allows them to choose from authorised further training programmes.

Further offers from the Federal Employment Agency

Further training "digital driving licence"

Especially by on-site instruction at the unemployed person's home and provision of hardware (tablet), entry into the digital world for older people. Financed as FbW, work remotely from home and partly at the training provider. Duration: 4 weeks

Measures to activate elderly workers at a training institution

In addition to labour market information and orientation, health topics and resilience. A homogeneous group of 50+ with very interactive cooperation. Duration: 4-8 weeks, but not offered this year (Corona).

Integration of people with disabilities

Introduction to the labour market, workshop character. Participants: often elderly workers, duration 4 weeks with 1-2 training days per week.

Further workshops for elderly people

Holistic integration, counselling to teach skills (digitalisation, networking)

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Annex 4

Poland Desk Research

Findings from the desk research

1. **What 's the situation of senior workers on the labour market in your country?**

Describe the most relevant situations in your country (e.g. percentage of people 50 + employed and unemployed). Please also provide comparative data in relation to the last 10 years.

Discussion on the situation of 50+ employees on the Polish labour market, it is worth starting from the issue of generational replacement, which has not been present in Poland for many years., The fertility rate should be 2.1 - 2.15, which means that per 100 women aged 15-49 there should be an average of 210-215 children. In Poland, this ratio has been successively decreasing for almost 30 years, noting single increases over the years. In 2021, it was 1.33, which is the lowest value in the last few years. (GUS 2022)

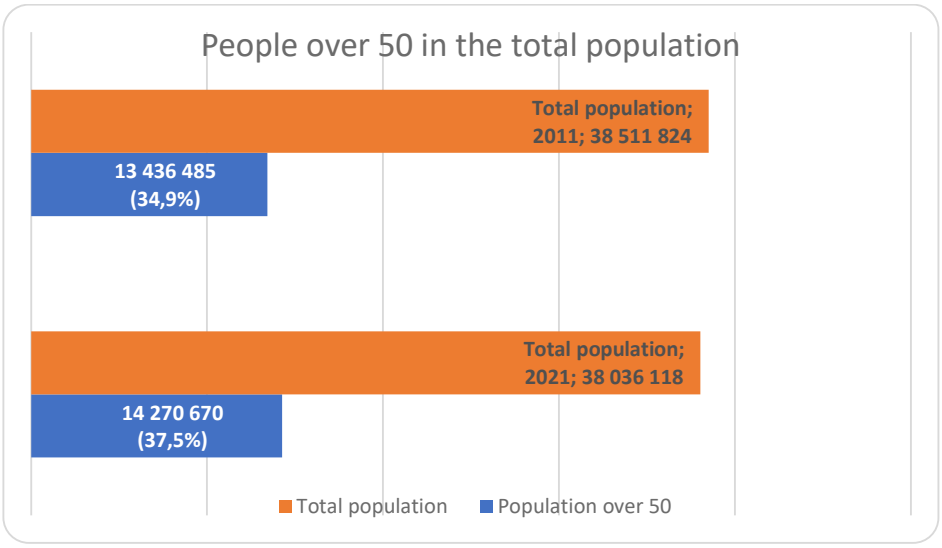
Decrease of the fertility rate has a significant impact on the population structure, diversity and size of labour resources in the country. In Poland, the aging process of the society is currently intensifying. As indicated by statistical data, over the last 10 years there has been an increase in the number and share of elderly people in the population of Poland. At the end of 2021, the number of people aged 50 and over amounted to over 14.2 million, which constituted 37.5% of the total population. (GUS 2022)

These tendencies are confirmed by the results of the National Population and Housing Census from 2021, according to which the population of Poland in 2021 amounted to 38 036 118 people and decreased by 475 700 (0.9%) compared to 2011. It included the number of women by 187 800 (0.9%), and men by 144 400 (0.8%). Moreover, in the years 2011-2021, the percentage of the working-age population decreased from 64.4% to 60%. The share of post-working age people increased from 16.9% in 2011 to 22.3% in 2021, which means that in the last 10 years there have been almost 2 million people aged 60-65 and more, and thus every 5th Polish citizen is over 60 years old. (GUS 2022)

Prognosis for the upcoming years, carried out by the Central Statistical Office in 2014, shows that in 2050 the population of Poland will decrease by 4.55 million, it is a 12% compared to 2013 and will amount less than 34 million. Further unfavourable changes in the age structure will be observed, together with a reduction in the number of women of childbearing age. It is estimated that in 2050 people aged 65+ will constitute almost 1/3 of the population, and their

number will increase by 5.4 million compared to 2013. In turn, women of childbearing age in 2050 will account for only 62% of the 2013 figure.

Figure 1 (People over 50 in the total population): bdl.stat.gov.pl

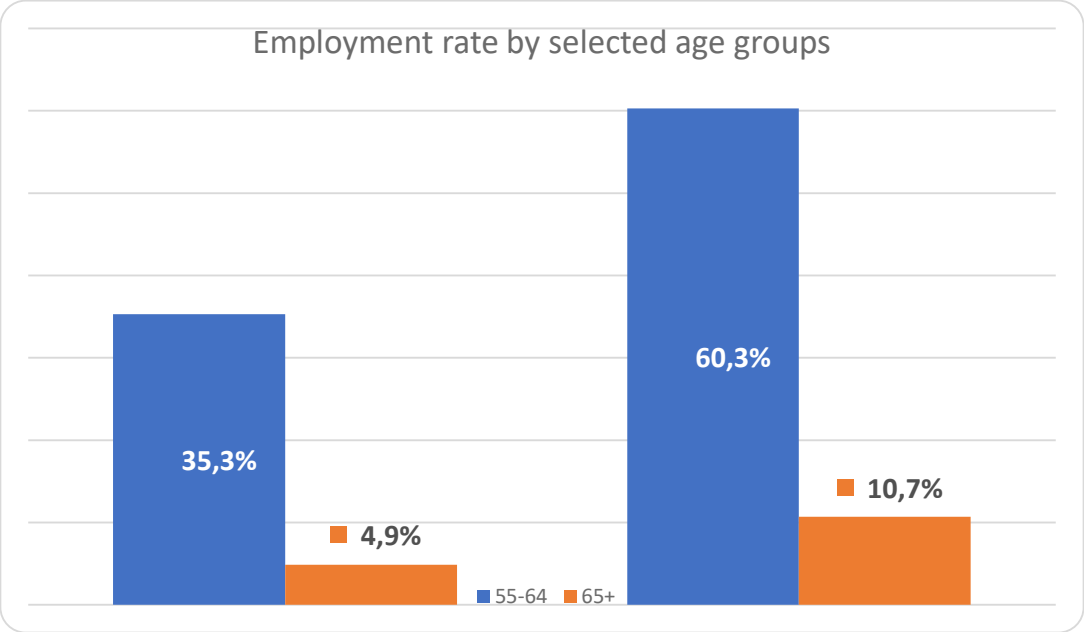


When it comes to employing people over 50, according to research by the Safe at Work Coalition, employers willingly employ people 50+ and currently age is not a factor determining the employment of workers . More important than the age are the competencies that the candidate has for the job and the ability to cope with the tasks entrusted to him as part of his duties. (Safe at Work Coalition 2022)

The opinion of employees over 50 years about working at a later age is divided. Above mentioned research shows that 39% of people over 50 want to work after retirement. However, almost as many people - 38% - still have not made a decision on this issue. Barriers related to remaining in the labour market, which are indicated by people aged 50+, include: the negative impact of work on health, which is mentioned by every third respondent. Among the respondents, 23% of the them declared that they had no plans to take up work after retirement. These people were asked about factors that could influence their willingness to work after reaching retirement age, they indicated high salary (32%), the possibility of part-time work (30%), and a less stressful (18%) or less physically demanding job (15%). Considering the above-mentioned issues, it is worth noting that one of the possible solutions to the approaching demographic crisis, and thus to the problem of staff shortage, is the need to provide people aged 50+ with healthy and safe working conditions, as well as a more flexible approach to their employment. (Safe at Work Coalition 2022)

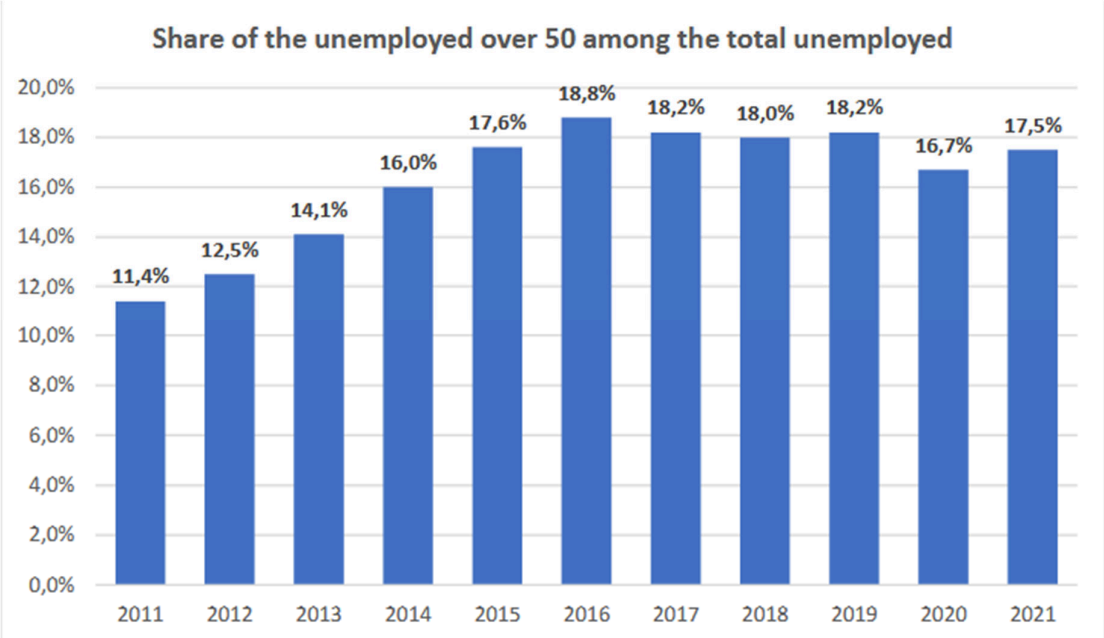
Figure 2 (Employment rate by selected age groups): bdl.stat.gov.pl

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The chart above shows the employment rate of people aged 55-64 and 65+ in percentage terms. As we can see in the years 2011-2021, this percentage increased both among people 55+ and 65+.

Figure 3 (Share of the unemployed over 50 among the total unemployed): bdl.stat.gov.pl



When it come to the number of unemployed people among people aged 50+ in Poland, in 2011 there were 1,982,676 registered unemployed, including 225,995 people over 50 years old (11.4%). In 2021 812,301 people were registered, including 140,547 people 50+ (17.5%). As can be seen in the chart above, the number of unemployed people aged 50+ has been

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constantly growing since 2011 and reached the highest value in 2016, then started to decrease slightly until 2020, when it reached the lowest value, which may be related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. **What is the employment rate of older workers in particular industries and which industry has the biggest labour shortage?**

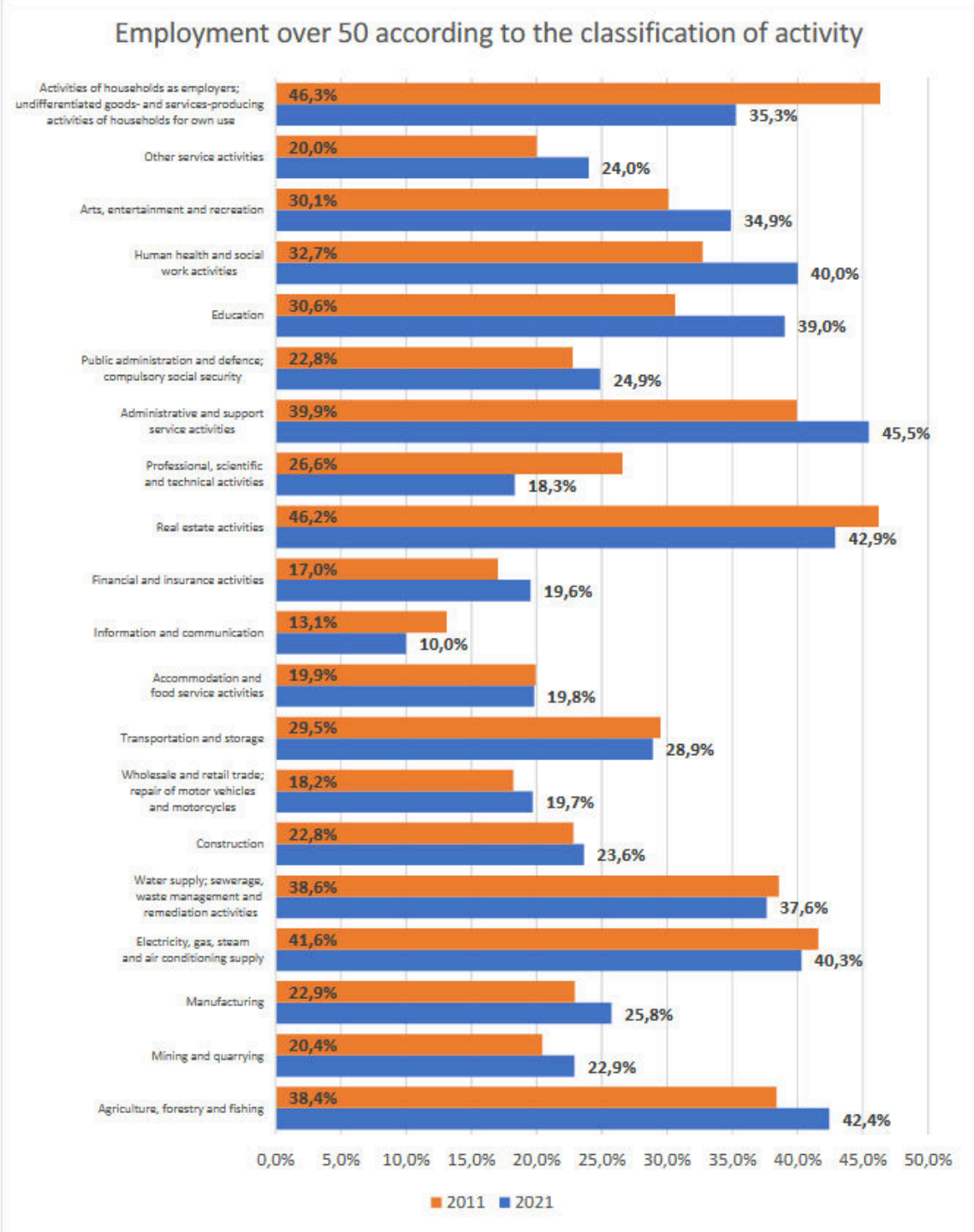
Please also provide comparative data in relation to the last 10 years.

As for the share of employees aged 50+ in individual industries in Poland, according to the chart presented below, the largest number of them work in Administrative and Support Service activities (45.5%), real estate activities (42.9%) and agriculture, forestry and fishing (42.4%). A large percentage of people over 50 years old is working in electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply (40.3%) and in human health and social work activities (40.0%). The fewest people aged 50+ work in the information and communication industry (10%).

Comparing employment in individual industries over a 10-year scale, it can be observed that since 2011, the employment of people over 50 years old has significantly decreased in activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use. On the other hand, employment in the education, medical and social work sectors as well as in the service sector and administration increased.

Figure 4 (Employment over 50 according to the classification of activity): https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/LFSA_EGAN2__custom_6126497/default/table?lang=en

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In Poland, there are labour shortages in many sectors, mainly in the construction, education, transport, catering and medical industries. Currently, there is a shortage of construction workers and all specialist workers in the construction industry, such as roofers and sheet metal workers in building trades, construction joiners and carpenters, bricklayers and

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plasterers, construction installation assemblers, finishing work technologists in building trades. The medical industry lacks mainly doctors, nurses and midwives, paramedics and social work professionals caring for the elderly and disabled. There are also shortages of teachers of practical vocational training and teachers of general subjects. Bus and truck drivers are in great demand in transport sector. There is also a shortage of cooks in the food services. These are just some of the occupations and industries where there is a shortage. The full list you can see in the graphic below.

Figure 5 (Shortage of job seekers): https://barometrzawodow.pl/modul/prognozy-na-plakatach?publication=national&year=2023&form-group%5B%5D=all



3. **Is there any promotion of counseling services, programs or projects related to employment of senior workers adapted in various entities in your country *(national/regional/local level)?***

Please provide the following information:

- ✓ Name of counselling services/programmes/projects
- ✓ Leading institution
- ✓ Short description
- ✓ National/regional/local level

In Poland, we can distinguish several law regulations, services and tools, as well as projects and programs addressed to people aged 50+. Among them we will find the solutions guaranteed by Polish law, as well as projects or programs implemented by companies, public institutions, foundations or universities.

System solutions

Employee pre-retirement protection

A provision has been introduced in the Polish Labour Code according to which the employer may not terminate the employment contract of an employee who is short of no more than 4 years until retirement age. In Poland, the retirement age for women is 60 and for men 65. Which means women aged 56 and men aged 61 who work under an employment contract are protected against dismissal. In addition, the employee must be employed for an indefinite period. During the period of such protection, the employer cannot terminate the employment contract or reduce the employee's salary. If an employee works in several companies, he is covered by protection in each of them. (https://zielonalinia.gov.pl/-/ochrona-przedemerytalna-pracownika)

Salary subsidy for people aged 50+

The Act on the Promotion of Employment and Labour Market Institutions contain a provision in accordance with the employer may obtain support in co-financing of salary costs case of employing an unemployed person aged 50+. The condition for receiving the subsidy is submitting an application in Labour office, and after its positive processing, employment of an unemployed person over 50 years old directed by the Labour office. The co-financing is granted for the period of:

• 12 months – when employing an unemployed person between 50-60 years old

• 24 months – when employing an unemployed person over 60 years old

After the end of the co-financing period, the employer is obliged to continue employing the employee for the period of:

• 6 months - if he received funding for 12 months

• 12 months - if he received funding for 24 months
(https://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20230000735)

Incentive benefits for uniformed services

In 2023, a new special incentive benefit for uniformed services was introduced. This solution has been made to convince workers and experienced specialists to stay in service and not to retire before the age of 50 (currently, the average age of retiring policeman is 47). All officers with 15 years of service are entitled to it and it will start at 5% and it grew an additional 1% each year to reach 15% after 25 years of service. After reaching the 25th year of service, the new benefit will remain at 15%. It will be an additional allowance to already implemented benefit in the amount of 1500 PLN after 25 years of service and 2500 PLN 28.5 years of service. (https://www.infor.pl/prawo/sluzby-mundurowe/policja/5622436,swiadczenie-motywacyjne-za-dlugoletnia-sluzbe-funkcjonariusz-2023.html)

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Examples of initiatives, programs and projects undertaken by companies and enterprises

IKEA and the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

IKEA has been implementing the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy since 2020, paying attention to the values of age diversity for business and society, with particular emphasis on people over 50 on the labour market. The company encourages to recognize the talents and potential of experienced people and provide them with equal opportunities in access to professional development. IKEA wants to promote intergenerational cooperation and support people aged 50+. (https://www.dlahandlu.pl/nonfood/starsi-pracownicy-chetnie-widziani-w-sieci-ikea,98181.html)

The "I can do IT" project at Bank BNP Paribas

The project is a development initiative for full-time employees of Bank BNP Paribas over 50 years old. It is available to people employed in Operations, Sales Network and Technology departments. The mission of the project is to support diversity in the organization - by providing access to a new path of development for people who on a daily basis can boast of professional and life experience. (https://www.bnpparibas.pl/blog/wiek-w-pracy-szansa-czy-bariera-projekt-i-can-do-it-w-banku-bnp-paribas)

Randstad Polska and the Job 50+ Program

Randstad Polska is an employment agency providing temporary work and personnel consulting services. Work 50+ is a program created by the company, which aims to support employees from the 50+ age group in developing their professional potential on the labour market. It is addressed to employers interested in hiring employees in this age group. The project emphasizes that a team of people over 50 has many advantages, including the possibility of intergenerational exchange of knowledge and experience. As part of the program, a free webinar was created in which workers of the company talk about the opportunities and challenges of employing people aged 50+ from a legal and business perspective. (https://www.randstad.pl/praca-50-znajdz-potencjal-w-dojrzalosci/)

Cemex and the Initiative for Employees 50+

The company established the 50+ Club for CEMEX employees over 50 years old. As part of the development and integration programs, regular initiatives are organized to support the

participants of the 50+ Club, promoting their activity and commitment to work. (https://www.cemex.pl/jak-pracuje-sie-w-cemex-ie.aspx)

Examples of initiatives, programs and projects undertaken by public institutions and foundations

Project: "In spite of the birth certificate - people aged 50+ and seniors on the labour market"

The project was implemented by the WSB Academy in Dąbrowa Górnicza (university), his idea was born in the environment of seniors of the University of the Third Age, which was resulted of the need of people aged 50+ to be professionally and socially active. The aim of the project was to support seniors on the labour market. As part of it, support tools were created, such as an online website with job offers and professional career guidance for seniors and a guide for seniors and employers on the possibility of employing people aged 50+. In addition, the project included many activities such as training, courses and workshops to improve qualifications, as well as events such as the conference "Senior at work. The power of the silver generation" and the Senior Job and Volunteer Fair. (https://wsb.edu.pl/senior-w-pracy/o-projekcie)

Research project "Work 60 plus"

The idea of the project is international and was created as a result of cooperation between several institutions. Besides the Social Insurance Institution, which acts as a content partner, the Labour Institute and Social Affairs and the Bialystok Foundation for Personnel Training, it is supported by the European Union University of Applied Works and the Employment Service of Lithuania. At the moment the aim of the project is to support employers in maintaining the employment of people aged 60+ through, among others, adapting the working environment to such people.

(https://www.dziennikprawny.pl/pl/a/zatrudniasz-osobe-60-zus-ma-dla-ciebie-propozycje)

A pilot project of the Labour Office of the Capital City of Warsaw "A good employee has no age", financed by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy

The aim of the pilot "A good employee has no age" was to increase the chances of retirees on the labour market by providing new financial instruments to support the employment of this group and changing the stereotypical perception of "working seniors" as low-value employees. The testing of the support system for people at retirement age concerned both the acquisition of seniors willing to work and the development of a system of financial incentives for employers employing retirees. (https://warszawa.praca.gov.pl/dobrypracownik)

Annex 5

Slovenia Desk Research

Findings from the desk research

1. **What ‘s the situation of senior workers on the labour market in your country?**

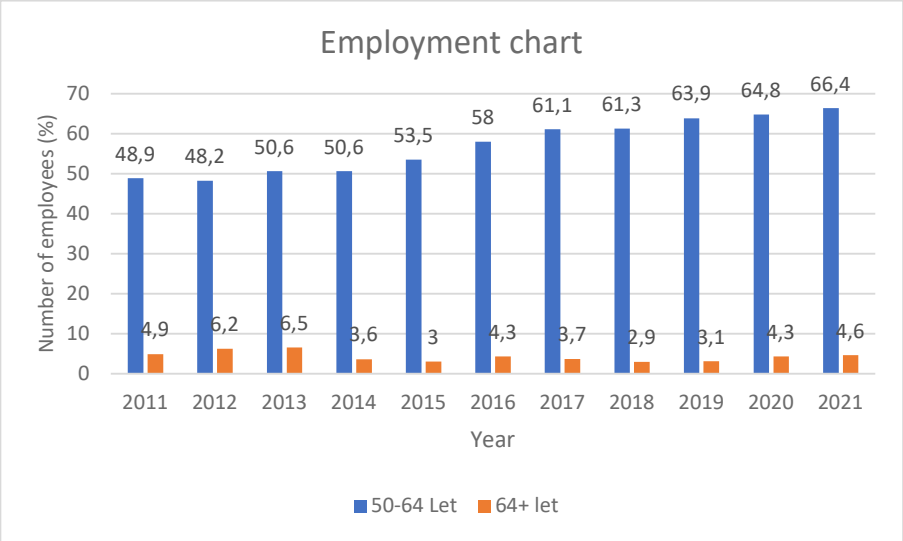
Describe the most relevant situations in your country (e.g. percentage of people 50 + employed and unemployed). Please also provide comparative data in relation to the last 10 years.

According to a research of United Nations, Slovenia is one of the ten countries with the highest average age of population. As of now, every fifth person in Slovenia is over the average age of 65. If this trend continuous the percentage of people that are over the age of 65 will reach 25% by the year 2030 and if we take a look at the year 2050 every third person will be over 65 years old. As we already mentioned in recent years the average age of Slovenian citizens has been rapidly increasing for an example in 2012 the average age was 42 years old (SURS, 2013). Last reliable measured data tells us, that the average age in 2022 was 43.9 years (SURS, 2023).

The rise of average age of citizens in Slovenia over the years has a strong effect onto the labour market. Because of that senior workers also suffer some consequences. Almost a third of the population in Slovenia is retired with 630.063 out of 2.217.000 citizens (Zavod za invalidsko in pokojninsko zavarovanje Slovenije, 2022). Consequently, more and more senior workers need to be employed or work longer, as the years of work increase and the pension is reduced. In Slovenia a Senior worker is determined by law which means that a senior worker is someone aged 55 or over. Employers are also aware that they need to provide more benefits for the senior workers (Additional days on their annual leave, they can work part-time and they can’t work over time or at night, except if they sign an agreement) (Data d.o.o., 2022).

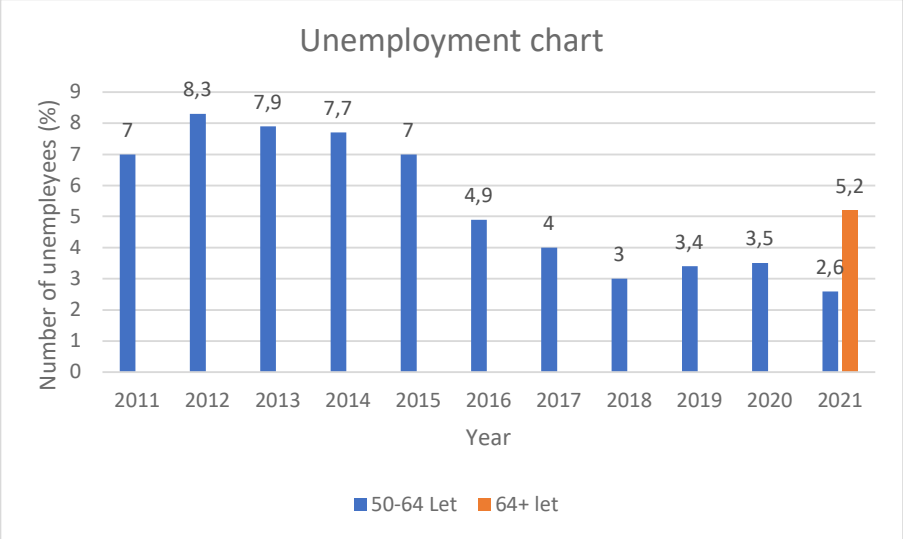
Figure 1 (Employment chart): https://pxweb.stat.si/SiStatData/pxweb/sl/Data/-/0762003S.px/table/tableViewLayout2/:

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The graph with the name Employment chart indicates, the number of employees aged 50+ has been increasing annually since 2011. We have obtained data on older employees aged 50-64 and 64+. The number of employees aged between 50 and 64 has been increasing in recent years. While the number of employees aged 64+ has remained roughly the same throughout the year, with minor variations.

Figure 2 (Unemplayoment chart): https://pxweb.stat.si/SiStatData/pxweb/sl/Data/-/0762003S.px/table/tableViewLayout2/;



As mentioned above, the number of people aged 50+ in employment in Slovenia is increasing. The Graph with the name Unemployment chart shows the percentage of unemployed citizens from 50 to 64 years has been decreasing over the years (if we exclude the years when COVID-19 was present). For the people that are 64 years and older there were no older data found except for 2021.

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2. **What is the employment rate of older workers in particular industries and which industry has the biggest labour shortage?**

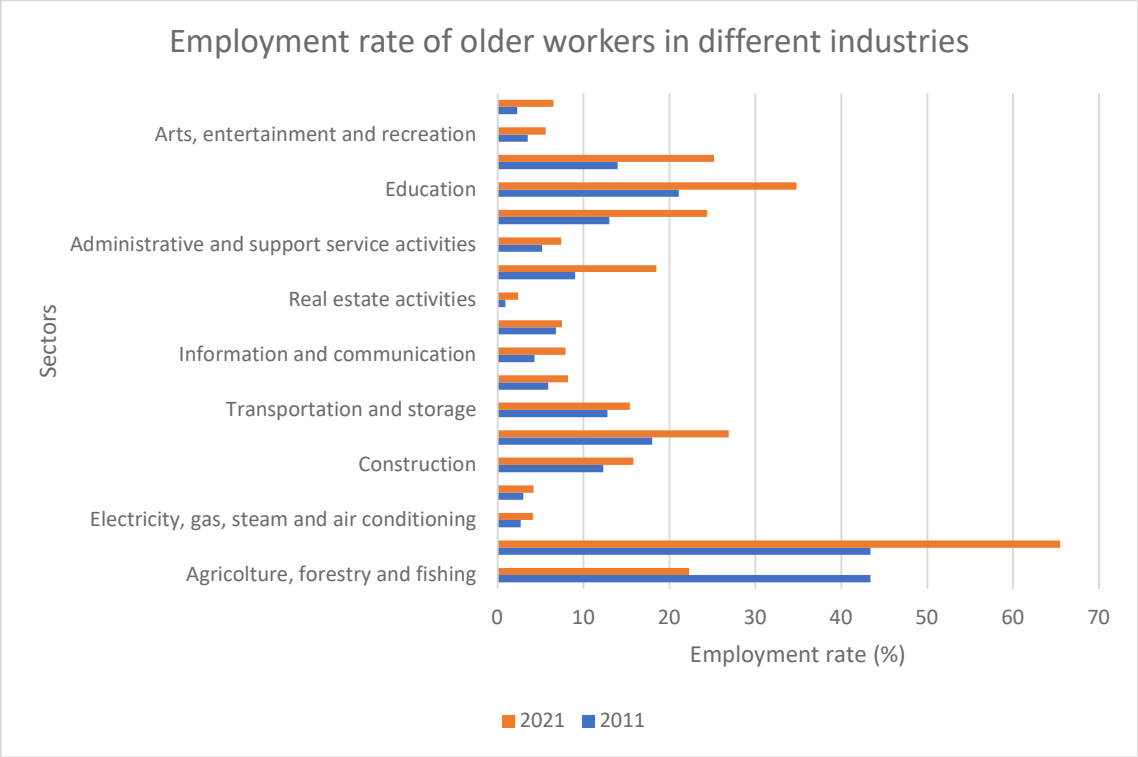
Please also provide comparative data in relation to the last 10 years.

As a result of rising employment rates in the older working age group (50+), we can notice many changes in employment growth in certain industries in Slovenia. One of the most popular industries for older workers is manufacturing, where they make up 65.5 workers per 1 000 people. After that we have education with 34.8 workers per 1 000 people, wholesale trade and repair of motor vehicles with 26.9, human health and social work activities with 25.2 workers per 1 000 people, public administration and defence; compulsory social security with 24.4 of the workers per 1 000 people. These are the industries with the oldest workers in Slovenia.

In the Food Services industry, older workers account for 8.2 workers per 1 000 people, in Information and Communication activities they account for 7.9 workers per 1000 people, in the sector of Financial and Insurance activities they account for 7.5 workers per 1000 people, in Administrative and Support activities older workers account for 7.4 workers per 1000 people, In the Other Services activities industry, older workers account for 6.5 workers per 1000 people, For the industry of Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, we have found that older workers account for 5.6 workers per thousand people. In the Other Services activities industry, the older workers account for 6.5 workers per 1000 people, and for the Entertainment and Recreation activities industry, we have found that they account for 5.6 workers per 1 000 people.

Water Supply, Sewerage, Waste Management and Sanitation is an industry that has a very small older workforce of 4.2 workers per 1000 people. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply has an occupancy rate of 4,1 workers per 1000 people, and the industry with the smallest percentage of older workers is real estate activities, with only 2,4 workers out of a thousand people.

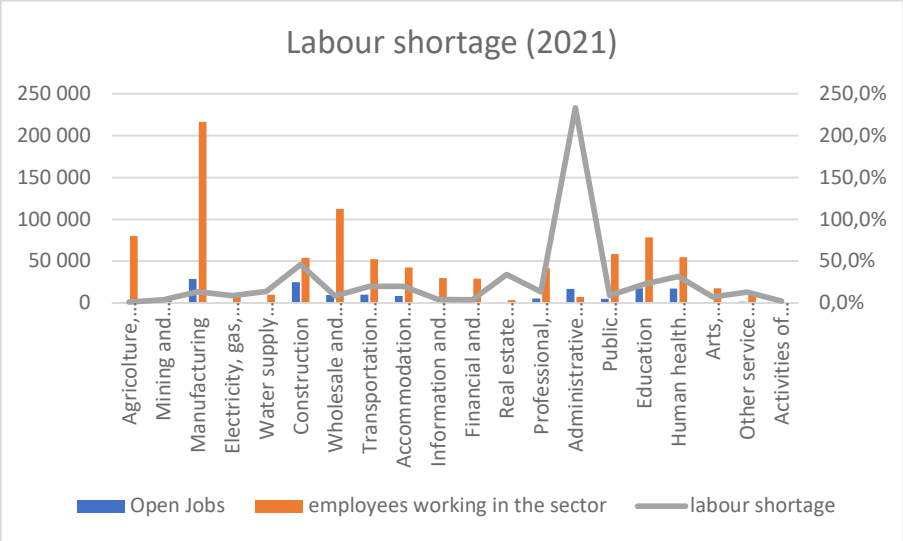
Figure 3 (Emplayment rate of older workers in different industries) : https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/LFSA_EGAN2__custom_5883007/default/table?lang=en



Each piece of information is also presented in the graph with the name Employment rate of older workers in different industries. For each industry, we looked at data for the year 2021 and the year 2011. In the course of our research, we found that the employment rate of older workers in each industry has been increasing over the years. The only industry that has lost % of older workers in recent years is Agriculture, forestry and fishing.

Figure 4 (Labour shortage): https://www.ess.gov.si/partnerji/trg-dela/trg-dela-v-stevilkah/ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/LFSA_EGAN2__custom_5883050/default/table?lang=en

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Slovenia faces labour shortages in several different sectors. While there is no precise statistical information on which sectors are experiencing labour shortages available to the public, we have concluded through our research on the most and least occupied sectors and job vacancies that the largest labour shortages in Slovenia are in the Administrative and support service activities sector with 233,3% more open jobs than there are workers.

3. **Is there any promotion of counseling services, programs or projects related to employment of senior workers adapted in various entities in your country *(national/regional/local level)?***

   Please provide the following information:

   - ✓ Name of counselling services/programmes/projects
   - ✓ Leading institution
   - ✓ Short description
   - ✓ National/regional/local level

In Slovenia we have several different counselling services/programmes/projects. The most common or recent ones are:

- SeniorDela

- Simbioza

- Optius

- Celovita podpora podjetjem za aktivno staranje prebivalstva (ASI)

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- Zavod za zaposlovanje

SeniorDela is a platform or website that is well known for finding jobs for older people. With its slogan "The first point of contact between older people who want to keep working and companies and individuals who need reliable and experienced workers", it provides older workers with the opportunity to find the most suitable jobs and encourages employers to increase their recruitment of older people. They offer nearly 50 different jobs in different fields across Slovenia. Their leading institution is Mitja Pajek s.p. (https://seniordela.si/)

Simbioza offers a wide range of group and individual types of non-formal education. It supports older people in using new emerging technologies and guides them into the digital world in a friendly way, with personalised content and expert lecturers. Their most popular or well-known programmes are computer science and operating a smartphone and other smart devices. By acquiring certain digital skills, older users become aware of new developments in the digital market, become more independent, communicate better and more easily, and enjoy a better quality of life with a boost of self-confidence. As a project, Simbioza is also known for the fact that it involves a lot of intergenerational socialising and forming many new friendships. Their leading institution is Simbioza Genesis, socialno podjetje. (https://simbioza.eu/)

Optius is a career portal aimed at employers and job seekers alike. As one of the biggest portals in Slovenia, it is known for having a huge number of job offers. The portal had a survey called "Let's bust the myths about older people!" to encourage older people to look for jobs and also to encourage employers to recruit more older workers. Their leading institution is Moja zaposlitev, spletno oglaševanje d.o.o. (https://www.optius.com/)

Celovita podpora podjetjem za aktivno staranje prebivalstva (ASI) has organised the SPP competition- Over the years, they are still committed. The company believes that older employees are a great source of knowledge and experience, as they have a larger network of acquaintances, they are committed, in many cases more hardworking, more considerate and the biggest plus is that they pass on their knowledge to younger people. Therefore, the contest aimed to raise the profile of employers themselves who valued older employees positively, as they believe that companies that value older workers actually contribute more to their growth, success and innovation. The competition awarded diplomas to the companies that participated and employed older workers, putting them in a good light with a wider audience. Their leading institution is Javni štipendijski, razvojni, invalidski in preživninski sklad Republike Slovenije. (https://www.srips-rs.si/sl/razvoj-kadrov/celovita-podpora-podjetjem-za-aktivno-staranje-delovne-sile-asi/natecaj-s-priznanjem-starejsim-prijazno-podjetje)

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Zavod za zaposlovanje it is one of the most important institutions on the Slovenian labour market. It provides services for the unemployed, jobseekers and those who need professional help with employment and vocational guidance. The Platform provides employers, social partners and providers of employment programmes, as well as professional institutions and the general public with a transparent and efficient platform to create the largest Slovenian employment platform. The Platform has a wide range of education, training and employment promotion programmes. It also offers additional tax deductions, tax waivers or contribution refunds for older employees. Their leading institution is Zavod RS za zaposlovanje. (https://www.ess.gov.si/iskalci-zaposlitve/#/)

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