

THE ELDERLY AT THE WORKPLACE, WORKING TIME AND A PENSION AGE OF 68 AND HIGHER



NL workforce becomes grey haired

NL : people reach a higher ages

NL has a low birth rate

Current pension age : 67.5 , in 2022 to 70

Biggest problem at the workplace: work-pressure and work
related stress

For many workers in 'heavy occupations/ jobs' the work
becomes too heavy after the age of 55

HEALTHY WORKPLACES IN DE NETHERLANDS FOR ALL WORKERS, YOUNG AND OLD



- In NL : long debates between Employers and Unions about discussions concerning:
- Longer working until your pension (was 65 now to 68)
- Age-aware (or age-focussed) policies in companies
- How to deal with the Gray-Haired Tsunami in companies?
- Biggest problem in the NL : the amount of unemployed people in the age group 50+
- Younger workers are at the moment in a relative better position, but also high unemployment and only temporary and flexible jobs (zero contract etc)

LOW SKILLED/EDUCATED WORKERS



- Can't reach the **pension age of 68 in good health**
- People with low skilled jobs **start their working career at 16/17 years of age**, higher educated workers enter the labour market round 25 years
- **health problems at early age** somewhere round 53/55 of age, instead of 72 for higher educated
- **The are paid** less than higher educated workers and cannot save money 'for the old age', higher educated can.
- **They live shorter**, so they cannot profit an equal time from pension

SO, IS IT FAIR THAT EVERYBODY HAS TO WORK TILL 68?



- No, it's not fair.
- So why not making it possible to stop earlier for people with 'heavy professions', (like construction workers or bricklayers?):
- not possible to define a 'heavy job'.
- All jobs/professions can be made 'heavy' , a teacher for example , teaching in bad neighbourhoods in a classroom with 40 children, also have a 'heavy profession'

UNION'S ACTIONS



In the Chemical sector , in cases of 5 shifts-services

An average working week is 33 hours by this system

With (see next sheet)

AGING AND SUSTAINABLE, DECENT WORK



- In the NL a lot of Collective Agreements made by Unions and Employers have taken on board a lot of measures for the elderly worker
- Extra holidays
- Dispensation/exemption for overwork / time, for
- Night shifts
- Irregular shifts
- Consignment shifts
- Financial compensation (temporarily) to minimise income-effects due to these exemptions

LEGITIMACY TO MAKE SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ELDERLY WORKERS



- The Netherlands Institute for Human Rights says extra measures are justified when there is
 - heavy physical labour or working conditions
 - mental toil and mental strain
 - irregular work and rest (c.q. shift work)

AGING AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL: OLDER WORKERS MUST WORK LESS LONG



But there is great pressure on all these extra measures:

More elderly workers means more expensive measures in the companies

Elderly workers become 'too expensive' and less attractive for the labour market

Difficult to 'organise' the work if the majority of the workforce can make use of exemptions (for example in the case of a full continuity company with night shifts)

UNION'S ACTIONS



Also, Collective Agreements differ: in many Collective Bargaining's / Agreements we have realized the so called '80-90-100 arrangement': 80% work, 90% salary and 100% 'building up pension'. (In the Meat-processing Industry, at Unilever).

There are also other attractive arrangement: the 50-80—100 arrangement (at municipalities).

In The Municipality of The Hague there is a 60-80-100 arrangement : from the age of 60 you can work for 60%, a salary of 80% and a pesnsionbiulding for 100%.

This means that space is created for employment of young people in that older workers are encouraged to work less and thus creating structural space in the formation.

UNION'S VIEWPOINTS AND ACTIONS



So, in such "young for old" schemes two considerations play a role together.

One consideration is to get the older retiring in good health. The other is the consideration to make the older way to boost youth employment.

That's 2 for the price of 1 !! And attractive for Unions members, young and old.

BEWARE OF THE PITFALLS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS!



Unions argue that 'making the workplace a healthy place' is much more effective. Employer is also legally obliged (see Framework directive) to adapt the working conditions to the needs of worker, in improving his/her work capacity

The 24 hours economy leads automatically to more nightwork and shifts. Full continuity processes (delivery on demands the next day by internet shopping)

Next danger: robotics : robots do not have bio-rhythms that can be distorted, can work full continue 24 hours a day. Many simple jobs will disappear. See for example the cash-registers nowadays.

MORE STRUCTURAL MEASURES ARE NEEDED FOR HEAVY WORK



- FNV Union's idea:
- Companies should really get started with improving working conditions and preventing disability and failure
- In sectors the most abrasive risks in the different professions must be measured and made visible
- Or, in other words, sectors must make on the basis of criteria the aggravating circumstances in the different professions visible (by using checklists).
- For professions where real improvements are not possible, and thus where people do too heavy work, employees must be able to stop earlier, while maintaining a good pension. In those cases it goes without saying that the employer concerned contributes to compensating for financial downturn