



## Resolution 1958 (2013)<sup>1</sup>

# Combating discrimination against older persons on the labour market

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Age discrimination is one of the most widespread forms of discrimination, although there are substantial differences between Council of Europe member States in terms of awareness of the problem and the scale of efforts to combat it. In the sphere of employment, discrimination against older workers (active persons aged between 50 and 64) and older persons more generally (65 and older) is reflected in differences in treatment that are neither justified nor necessary, especially where access to recruitment and further training is concerned.
2. In the current European context of economic crisis and the ageing of the population, older workers face increased difficulties relating to all aspects of employment: they still have to contend with inequality and stereotyping, while competition is fiercer; in several countries the retirement age is being raised while many older staff are being pushed into early retirement.
3. The Parliamentary Assembly believes it necessary to establish effective legal provisions to tackle age discrimination and also to introduce positive action for older workers wishing to enter or re-enter the labour market and for older employees, including those who wish to continue working beyond pensionable age. The particularly vulnerable position of persons affected by multiple forms of discrimination by cumulating different criteria should be specifically taken into account when it comes to conceiving legislative or policy responses.
4. Moreover, age discrimination goes hand-in-hand with the more general phenomenon of “ageism”, driven by a negative view of ageing in society. The Assembly considers it vital to strive to change mentalities in order to eliminate stereotypes and build a positive and true image of all age brackets.
5. In the light of these considerations, the Assembly invites the member States of the Council of Europe to:
  - 5.1. ensure that their national legislation includes age among the criteria of non-discrimination and takes account of the phenomenon of multiple discrimination;
  - 5.2. ensure that anti-discrimination legislation is implemented effectively, including through the introduction of monitoring arrangements and an effective system of incentives and sanctions where applicable;
  - 5.3. introduce positive measures aimed at facilitating access to employment for older people, taking into account the situation of particularly vulnerable groups;
  - 5.4. make it easier for older workers who have had long periods of unemployment or gaps in their employment to re-enter the labour market, in particular for older women who have had long periods without paid employment, for example while raising children or caring for other family members, and whose employment has been marked by temporary and part-time contracts;

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1. *Assembly debate* on 4 October 2013 (36th Sitting) (see [Doc. 13292](#), report of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, rapporteur: Ms Gafarova; and [Doc. 13308](#), opinion of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development, rapporteur: Mr Hanson). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 4 October 2013 (36th Sitting).



- 5.5. develop access to further training for older persons who are in employment or unemployed so that they can update their knowledge, perfect their skills and adapt to new technologies and technological developments in their professional field;
- 5.6. support information campaigns aimed at changing mentalities regarding ageing and raising public awareness of the substantial experience of older workers, and promote innovative approaches for their employment, such as flexible work schemes, wherever appropriate (for example part-time work, job-sharing, task rotation);
- 5.7. encourage mentoring programmes to facilitate intergenerational dialogue and promote exchanges of experience with a view to eliminating the stereotyping of older people.