Age - Monitoring and managing health and age at work

Panel 2 - Working conditions in an ageing society
Main topics...

Ageing: why to study it?
   The Portuguese case

The study motivations
   Where do we want to get…

Age survey
   Instrument, procedure and findings

Future directions…
Background – social relevance

Ageing of the workforce is perhaps the greatest current issue to which European and Western societies are being challenged.

The common solution aims to encourage older workers to remain active.

This cannot be achieved without an adjustment of working conditions, considering their health and needs.

(Vendramin, Valenduc, Molinié, Volkoff, Ajzen & Léonard, 2012)
Despite the increasing attention to age, the study of the relationship between age and work has remained at a macro level with little impact on what happens inside the organizations, namely regarding the working conditions design.
Demographic changes

Ageing is one of the most prominent phenomena of demographic change for the majority of Western countries, particularly in Europe (UN, 2001).

### Potential Support Ratio (PSR)

\[
\text{PSR} = \frac{\text{# citizens 15-64}}{\text{# citizens with 65 or more}}
\]

- 12 [1950]
- 9 [2000]
- 4 [2050]
## The Portuguese case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>forecast 2050</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>younger &lt; 15</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old &gt; 65</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Life expectancy*: 79.2 anos, 81 anos

The emigration of **qualified younger people**, due to the economic conditions

[2012] 3,4 Portugal

[2060] 1,5 central scenario

[1950] 12

[2000] 9

[2050] 4

*Sara Ramos, Portugal*
The Portuguese case

- Postponing the **legal age of retirement** (66 years and 3 months and gradual increasing)
- European concerns and incentive to a **long working life** and increasing participation of older workers in the market
- Higher proportion of >50 years old in activity formally recognized
- **Low salaries**, comparing to the most part of European countries
- **Low birth rate**, comparing to other European countries
- Absence of **public policies** focused on the transition for retirement
The Portuguese case

- Mean age of retirement of 68 years old for men and 66 years old for women (source: OCDE)
- Low fading of employment rate > 55 anos (only lower in Sweden)
- 2nd place on health problems: for >50 years old, people reported difficulties in maintaining their jobs until 60 years old (5º EWCS)
- Portuguese workers extend their working life even considering that they are not in good health conditions
Our reality...
Challenges to organizations

- Critical **competences gap** due to the (sometimes non planned) exit of older workers (DeLong, 2004; Dychtwald, Erickson & Morison, 2006)

- **Young talent scarcity** (Burke & Ng, 2006) due to low birth rates and, in Portugal, to the young qualified emigration

- Need to **extend working lives**, which requires to **adapt working conditions** and careers (Vendramin et al, 2012)

- Increasing **age diversity** in organizations (Streb, Voelpel & Leibold, 2006)

2 big questions:

How to manage an ageing workforce?

How to retain older workers?
Since 2001...
...how to develop the study of ageing in Portugal

• Search for an **instrument** with specific characteristics
  ✓ in content, considering the **expositions, hazards, health questions and retirement expectations**
  ✓ in form: **simple, short, feasible**
  ✓ and able to **support transversal and longitudinal designs**

• A **national and trans-sectorial** approach that allows a global knowledge of the Portuguese workforce

• Understand the **real work** situations
Partnership between **ISCTE-IUL** and the **National Authority for Working Conditions**, in a project that conciliates research and intervention objectives:

- Monitoring **health and ageing evolutions** among Portuguese workforce, with different data collection over time
- Dissemination among **different stakeholders** and social partners (academics, employers, unions, workers)
- Identification of **priorities for intervention** (economic sectors or professional activities)
Methodology – Instrument

AGE Survey

Procedure:
- based in other international instruments: SIT, ESTEV, VISAT, EVREST, SLOSH, 5th EWCS, SVP50, JD-R ...
- Validation with experts (researchers and occupational physicians)
- Pre-test with a sample of 300 workers
- Administration by ACT labour inspectors, with specific guidelines in all the country

Survey dimensions:
- working conditions (working time, schedules, demands/resources, perceived risks);
- health complaints (and their relation with work);
- retirement expectations, health and safety organizational policies, job redesign and individual adjustments due to age
total N = 3106 workers from all activity sectors 
44.6% men and 54.4% women aged between 18 and 76 
(M = 39.80 and SD = 10.32)
71% work in SME’s (micro=15%; small=35%; medium=21%) and 29% in big companies
76% are permanent workers

* micro: < 10 workers; small: 10-50 workers; medium: 50-250; big: > 250 workers

Sara Ramos, Portugal
96% have a full time job
6% have a second professional activity
56% have a monthly gross income between 505€ and 1500€; 14% up to 505€; and 14% more than 1500€
62% have between 6 and 12 years of education, 31% have higher education and only 6% have 4 or less years of education
Some general findings

Working conditions

✓ Sectorial differences in **expositions vs exigencies & resources** – the less "visible" risks

✓ Differences between micro, small, **medium size** and large companies

✓ Differences between contractual links – the **temporary workers**

✓ Sex differences – risk of accident and atypical schedules in **men** vs. emotional requirements and low resources in **women**

✓ Positive perception about **OSH practices** in companies

✓ Very low level of disabilities recognition and scarcity of individual measures/replacements due to age

*Need for more complex approach: inspection vs prevention / interaction between risk factors / differential approach (size, sector, contract type)*
Some particular findings

Frequent* work constraints:

- Physical workload (posture, heavy weights, repetitive movements, displacements) 78,2%
- Visual constraints 74,1%
- Exigences of concentration 63,6%
- Intense Noise 51,9%
- Work under pression 37,0%
- Emotional exigencies 25,5%
- Doesn’t learn at work 18,2%
- Work at height, in confined spaces or underground 17,1%

*percentage of workers that saying « yes », between « frequently » and « always » (in a 4 or 7 points frequency scale)
Some particular findings

Health and work

Reported health problems and its relation with work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical health problems</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
<th>relation with work*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muscular, articular and bone problems</td>
<td>47,9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual constraints</td>
<td>38,9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditive constraints</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological and cognitive health problems</th>
<th>% Yes</th>
<th>relation with work*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quick tiredness and fatigue</td>
<td>30,9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep disturbs</td>
<td>30,8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory and concentration problems</td>
<td>23,7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nervousness, irritability, anxiety</td>
<td>43,2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demoralization, depression</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Among the ones that answered YES, relation with work: worsened by work or caused by work (–– = 10%)
Some particular findings

Health and work

Findings also show strong relationships between certain working conditions and the reported health problem...

1-Relation between muscular problems and work under pression and physical workload

![Graph showing relation between muscular problems and work under pression and physical workload]

Reading: 27.6% of the workers that work under pression and with high physical load reported muscular problems, and said that it was caused by their work.
Future perspectives

Age and Work

✔ What **remains** – risks associated with accident; memory problems and concentration; depression

✔ What **increases** – long working days; work environment risks; musculoskeletal problems; vascular problems and fatigue

✔ What **decreases** – log working weeks; psychosocial risks; atypical schedules; physical and visual effort; work intensity; sleep and gastrointestinal problems – the *selective effects* of working conditions

*How to understand the work evolutions over time and the effects of work on health?* – *need for repeated and compared samples*
References


Censos 2011 Résultats Définitifs – Portugal. Lisbonne: INE.


Coordination:

Sara Ramos
Carlos Montemor

Scientific team:
Sara Ramos, ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa
Helena Carvalho, ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

Technical and scientific consultancy:
Serge Volkoff, Centre d’Études de l’Emploi et du Travail – Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers
Céline Mardon, Centre d’Études de l’Emploi et du Travail – Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers
Anne-Françoise Molinié, Centre d’Études de l’Emploi et du Travail – Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers

Scientific consultancy:
Marianne Lacomblez, Faculdade de Psicologia e de Ciências da Educação – Universidade do Porto