



Ionad Frithbhulaíochta
Anti-Bullying Centre

POWER Ageing: Addressing Ageism in the Workplace Report

November 2022



IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL
An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn



Age &
Opportunity



Ollscoil Chathair
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City University

**Power Ageing: Addressing Ageism in the
Workplace Report
ABC DCU Research Report**

November 2022



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Authors


Alfredo Salomão Filho, Tanja Tillmanns & Trudy Corrigan

DCU Anti-Bullying Centre
Institute of Education
Dublin City University

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List of Acronyms

CI	Citizens Information
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DCU	Dublin City University
DH	Department of Health
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
IHREC	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRISMA	Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis
SHARE	Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe
UN	United Nations
WHO	World Health Organization
WRC	Workplace Relations Commission




Executive Summary

The report engages with the ageing workforce global debate and the occurrence of discrimination on the grounds of age in the workplace. It identifies current issues which are associated with ageism, highlighting potential solutions to address ageist structures, attitudes and practices in the workplace. Conducted over a seven-month period, this research consists of a systematic literature review of 108 selected studies in the realm of older workers, encompassing macro level and organisational policy on older workers; end of career opportunities; recruitment, training and promotion; intergenerational organisational initiatives; health and well-being; and experiences of ageism. The analysis of the selected studies generated a series of recommendations on how to effectively manage intergenerational organisations.

The increasing institutional concern with active ageing in western, industrialised nations appears as a positive shift towards the recognition of older people's human rights and productive capabilities. However, older workers are still encouraged to be "realistic" as to their limited, precarious employment possibilities. Moreover, the prioritisation of salary demands from younger employees and the cease of training efforts for older workers are normalised. After the age of 50, workers find themselves at risk of unemployment given the increasing higher retirement age in Europe as well as the new required skills to engage with technological advancements. Factors such as good health, the perception that older workers are of value, flexibility and choice, and the need for an ongoing conversation across the life course facilitate working life extension. On the other hand, poor health, negative impacts of work on health, ageism, and a lack of respect and institutional support are the perceived barriers to do so. Research has demonstrated that health does not change significantly for those who formally retire but worsens considerably for those who leave the labour market for other reasons.

The state must take comprehensive action as to more structural issues, such as inequality, poverty and the scarcity of job opportunities within the universe of older workers. The government has the responsibility to (1) redesign and enact policy to enhance the understanding and scope of healthy, active ageing, (2) augment social security networks, (3) facilitate working life extension, (4) increase awareness of anti-discrimination legislation, and (5) support more evidence-based research on the implementation of public-private partnerships, gathering more knowledge on (a) the costs and benefits for older adults, (b) factors influencing their decision-making process towards employment continuity, as well as (c) their functional capacity and performance needs. As to organisations, the recommended plan of action is to (1) redesign and enact policy and regulations to accommodate the needs of older workers, (2) support and encourage older workers' work performance, intrinsic motivation, and physical and psychological health, and (3) eliminate prejudice, stereotypes



and discrimination against them. Moreover, organisations can engage with older employees, promoting organisational intergenerational “oneness” and eliminating “age norming of jobs”. It is a combination of efforts from all stakeholders that may accomplish the best results towards a culture that respects and values older people at work.

1. Introduction


1.1 Research context

The rise of longevity and the low birth and death rates in Europe result in a greater population of not only older persons but also of older workers (UN, 2019a). These significant socio-demographic changes and their related effects have increasingly attracted the attention of academics and policy makers. An ageing population directly affects retirement structures, employment and social policies, labour market trends, global workforces, social insurance frameworks, and workspaces (Ciampa & Chernesky, 2021).

The institutional concern with an ageing world was materialised for the first time with the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the Political Declaration – both set at the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002. The key challenge of “building a society for all ages” was then addressed (UN, 2022). As defined by the WHO, the decade of 2020 stands as the Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020–2030), where a more holistic approach to ageing has been challenging the well-established medical model (Ward & McGarrigle, 2017). Recently, health can be seen as the outcome of a combination of physical, mental and social factors. A policy framework on active ageing has been adopted by many European countries, harvesting positive results.

People are living healthier and longer, which favours, by choice or necessity, their working life extension, an idea celebrated by supra-national organisations, the state and civil society. Remaining for a longer period at work translates into an increased GDP and tax revenues, while potentially postponing pension payments. Most industrialised countries have reformed their pension schemes to prolong working lives, albeit there is room for augmenting labour force participation at later life stages. Following up on this demand, the European Commission (2010) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2016) incentivise a greater involvement of older workers in the labour market. However, in a context of rapid economic and technological changes, an ageing workforce is forced to deal not only with the current organisational demands but also with discrimination at the workplace.

Recently, the World Health Organisation has published a global report on ageism – where the toxicity linked to this phenomenon as well as the necessity to tackle it – are transparent. Ageism has harmful and far-reaching effects on people’s health, well-being and human rights (WHO, 2021). The analysis of the context of discrimination against older workers is therefore crucial. Despite attempts to outlaw age discrimination, ageism is still considered a problematic feature of most Western labour markets (Kroon et al., 2018). However, to date there has been little discussion, research, or policy development to ensure the well-being of older workers



(Brownell & Kelly, 2021). The report presents the results of a systematic literature review based on 108 studies on the context of older workers, illuminating ageism in the workplace as well as making a series of recommendations on how to effectively manage intergenerational organisations.


1.2 Research objectives

The aims of this study are to:

1. Conduct a comprehensive systematic literature review which identifies the issues associated with ageism and bullying of older people in the workplace.
2. Evaluate the breadth of ageism and bullying in the workplace in both a national (Ireland) and international context.
3. Evaluate the solutions which are used in the workplace to address ageism and bullying associated with older workers.
4. Evaluate a solution-oriented approach in terms of awareness of legislation to address ageism and bullying associated with older workers in the workplace.
5. Evaluate the extent of literature which deals with ageism associated with recruitment of older workers, training opportunities, promotional opportunities and end of career opportunities to enhance the productivity, health and well-being of both older and younger workers.
6. Evaluate the extent to which intergenerational learning initiatives and mentoring between older and younger workers helps to address ageism in the workplace.

1.3 Research rationale

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to work in a fair environment, while the Goals 3,4 and 8 of the UN 2030 Agenda focus on promoting a decent, inclusive work context for all (Cebola et al., 2021; UN, 2015). Around the world, ageism is vastly detectable in the organisational space: older adults are particularly vulnerable to age-based discrimination. Besides creating a virulent work environment that directly affects health and well-being, ageism decreases productivity and forces workers into early retirement. In times where people are living longer and healthier, and the idea of working life extension is gaining momentum, the report makes a contribution to the ongoing but recent exploration of ageism in the workplace as an object of



study. There is a scholarly consensus on the need to gain a greater insight on age discrimination if this issue is to be effectively tackled by the state, private organisations and civil society (Kroon et al., 2018; Sugisawa, 2022; WHO, 2021).

Funded by the Irish Research Council, the study was conducted under DCU's Anti-Bullying Centre, whose objectives supports the implementation of the Government of Ireland's Action Plan on Bullying (2013), Action Plan for Online Safety (2018-2019), Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice (2018-2024), and the WRC/HSA Joint Code of Practice on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work (2021) (DCU, 2022). The study is also aligned with DCU's initiatives towards an age-friendly society. As a founding member of Age Friendly University Global Networks, DCU, led by Dr. Corrigan – together with Arizona State University and the University of Strathclyde – were the first three universities to develop the 10 Principles of an Age-Friendly University in 2012. These principles have now been incorporated by 51 colleges worldwide.

1.4 The structure of the report


The report is structured into five chapters: *Chapter 1* introduces the study context, objectives and the rationale for the research. *Chapter 2* presents the definition of ageism and examines the Irish context of older workers and ageism. *Chapter 3* describes the systematic literature review methodology employed in the study. *Chapter 4* presents the selected literature. *Chapter 5* makes concluding remarks and recommendations.

2. On ageism

2.1 Introduction

During a 1969 Washington Post interview, Robert Butler, M.D. spontaneously coined the term ageism to designate age-related bigotry. Besides his thorough scholarly contribution, Butler helped to give ageism a “diagnostic label” (Achenbaum, 2021), which paved the way for ageism becoming an academic and policy concern. For Butler (1969), the first director of the US National Institute on Aging, combating ageism is of paramount importance in ensuring inter alia the human rights of older adults.

Ageism is broadly defined as “a set of social relations that discriminate against older people and set them apart as being different by defining and understanding them in an oversimplified, generalised way” (Minichiello et al., 2000, p.253). The WHO's approach to the nature of ageism is closely




associated with social psychology; it is manifested in the form of stereotypes (cognitive level: how we think), prejudice (emotional level: how we feel) or direct discrimination (behavioural level: how we act) (WHO, 2021; Iversen et al., 2009). Other authors, such as Spencer (2021) understand ageism as the cause for workplace bullying and harassment, or the “psychological harm inflicted against a worker in the workplace by fellow workers, managers or others” (Spencer, 2021, p.147). For the purposes of this report, the WHO’s perspective on ageism is adopted moving forward.

At age 18, one may be considered too old to become a world class pianist, but too young to coach a professional soccer team (WHO, 2021). While age is a social construct (ibid), ageism is a “social disease” (Palmore, 2015). Negative views about older people are not seldom in our society, nor are they recent. Stoic philosopher Seneca (4 BCE–65 CE), claimed that “senectus morbidus est” (old age is a disease), while Juvenal (55–127 CE) insulted septuagenarians with health conditions. In recent times, age has become “an individual and societal marker” in every-day older industrialised Western societies (Achenbaum, 2021).

Berger (2021) attributes to “some researchers” and more prominently the media, as the contributing sources of negative narratives towards older people in the societal level. More structurally, McDonald (2021) examines capitalist economies’ continuous policy efforts to marginalise older workers, framing retirement policies and pension schemes as “systematic ageism”. As to economic concerns, the focus placed on the cost of ageing may favour the creation of a tense atmosphere prone to ageism and intergenerational conflict (Berger, 2021). In critically invoking the term “apocalyptic demography” (Evans et al., 2001) to designate population ageing, Berger (2021) challenges the existence of a rationale for the use of the term “apocalyptic”, inviting us to reflect deeper on this issue. The increase in health-care spending is real. However, it is also a consequence of inflation and technological innovations, rather than being an exclusive effect of an ageing world (ibid).

Parallel to the collective imaginary around “apocalyptic demography” (Evans et al., 2001), one major incremental change that has attracted the attention of academics and policy makers is the rise of longevity and the low birth and death rates in Europe, resulting in a greater population of not only older persons but also of older workers (UN, 2019b; 2019c; Russell & Fahey, 2004). In the job market, fewer lifelong full-time jobs and more “flexible” forms of work, such as self-employment, contract work, freelancing, consultancy and part-time work lead civil society and the state to support such flexible forms as a solution for economic inactivity in later life (Platman, 2003). All the above phenomena have contributed to the enactment of public policies on active ageing, employment, and retirement, helping shape the labour market of industrialised nations




(Russell and Fahey, 2004). This in turn, brings new, or accentuates old, problems.

2.2 Ageism in the workplace

One of these problems is the occurrence of ageism in the workplace and the related nefarious socio and economic consequences at both micro- and macro level. The effects of ageism are far-reaching, such as an increasing risk of abuse against older people (Spencer, 2021) and a higher economic cost for society: “billions of dollars”, according to the WHO (2021, p.16). While ageism increases the risk of poverty and financial insecurity for older people, it also deteriorates the organisational environment. If people live longer and healthier, their intention (or need) to extend their productive life is reasonable, being largely affected by economic and socio-demographic factors, health as well as policies and programmes on extended working life and active ageing (Laliberte Rudman & Aldrich, 2021). Therefore, a greater participation of older adults in the socio-political and work spheres should contribute to their empowerment (Brownell & Kelly, 2021), productivity and well-being (WHO, 2021) rather than being a medium for age discrimination.

Ageism is a transversal phenomenon; it is brought into being differently in distinct work dimensions, such as recruitment, training and promotion (Cebola et al., 2021). Furthermore, research has shown that ageism in the manager–employee relationship appears as one of the main obstacles towards an age-inclusive workplace (Previtali & Spedale, 2021), while age discrimination laws are not always enforced in organisations (Dennis & Thomas, 2007). Moreover, ageism negatively affects health, well-being, and human rights of older workers (Berger, 2021; WHO, 2021), hindering their levels of vitality (Vanajan et al., 2020), productivity, job satisfaction and commitment (Kleissner & Jahn, 2020a). Additionally, early retirement is not only a consequence of poor physical and or mental health but also of ageist policies and attitudes (Berger, 2021; Kleissner & Jahn, 2020a-b; McDonald, 2021).

A crucial point in this discussion is the exploration of the negative stereotypes of older workers, which in turn are immersed in oversimplification and generalisation (Minichiello et al., 2000). Older workers are seen as rigid, technologically incompetent, unproductive, unmotivated, inflexible, uncreative, as well as being incapable of both learning (particularly technological skills) and reporting to younger managers (Capelli & Novelli, 2013; Dennis & Thomas, 2007; WHO, 2021). On the other hand, older workers (especially if highly qualified) can be perceived as adaptable to change, positive, reliable, committed, experienced, hard-working, socially skilled, good mentors and leaders (WHO, 2021). How we think, feel, and act towards older people is deeply



embedded in our own sense of self, as we learn to be ageists (Kellaway, 2022).

Given the current plethora of changes, from demographics to labour market and active ageing policies, it is timely to properly tackle ageism in the workplace: organisations and older employees have a lot to benefit from each other. An inevitably higher number of older people in the workforce will require environments where they can professionally flourish. The envisaged “win-win” socio-political agenda augments the recognition of the social, economic and health benefits of age-inclusive, intergenerational working environments. However, age is still underrepresented as to diversity policies in organisations (Kellaway, 2022), as illustrated below.

Many companies have admirably focused resources on becoming more diverse and inclusive when it comes to gender and race, but too many are laggards when it comes to age. In a 2015 survey of global CEOs, PwC found that 64 percent of companies have a formal diversity and inclusiveness strategy and 85 percent of CEOs think it's improved their bottom line. However, only 8 percent of the 64 percent include age as a dimension of their strategy. At a time when labor shortages are emerging, due in part to new restrictive immigration policies, while there simultaneously exists a demographically aging workforce that declares they want to delay retirement, it's shocking to see so few company leaders think expansively age-wise about how they can attract and retain both the smartest and the wisest (Conley, 2018, p. 411).

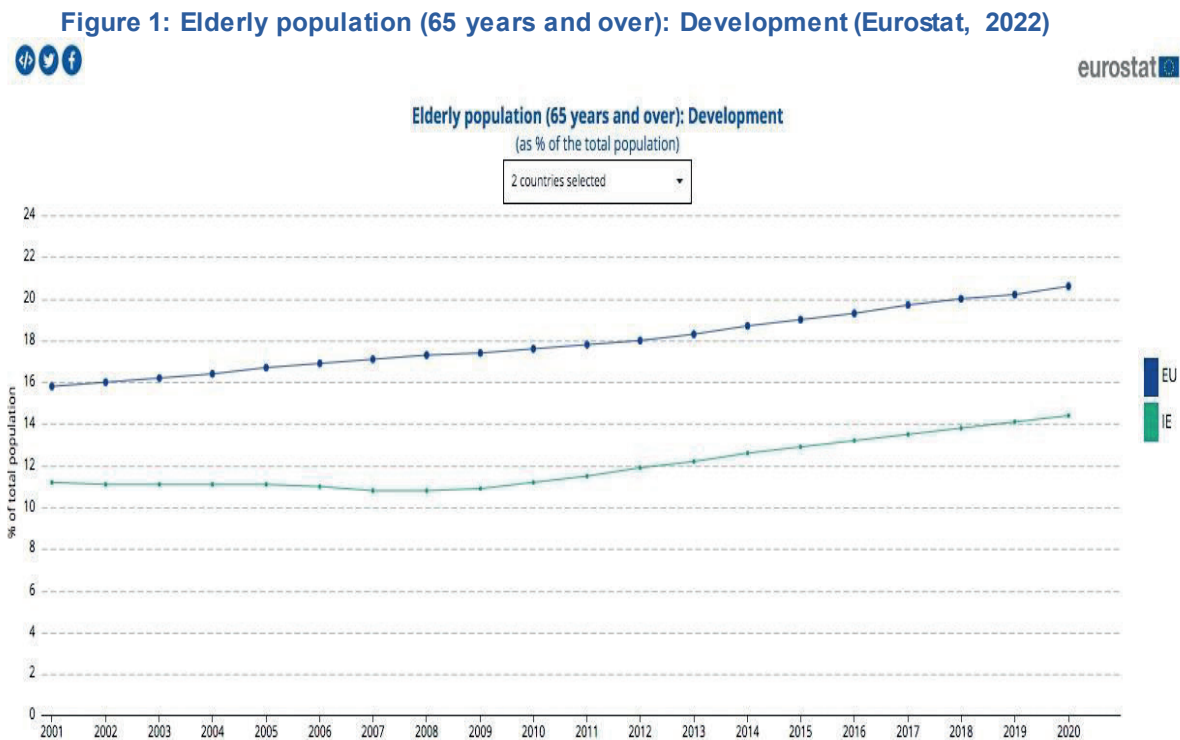
Chip Conley, then a 52-year-old successful boutique hotelier, joined Airbnb in 2013. After five years, Conley has become a spokesperson for the intergenerational workforce. Based on his experience working with colleagues in their twenty's in an international tech start-up, he believes that each generation adds value and in combination fosters “intergenerational wisdom”, which amalgamates the emotional intelligence of older workers and the digital intelligence of younger workers (Conley, 2018; Keogh, 2021). In what follows, the context of older workers and ageism in Ireland is examined.

2.3 Ageing, work and ageism: the Irish case


2.3.1 Context

As much as the world population aged 65 and over is growing faster than all other age groups (UN, 2022), the population of Ireland has been getting steadily older since the 1980's. Between 2011 and 2016, the number of females aged 65 and over increased by 16.7% (to 340,730), while males aged 65 and over increased by 22% (to 296,837). There will be 1.5 million people aged 65 and over in Ireland by 2051 (CSO, 2022). Despite these

trends, Ireland is currently the youngest country in the ageing EU (Eurostat, 2022), therefore facing a timely opportunity to prepare in advance for future social demographic changes. Figure 1 below shows the proportion of people 65+ years of the total population of Ireland and the EU.



In Ireland, rather than being characterised by decline and increased dependency, older adults continue to make valuable contributions to society; they are identified by active citizenship and participation in the lives of their families and their communities (Ward & McGarrigle, 2017). Trinity College Dublin’s 2017 report “Health and Wellbeing: Active Ageing for Older Adults in Ireland – Evidence from The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing” illuminates a series of interesting findings, assessing the degree of support provided by older adults in Ireland. Irish older adults (48%) provide monetary assistance to their children and informal childcare to their grandchildren. Almost half of Irish older adults performed voluntary activities – with 17% doing so on a weekly basis. Equivalently, a large proportion of older adults participate in organised clubs and groups (47%), and also partake in active and social activities (60%). The array of activities performed by Irish older adults is associated with a better quality of life, which demonstrates the shift away from a mainly medical framing of ageing to a more holistic approach (Baska et al., 2021; Ward & McGarrigle, 2017).



Although the investigation of the daily routines and interpersonal relationships of older people living in planned age-friendly communities are scarce (McDonald et al. 2021), the National Positive Ageing Strategy (DH, 2013) has guided the development of many active ageing initiatives in relation to (1) economic, social, and cultural elements, (2) community and family life, and (3) solidarity between generations. It has also provided an important orientation towards future active ageing policy directions (Ward & McGarrigle, 2017), such as the commitment to improve the employment options for older workers.

2.3.2 Older workers in Ireland


On an investigation of older Irish men's negotiations of cultural representations of ageing, O'Neill & Ní Léime (2022) places the following question to one of their study participants: "what roles do older people play in today's society?" And he replies, as follows.

Having just retired last year, you do have to rebalance and see where you're going, but undoubtedly your career or your job hugely shapes who you are and what you are and how people view you ... it probably is the most defining character of our lives, maybe too much so (Thomas, 68, FG1). (O'Neill & Ní Léime (2022, p.13).

The above statement finds resonance with Herbert's (2021), who explores the employment and gendered rural ageing of mid-life women in rural Ireland. The large majority of participants of Herbert's (2021) study had not yet retired from employment and most were not planning to. These findings dialogue with international literature (WHO, 2021) in relation to the significance individuals attribute to work at mid-life, such as being a source of "extended social networks, increased income, sustained self-esteem and positive mental health" (Herbert, 2021, p.10). Further on, based on the Irish Longitudinal Study of Ageing (TILDA), Nolan & Barret (2019) observe how the lack of pension income appears as "an important determinant" of extended working lives for both men and women.

One fifth of the Irish labour force are composed of older workers; and they are over-represented in certain industries, such as agriculture, private services, and self-employment (ESRI, 2019). In recent years, the employment rates of older workers have increased, and retention rates are above the OECD average (ESRI, 2019). In 2015, the retention rate for employees aged 60 to 64 was 58% compared to 49% across the OECD (Martin, 2018) and raised to 71% in 2018 (ESRI, 2019).

Following macro policy trends, a key aspect to prolong working lives in Ireland is the continuous improvement of working conditions. Regardless of their age, many older workers consider their health and safety being at



risk¹ and are therefore less positive about the continuity of their jobs. In Ireland, the main reasons for early retirement are adequate income and financial stability, while the experience of an imbalance between work and other demands (including caring) results in a disbelief that work can be continued (ESRI, 2019). Those who previously held manual jobs in the construction and retail sectors are more likely to leave employment due to illness and care responsibilities, compared to managers and or professionals. There are also some notable gender differences in the reasons for leaving employment early in Ireland. For example, women are five times more likely to leave employment in order to care for the family than men. Consequently, the ESRI study (2019) recommends more flexible work arrangements to retain older workers, especially older women – including those in rural areas (Herbert, 2021).

In 2018, The Public Service Superannuation (Age of Retirement Act, 2018) allowed people to extend their working lives by 70 years of age, which has become a preferred option for many older workers due to the increasing housing costs (Corrigan & Morgan, 2020). Yet in 2018, The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (2018) published new guidelines for employers to reinforce the possibility of older workers to work beyond the age of 65, if they wish (or need) to do so (ibid). For many older job seekers, however, “ageist attitudes create barriers for them to be accepted for interviews for a variety of careers”. (Corrigan & Morgan, 2020, p.12).

2.3.3 Ageism and antidiscrimination legislation in Ireland

If older people seek to remain in employment, they wish “not a longer, but fuller working life” (Herbert, 2021, p.17). Accordingly, ageism in the workplace needs to be addressed beyond legislation (ibid). Despite little availability of recent studies on ageism in the Irish workplace, Keogh (2021) reports in The Irish Times that age discrimination is “alive and well” in the country. As to recruitment, more than 90% of workers over 55 reported that “their age went against them”, with over a third believing that potential employers perceived them as “too old” for the technology sector (ibid). Yet, victims of ageism tend not to report abuse, rarely starting a court case against their employers (Kellaway, 2022) or simply choose to resolve discrimination issues at the organisational level (O’Sullivan & MacMahon, 2010). Russell et al. (2008) shows that 86% of people who suffered discrimination while seeking employment together with 48% of employees who suffered discrimination in the workplace took no legal action in Ireland.

¹ As to the Irish publicly funded health service workforce, Fleming et al. (2022) observes an overall decrease of 8.1% (n=9,333) in staff level during the Recession (2008-2014). Regarding the Recovery (2014-2019), however, the levels rebound and increase by 15.2% (n=16,789).

Legally, equality is ensured by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC). The IHREC informs the public on human rights and equality legislation, also assisting individuals who bring claims to the Equality Tribunal, while the WRC investigates or mediates claims of unlawful discrimination under equality legislation (CI, 2022).

The enactment of the Employment Equality Acts (1998-2015) brought substantial changes to equality law and the institutional landscape, providing the first definitions in Irish law of sexual harassment and indirect discrimination. Amended by the Equality Act 2004, these Acts repealed the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act 1974 and the Employment Equality Act 1977. According to O'Sullivan & MacMahon (2010), the Employment Equality Acts (1998–2015) are a solid piece of legislation as they prohibit discrimination on a wide range of areas of employment on nine grounds (gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, membership of the Traveller community). From 2001 to 2007, there were 106 cases of discrimination on the grounds of age, representing 19% of the total number of discrimination cases. Table 1 below provides an overview of cases during this period.

Table 1: Number of Grounds Cited in Cases, 2001–07 (O'Sullivan & MacMahon, 2010, p.341)

	Gender	Age	Disability	Race	Marital Status	Family Status	Religion
2001	28	0	3	2	9	1	0
2002	36	13	6	1	10	8	1
2003	30	12	5	8	6	5	2
2004	32	22	10	12	6	5	4
2005	23	18	12	9	9	5	5
2006	28	19	13	9	4	6	4
2007	37	22	10	14	8	8	2
Total, <i>n</i> (%)	214 (38)	106 (19)	59 (11)	55 (10)	52 (9)	38 (7)	18 (3)

More recently, two cases of workplace discrimination on the grounds of age gained notoriety. In January 2020, the Workplace Relations



Commission ordered the Irish State broadcaster, RTÉ, to pay €100,000 to a former employee. In this case, the employer had discriminated against the former employee on the grounds of age by refusing to allow her to work beyond the company's mandatory retirement age of 65 (Killalea et al., 2020). Moreover, applicants who intended to join Garda Síochána between 2005 and 2007 were refused entry in accordance with the Garda Síochána (Admission and Appointments) Regulations 1988 – which set the upper age limit for entry as a trainee at 35. In November 2020, after a legal odyssey (the matter has been referred back to the Supreme Court), the Workplace Relations Commission published its rulings confirming that age restrictions enforced to stop those aged 35 and over from joining the Garda Síochána as trainees are discriminatory under the Employment Equality Act 1998-2015 (IHREC, 2022).

The next chapter describes the methodology employed in the study. It elucidates how the literature selection and analytical processes were performed.

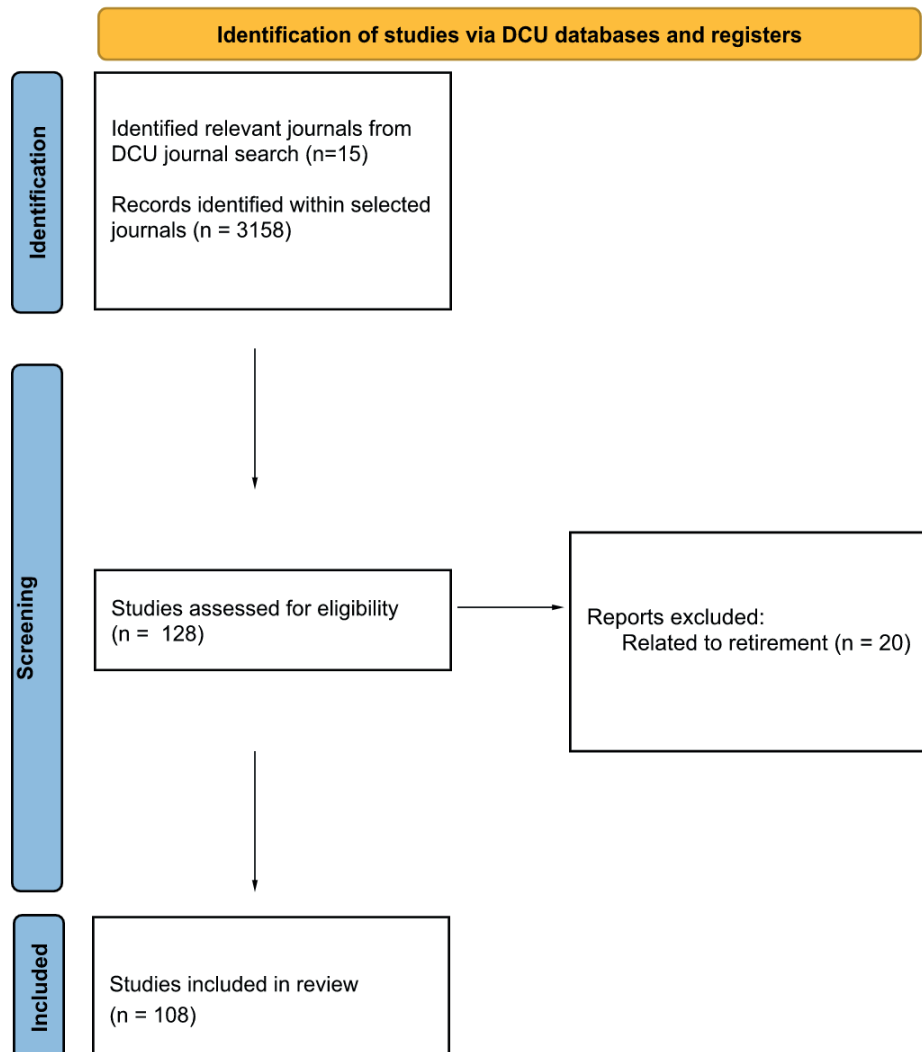
3. Methodology

3.1 Doing a systematic literature review

This study is a stand-alone systematic literature review (Templier & Paré, 2015) that aims to make sense of the body of existing literature (Rousseau et al., 2008) about the reality of older workers and ageism. To do so, a descriptive, textual narrative synthesis approach (Xiao and Watson, 2019) was applied. Such a descriptive review evaluates the current state of the literature focusing on specific topical areas (ibid).

The predefined thematic areas concerning the work universe of older people are, as follows: (1) state and (2) organisational policies related to older workers, (3) end of career opportunities, (4) recruitment, training and promotion, (5) health and wellbeing, 6) intergenerational learning, as well as (7) experiences of ageism. These predefined topics help organise the selected literature, as textual narrative synthesis is characterised by applying a standard data extraction format by which different characteristics of the literature, such as the findings and context, are the focus of the review (Popay et al., 2006; Lucas et al., 2007). Due to this standardised nature of our review, quantitative and qualitative studies related to each topic area were included. For transparency purposes, the PRISMA guidelines (Page et al., 2021) guided the employed methodology. PRISMA stands for Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis. To ensure an objective and transparent review, this approach recommends applying the PRISMA-statement containing a checklist (see Appendix) and a flow diagram which is presented below (Figure 2).

Figure 2: PRISMA 2020 Flow-Diagram (adapted from Page et al. 2021)



In the following section, the entire review process is explained in detail: inclusion criteria as well as literature identification and screening.

3.2 Literature search and evaluation

3.2.1 Inclusion criteria

This systematic literature review is formed by 108 selected studies among peer-reviewed articles (theoretical and empirical), books and reports, published in the decade of 2020 (until 1st July 2022). The chosen publication period supports the creation of a review of the most recent literature, ensuring that the discussion is based on current, state-of-the-art knowledge, including that of policies and legislations. From health science and psychology to social policy and business studies, the search included

only peer-reviewed articles published in SCImago Quartile 1 (Q1) ranked journals.

There are however three limitations of this study. First, the search process used only Dublin City University's database. Second, this review only considered publications in English. Finally, this study did not endeavour to evaluate the methodological quality of each scientific publication: peer-reviewed articles' findings were taken as reported. Nevertheless, the selected articles' high-ranking positions in SCImago attest for their trustworthiness, validity and reliability.

3.2.2 Literature identification

This review was conducted by three researchers. The third researcher designed the study and predefined the thematic areas of investigation (see section 3.1); the second researcher identified the literature, while the first researcher focused on the screening and analysis of the selected material. The second researcher started the literature search by using the keywords "ageing" and "aging" in the journal search of DCU's online library. For each journal, preliminary manuscript relevance was determined by the title. From the title, if the content indicated a discussion on ageism in the workplace or the reality of older workers, she then further evaluated whether the journal was (at least in one related subdiscipline) ranked in SCImago's first quartile (Q1). As she noticed that some of these journals were ranked differently in sub disciplines such as social psychology, social sciences or psychology, she then continued her journal search in the same manner but using three additional keywords: "organizational psychology", "organizational behavior" and "human resources". In this first step of the identification process, 15 relevant journals were identified. Table 2 below provides an overview of the final selected journals, including their H-Index and ranking.

Table 2: Overview of the selected journals

Journal title (Country); H-Index	SCImago Ranking	No. of eligible articles
Ageing and Society (UK); H-Index 88	Q1 Arts and Humanities/Q2 Geriatrics and Gerontology + Health (social science) + Public Health (environmental and occupational health) + Social Psychology	39
European Journal of Ageing (Germany); H-Index 51	Q1 Health (social science) /Q2 Geriatrics and Gerontology	8

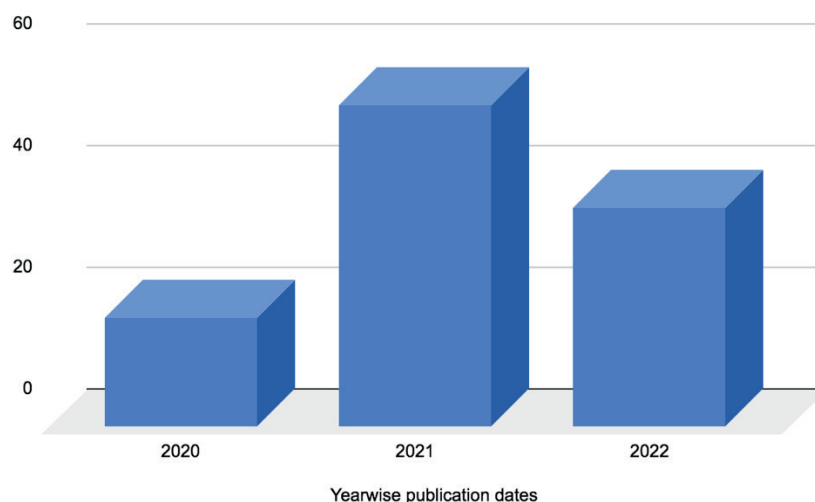
Age and Ageing (UK); H-Index 153	Q1 Aging + Geriatrics and Gerontology + Medicine	1
Research on Aging (USA); H-Index 68	Q1 Health (social science) + social psychology/Q2 Geriatrics and Gerontology	12
Psychology and Aging (USA); H-Index 159	Q1 Social Psychology + Geriatrics and Gerontology / Q2 Aging	1
Journal of Aging Studies (UK); H-Index 69	Q1 Issues, Ethics and Legal Aspects / Q2 Health Policy + Medicine	3
International Journal of Ageing and Later Life (Sweden); H-Index 18	Q1 Cultural studies / Q2 Gender Studies / Q3 Health (social science) + life-span and life-course studies	1
Journal of Aging and Health (USA); H-Index 79	Q1 Community and Home Care + Gerontology + Health (social science) + life-span and life-course studies + sociology and political science /Q2 Geriatrics and Gerontology	4
Journal of Aging & Social Policy (USA); H-Index 37	Q1 Demography + Gerontology + Lifespan and life-course studies	14
Journal of Human Resources (USA); H-Index 111	Q1 Economics and Econometrics + Management of technology and innovation + Organizational behavior and human resource management + strategy and management	1
Human Resources for Health (UK); H-Index 68	Q1 Public Administration + Public health, environmental and occupational health	1
European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology (UK); H-Index 73	Q1 Applied Psychology + Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management	6
Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior.	Q1 Applied Psychology + Organizational Behavior and human resource management + social psychology	2
Management Learning (UK); H-Index 79	Q1 Decision Sciences + Management of Technology and Innovation + Strategy and Management	2
Frontiers in Psychology (Switzerland); H-Index 133	Q1 Psychology	5

Following the journal identification, she used the keywords “older workers”, “employment” and the combination of the keywords “intergenerational learning AND work” to identify relevant articles in each journal. The keywords “ageism”, “agism” and “senior” were included for journals more related to psychology or business studies. Suitable articles were selected by first screening the titles and then, when it appeared relevant, the abstract was reviewed to evaluate whether the article would be eligible for this review. In total, 3,158 articles across the 15 journals were scanned in that way. Table 2 above also offers an overview of the final number of articles identified from each journal.

In addition to the literature selection from the journals, the review also included one book (Berger, 2021) and five book chapters from one edited book (Blackstone, 2021; Ciampa & Chernesky, 2021; Spencer 2021; Woolever, 2021). The study also considered two reports: the 2021 World Health Organization’s Global Report on Ageism, particularly to rely on a well-established definition of ageism (see section 2.1), and Corrigan & Morgan’s (2020) “Ageism and Bullying in the Workplace: Implications for Policy and Practice” (totalising 108 sources).

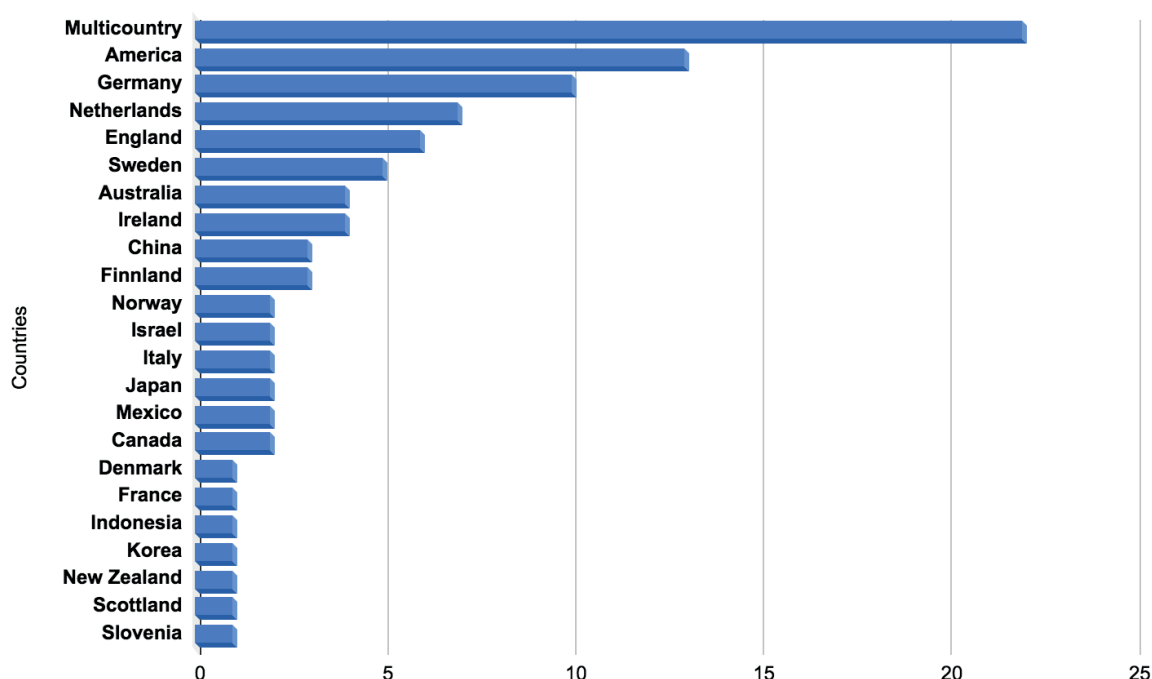
Three journals made by far the biggest contribution to this review: Ageing & Society (n=39), Journal of Aging & Social Policy (n=14) and Research on Aging (n=12). Figure 3 below displays that most articles included in this review were published in 2021. However, there is a noticeable upward trend, especially when considering that the review compiled material until July 2022. Therefore, this field of research is gaining relevance, which is indicated by the increase in publications in the last three years.

Figure 3: Publication dates of the selected peer-reviewed articles



This review covers studies from 22 countries, where the majority of studies concerned two or more countries (n=17). Most studies emerged from America (n=13), followed by Germany (n=10), the Netherlands (n=7), England (6), Sweden (n=5), and Ireland (n=4) (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Studies' country of origin

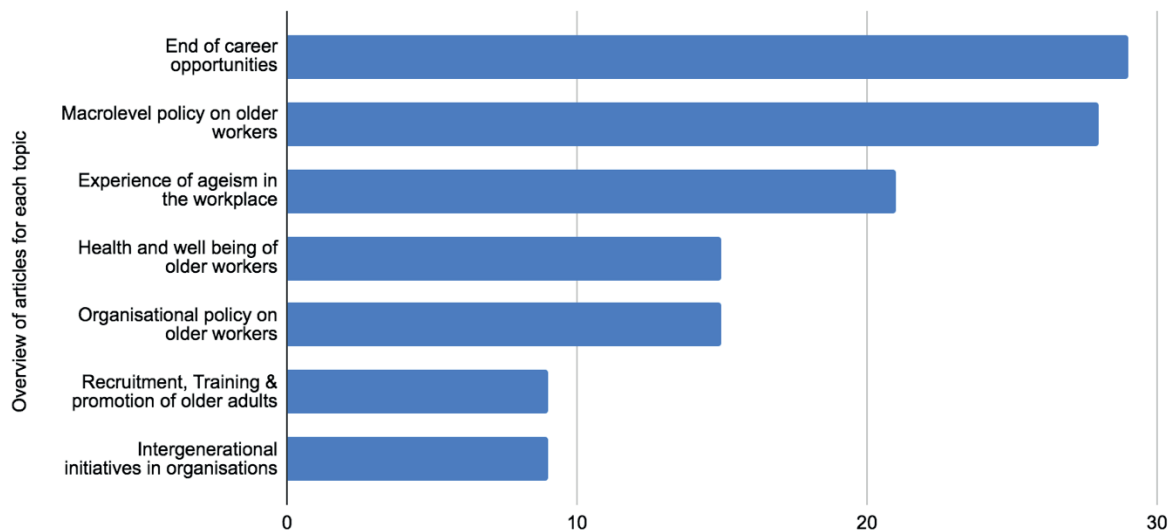


3.2.3 Literature screening

Google Sheets was used to record the relevant literature for this review. Google Sheets captured the references, the publication date, and the country of the study. Pre-defined key themes were used to analyse the findings of the article. After the 127 studies were identified by the second researcher, the collection was passed on to the first researcher for an in-depth screening of the literature. This was done via a careful reading of the articles, particularly the findings sections in order to categorise them into the relevant predefined topical areas, as follows: the Irish context of older workers; macro and organisational level policy on older workers; end of career opportunities; recruitment, training & promotion of older adults; intergenerational initiatives in organisations; health and wellbeing of older workers; experience of ageism in the workplace. Where relevant, studies were allocated to more than one topical area. This categorisation process was also recorded in Google Sheets. The theme “Irish context” resulted in four peer-reviewed articles and these were integrated into Chapter 2. Figure 3 below shows that most articles were related to end of career opportunities (n=29), macro level policy on older workers (n=28) and

experience of ageism in the workplace (n=21). In this screening process, 20 peer-reviewed articles were dismissed, as they were more related to retirement issues (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Overview of the articles regarding each topic



The following chapter depicts the results of the systematic literature review employed in this study. The chapter is organised in accordance with the predefined thematic areas, where each section is introduced by a table offering an overview of the corresponding selected publications.

4. Systematic literature review on ageism in the workplace

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the systematic literature review on the universe of older workers and the issues associated with their work life. The following sections (4.2–4.8) encompass studies on macro- and organisational level policy regarding older workers; end of career opportunities; recruitment, training and promotion; intergenerational initiatives in organisations; health and well-being; and experiences of ageism in the workplace. The selected literature was grouped in accordance with the pre-defined themes under the realm of ageism in the workplace. Table 3 below provides an overview of the organisation of this chapter.

Table 3: Overview of Chapter 4

	Macro level policy on older workers (Section 4.2)
	The influence of policy on the individual perception of healthy ageing
	Older adults providing care
	Unemployment among older adults
	Policy concerning older workers
	Tackling ageism in the workplace
	Organisational policy on older workers (Section 4.3)
	End of career opportunities (Section 4.4)
	Work-retirement transition
	Perceptions and effects of retirement among older workers
	The impact of an ageing workforce in society
	Recruitment, training and promotion of older adults (Section 4.5)
	Intergenerational initiatives in organisations (Section 4.6)
	Health and well-being of older workers (Section 4.7)
	Experiences of ageism in the workplace (Section 4.8)

The next section (macro level policy on older workers) gathers publications on the influence of policy on the individual perception of healthy ageing; older adults providing care; unemployment among older adults; policies concerning older workers; and a brief appraisal of ageism in the workplace.

4.2 Macro level policy on older workers

Table 4 below shows the 29 selected studies included in this section. It displays the authors of each study with the corresponding publishing journal as well as the country where the study was conducted or whether the manuscript refers to an overview of literature.

Table 4: Macro level policy on older workers


Author(s) / Year	Journal	Country
Orfao & Malo (2021)	Ageing & Society	Literature
Stengård et al. (2021)	European Journal of ageing	Sweden
Zanasi et al. (2020)	European Journal of Ageing	England
Hamilton & Suthersan (2021)	Ageing & Society	Australia
Koreshi & Alpass (2022)	Ageing & Society	New Zealand
Josten et al. (2022)	Ageing & Society	Netherlands
Stiller et al. (2021)	Ageing & Society	Germany
Qiu et al. (2022)	Ageing & Society	China
Liu et al. (2022)	Ageing & Society	China
Floridi (2022a)	Ageing & Society	Europe
Lestari et al. (2021)	Ageing & Society	Indonesia
Veira-Ramos & Schmelzer (2021)	Ageing & Society	England
Melesk (2021)	Ageing & Society	Europe
Laliberte Rudman & Aldrich (2021)	Journal of Aging Studies	America
Jongenelis et al. (2020)	Research on Aging	Australia
Pham et al. (2020)	Research on Aging	Asia and Europe
Axelrad (2021)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	Israel
Uribe & Flores (2021)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	Mexico
Hsu et al. (2022)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	Taiwan, South Korea, Japan
Baumann & Madero-Cabib (2021)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	Sweden, Denmark, Chile, America
Mandville-Anstey et al. (2022)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	Canada
Menec & Brown (2022)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	Literature
Tang et al. (2021)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	China
Keyes et al. (2022)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	America

Neumark (2022)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	America
World Health Organization's Global Report on Ageism (2021)	Report	Global
Berger (2021)	Book	Canada
Spencer (2021)	Book Chapter	Multicountry
Koreshi & Alpass (2022)	Ageing and Society	New Zealand

Guided by the assumption that older workers can extend their working lives (therefore diminishing their reliance on the state), a policy shift is observed in the Global North: the promotion of active, healthy ageing and age-friendly communities is on the rise (Berger, 2021; Spencer, 2021; Menec & Brown, 2022; Stengård et al., 2021). However, the capacity to keep being economically productive in late life stages is asymmetrically distributed and context dependent, particularly to those who experience unemployment in older age (Laliberte Rudman & Aldrich, 2021). The analysis of the policy discourse on older workers is therefore crucial not only to explore the institutional landscape of extended work lives but also to consider the degree of influence of policies in shaping one's own understanding of this new trend (Lestari et al., 2021; Mandville-Anstey et al., 2022; Menec & Brown, 2022).

4.2.1 The influence of policy on the individual perception of healthy ageing

Mandville-Anstey et al. (2022) perform a critical document analysis of ageing policies in Canada (from 2006 to 2015 in Newfoundland and Labrador) to examine women's perception of health in regard to ageing. The study shows that a healthy ageing policy discourse is conditioned to the maintenance of good health – with “productivity” and “ongoing contribution” appearing as central themes. Critically, Mandville-Anstey et al. (2022) question if the association between one's productive state and well-being would not limit the broad understanding of healthy ageing, once it is portrayed as being conditioned to productive activity. Equivalently, Lestari et al. (2021) examine the relation between 16 Indonesian regional active ageing policies and the subjective elements associated with the construction of older adults' identity. The findings illuminate that older people are categorised in two “constructions”: material (related to the discourse between “decline” and “successful ageing”) and cultural (related to the “public responsibility” and “family obligation” discourse). Lestari et al. (2021) make a distinction between macro (structural) and micro (interpersonal) policy effects. At the individual level, regional active ageing policies paradoxically empower older people, as the perceived goal of “successful ageing” is to be healthy – and at the same time marginalise those who are not able to be healthy, hindering “a rehabilitative approach



as a policy priority” (p.01). At the structural level, older people’s welfare permeates public and private domains, as comprehensive eligibility requirements for governmental assistance transfer the responsibility to the private sector.

4.2.2 Older adults providing care

Beyond the work universe and given the increase in older workers’ participation in the labour market in Australia, Hamilton & Suthersan (2021) flag the lack of institutional attention to the manner in which unpaid care is organised and redistributed. Furthermore, Koreshi & Alpass (2022) propose the enactment of policies and support systems that allow one to juggle work and caregiving in New Zealand. Analysing the decision-making processes of those engaged in work and care-giving, there is a real need to take the socio-demographic changes in the workforce into consideration as well as to support the process of population ageing (ibid). As people may become grandparents while still employed, there is a conflict between the roles of active grandparent and worker. Analysing data from the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) 2002–2017, Zanasi et al. (2020) observe that women with continuous careers, short employment interruptions, and living in wealthy households were more likely to withdraw from the labour market after the birth of the first grandchild.

On the relationship between childcare and extended working life, Floridi (2022a) suggests that governmental support for childcare may facilitate the retention of grandparents in the labour market. The author considers 20 European countries, where all study participants had work commitments (whether or not caring for grandchildren). Nevertheless, those who care for their grandchildren worked eight hours less per week (Floridi, 2022a). In rural China, there is an emerging cultural rupture in the practice of filial piety: the older generation offers support for adult children’s housing and childcare, but these adult children are not equally invested to provide care for their ageing parents (Qiu et al., 2022). Yet in China, Liu et al. (2022) emphasise the demand of crafting a comprehensive social security network for older adults who engage in entrepreneurship, improving wellbeing.

In the Netherlands, Josten et al. (2022) investigate the effects of older workers’ absenteeism due to illness. Older workers who provide informal care tend to display increased absenteeism (both men and women). The authors point out the existence of workplace policies working to prevent carers from reducing their work hours, therefore enabling them to continue working in a healthy way. A reduction in work hours in the years leading up to traditional retirement age can impact post-retirement quality of life (Koreshi & Alpass, 2022).


4.2.3 Unemployment among older adults

The concern with unemployment among older adults also appears in the policy debate on extended working life (Melesk, 2021; Orfao & Malo, 2021; Laliberte Rudman & Aldrich, 2021). Laliberte Rudman & Aldrich (2021) draw on data from an ethnographic study focusing on the negotiation of long-term unemployment in two North American cities (jobseekers aged 50 and older). The findings depict how “broader individualizing neoliberal mandates” (p.01) constrain the way older jobseekers understand and approach later life unemployment. Here, ageism is perceived as an institutional barrier, where service providers adopt a narrow, individualised approach in order to manage it. Older workers are encouraged to be “realistic” as to their limited, precarious employment possibilities. Laliberte Rudman & Aldrich (2021) point out to the need for redesigning policy and services approaches to match the idea of extended working life as a solution for population ageing and the increasing number of old workers in the job market.

Building on the efforts made by both the European Commission and the OECD towards increasing employment rates among older adults in Europe, Orfao & Malo (2021) present a meta-evaluation of 82 studies on the effects of active labour market policies on unemployed people (50+). Overall, these policies bring more benefits to women than men. Furthermore, the authors observe that such policies slightly negatively affect (−0.8 percentage points) the probability of unemployed people (50+) reaching employment, which in turn vanishes 2 years after policy implementation. This negative effect illustrates the heterogeneity of the wide variety of active labour market policies. On the other hand, training policies generate a positive effect (1.7 or 2.4 percentage points) on the chance of finding employment, while direct job creation policies have a negative effect on actually finding a job (−3.9 percentage points). Interestingly, despite the evidence of positive impacts for both men and women, the average effect of active labour market policy on the probability of finding a job is negative for both groups.

4.2.4 Policies concerning older workers

In Mexico, Uribe & Flores (2021) draw attention to productive ageing policies and programs built upon partnerships between the government and private organisations, such as Starbucks in order to study the effects of such relationships. The Mexican government discursively supports older adults’ extended working life through these partnerships with the corporate world, but Uribe & Flores (2021) point out the lack of comprehensive governmental action as to more structural issues, such as inequality, poverty and the scarcity of job opportunities. The authors call for more evidence-based research on the implementation of those partnerships, highlighting the need to gather more knowledge of the costs and benefits




for older adults, factors influencing their decision making towards employment continuity, as well as their functional capacity and performance needs.

Drawing on data from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) Vieira-Ramos & Schmelzer (2021) show the evolution of older people's income (from work and pensions) between 1991 and 2007 in the UK. The results demonstrate that older workers' income (before and after retirement) was affected by processes of deindustrialisation, pension reforms, and the greater availability of jobs in the "knowledge economy". While well-educated and highly qualified men increased their income, women with the same level of educational attainment and qualification did not experience the same phenomenon. Moreover, for both low qualified men and women, there was no substantial loss or increase in income. Vieira-Ramos & Schmelzer (2021) conclude that the improvement on the labour market for qualified workers as well as the reforms benefiting private pension schemes increase the pension asymmetry between educational groups. This in turn illustrates how detrimental the change in pension schemes is for low-qualified men and women either low or highly qualified.

Based on the views of the Chinese government that China is "getting old before getting rich" (Tang et al. 2021, p.01), Tang et al (2021) delve into the effects of the "double drop policy" in the country. Implemented in 2019 and seeking to achieve a balance in contribution among provinces, this policy reduces the rate of employers' contribution to workers' basic pension plan, pursuing an increase in employment in the Chinese labour market. Drawing on data from Heilongjiang and Liaoning provinces in north-eastern China, Tang et al (2021) conclude that the "double drop policy" improves the plan's balance when considering both contributions and benefits, but only due to alterations in employment, coverage, compliance, or economic growth rates. Proposed modifications to reduce the gap between contributions and benefits include: "increases in provincial governments' subsidies (to approximately 8% of total fiscal expenditures), increases in the central government's adjustment proportion (to 11%–15%), and delays in the retirement age (progressively to age 65)" (p.01).

Furthermore, Baumann & Madero-Cabib (2021) approach two social-democratic (Sweden and Denmark) and two liberal welfare regimes (Chile and the United States) to investigate how welfare regime and health impact on retirement pathways in the context of flexible retirement policies. The results show the phenomena of early retirement (in early 60s) and "on-time retirement" frequently occurring in all countries, with social-democratic surpassing liberal welfare regimes as to the rate of early retirement. Moreover, liberal regimes accounted for more negative health conditions among early retirees, which did not happen in social-democratic regimes. Baumann & Madero-Cabib (2021) encountered no evidence of the impact of flexible retirement policies on extended working life, although



there is a clear influence of welfare regime and health on late-life labour force participation.

In Germany, Stiller et al. (2021) consider policy makers' aim to guarantee the sustainability of the social security system by examining safe and healthy working conditions for encouraging employment participation. The results highlight the importance of adopting a "person-centred perspective" (p.1) when analysing working conditions and its consequences. Above all, organisational policy should provide "quality of work" (ibid) in order to design and implement strategies that favour extended working lives.

Albeit crucial, employment is only a component of active ageing (WHO, 2021). Based on the four main domains of active ageing (employment, social participation, independent/healthy/secure living, and enabling environments), Pham et al. (2020) formulate the Active Aging Index (AAI) for Vietnam, then comparing it with those of China, Korea, Taiwan, and 28 EU countries. The review of all 32 countries brought the following results: Vietnam ranked 11th position in the overall position, 1st for employment, 5th for social participation, 32nd for independent/healthy/secure living, and 26th for enabling environments. Possible policy enhancements in light of the results include: maintaining the high rates in older adults' engagement with social and work activities, promoting healthy living approaches and behaviours among older adults as well as augmenting active ageing related aspects, such as poverty risk, lifelong learning and internet usage.

In the US, Keyes et al. (2022) contemplate the successful experience of San Antonio, Texas with ageing-friendly policies to examine the key role municipalities play in policy implementation and community engagement. The authors observe (1) the benefits of age-friendly planning going beyond local departments of services for older adults, (2) planned coordination of policies, and (3) gathering information (mapping) as a tool to help policy makers visualise opportunities and monitor progress. Further on, considering the Taiwanese, Japanese and Korean context, Hsu et al. (2022) discuss how active aging policies may reduce the public stigma toward older adults, therefore softening the difficulties within intergenerational redistribution. In Australia, Jongenelis et al. (2020) joins the discussion on the benefits of volunteering in relation to active, healthy aging policy and practice. The results show that those who engage in volunteering have a more positive perception of it than those who do not, as the former acquire skills and perceive an increase in social connectedness.

4.2.5 Tackling ageism in the workplace

Combating ageism on the policy level is deemed as essential towards the construction of a fair, healthy work environment (Berger, 2021; WHO, 2021). Neumark (2022) approaches age discrimination in hiring as a major

obstacle for older workers to join the job market. Analysing a series of court rulings that expose the discrimination against older workers in the US, a number of policy changes are delineated, as follows:

(...) increasing damages under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) to match the larger damages that some states allow; amending the ADEA to clarify that claims based on statistical differences in the effects of employer policies (“disparate impact claims”) are allowed for hiring discrimination, and that the standard for establishing discrimination is not that age was the determining factor in creating the disparity (the “but for” age criterion), rather that it was simply a contributing factor; amending the ADEA to allow intersectional claims regarding age and other group membership – especially regarding discrimination against older women; extending affirmative action for federal contractors to older workers; and considering strengthening the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). (Neumark, 2022, p.455).

Assessing potential gaps, Axelrad (2021) compared employers’ perceptions on older workers to official data in Israel. The results show the existence of gaps in labour force participation, health status and retirement age, which stand as possible explanations for the obstacles older workers face. Axelrad (2021) suggests the careful elaboration of educational measures and policies to increase employers’ awareness of the official data on the aging workforce in all its detail. The next section presents the literature related to policy on older workers at the organisational level.

4.3 Organisational policy on older workers

Table 5 below shows the 12 selected studies included in this section. It displays the authors of each study with the corresponding publishing journal as well as the country where the study was conducted or whether the manuscript refers to an overview of literature.

Table 5: Organisational policy on older workers


Author(s) / Year	Journal	Country
Egdell et al. (2020)	Ageing & Society	Scotland
Stengård et al. (2021)	European Journal of Ageing	Sweden
Grünwald et al. (2021)	Ageing & Society	Netherlands
Liff & Wikström (2020)	Ageing & Society	Sweden
Arman et al. (2021)	Ageing & Society	Sweden
Kooij et al. (2022)	European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology	Netherlands

Fasbender & Gerpott (2021)	European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology	Germany
Reed & Thomas (2021)	Management Learning	Literature
North (2022)	Frontiers in Psychology	China, America
Manzi et al. (2021)	Frontiers in Psychology	Italy
World Health Organization's Global Report on Ageism (2021)	Report	Global
Berger (2021)	Book Chapter	Canada

As much as the state, private organisations should engage in redesigning their human resources policy framework in order to accompany the social demographic changes occurring in the universe of work. In a societal landscape of increasing organisational influence, older workers should not only be contemplated with job opportunities that fit their skills and profile, but also have their work engagement and satisfaction considered and (ideally) guaranteed by HR policies, which in turn demands the establishment of work environments where ageist attitudes are condemned (Berger, 2021; Fasbender & Gerpott, 2021; Kooij et al., 2022; North, 2022; Reed & Thomas, 2021; WHO, 2021). Moreover, there is a real demand for orchestration in relation to state and organisational initiatives favouring older workers.

Despite legislative efforts to encourage the participation of older adults in the Scottish labour market, Egdell et al. (2020) point out to a lack of organisationally systemic approaches to prepare for the demographic and labour market changes. This qualitative study shows that employees' age and fitness for work is considered on an individual basis rather than approached systematically and structurally, indicating a hands-off approach from management. In Sweden, Arman et al. (2021) explains that older workers are viewed as either representatives of productive ageing and a solution to labour shortage problems, or as a barrier to recruiting younger, more promising employees with new skills. The study also shows how HR human resources departments are working towards maintaining retirement-timing narratives in Swedish workplaces. For the great majority, organisations avoid discussions about delaying the retirement age.

As to management resources within organisations, Reed & Thomas (2021) make a case for the great potential of "management-by-generation". The authors consider this increasingly more common management tool to organise the workforce in generations, which in turn allows management to find the best fit between the employee's characteristics and the task itself. Such "generational characteristics" may help inform the most adequate leadership styles and reward systems (p.47). Below is an excerpt extracted from a senior HR manager participant of Reed &




Thomas' (2021) study that illustrates how the practice of managing by generation is performed.

Basically the thinking behind it is there's no good or bad employees, there's just differences in the profiles. So we help managers have an understanding of what appeals to different profiles in the workforce . . . The message is let's acknowledge those differences and their diversity and what appeals to them, and let's help you manage them . . . (Senior HR) (Reed & Thomas 2021, p.53).

As much as Reed & Thomas (2021), Kooij et al. (2022) endorse the importance of job crafting behaviour, highlighting its key role in retaining older workers through "opportunity-enhancing HR practices". Conducting a survey with 125 Dutch older workers (65+), Kooij et al. (2022) found that such HR practices are associated with changes in psychological empowerment, altering utilisation and developmental crafting behaviours. However, changes in empowerment did not result in changes in accommodative crafting. Although job crafting is organic and emergent, organisations may set adequate conditions for which to flourish.

Manzi et al. (2021) also advocate the elaboration of new HR policies to recognise and enhance the workers' experience, increasing not only productivity but also authenticity, organisational identification and self-rate performance. Interestingly, Manzi et al (2021) suggest tackling age diversity by focusing on organisational practices and skills, where age would not assume a central role. Consequently, stereotypical views on older workers would become less relevant in the organisational space. Yet on job crafting related initiatives, Fasbender & Gerpott (2021) found that HR "accommodation practices" enhanced the relation between occupational self-efficacy and knowledge sharing. Nevertheless, the consequences of such practices are not always positive. While HR practices aided employees with higher occupational self-efficacy, they also contribute to a reduction in knowledge sharing by employees with lower occupational self-efficacy, a product of perceived age discrimination.

Classifying ageism as a "pan-cultural problem" (p.1) and going beyond the view on ageism as limited to chronological age, North (2022) points out to the interconnectedness of age with other factors, such as culture and work experience to delve into a recently developed organisational behaviour framework named "GATE". This tool focuses on prejudice emerging from workers' perceived "Generation (birth cohort), Age (life stage), Tenure (time with organization), and Experience (accumulated skill set over time)" (p.01). From a cross-cultural comparative perspective between the US and China, North (2022) found different perceptions of generation ("boomers" in the US versus Chinese "cultural revolution" workers), age ("United States warm-but-incompetent older adults, versus Eastern pragmatic elder resource concerns"), tenure ("Western job-hopping versus Eastern filial-piety-based loyalty") and experience, which is context dependent. (ibid).



In Sweden, Liff & Wikström (2020) seek to understand why people are retiring earlier than expected despite the existence of policies that increase the retirement age. Results show that HR routines that are deemed essential and rational influence this phenomenon, such as development feedback sessions, salary negotiations and internal recruitment. Yet, prioritising salary demands from younger employees and ceasing training efforts of older workers are seen as “normal”. The authors see a HR policy “redesign” as a feasible solution for organisations who wish to provide prolonged working life for older employees. Furthermore, observing the lack of studies on the influence of psychosocial working conditions on timing of retirement for older workers, Stengård et al. (2021) investigates if appropriate psycho-social working conditions may contribute to prolonged working lives. The authors considered seven waves (2006–2018) of the Swedish Longitudinal Occupational Survey of Health (N=6,000, observations=10,632). They concluded that allowing older workers to have control over their work tasks, providing opportunities for learning and using their skills, as much as rewarding and acknowledging their good performance, may facilitate their working life extension. Stengård et al. (2021) also found that job resources become increasingly more important with age.

In the context of longer working lives, Grünwald et al. (2021) highlight how key is the role played by organisations in helping reconcile older employees’ work and care-giving obligations. Analysing 1,651 Dutch older workers (age 60-65) who provide care at least once a week, the authors found that caregiving is perceived as less stressful by those who have access to phased retirement and organisational health support. Moreover, available organisational support reduces the level of care-giving stress and augments gratification.

The next section presents the literature related to end of career opportunities.

4.4 End of career opportunities

Table 6 below shows the 29 selected studies included in this section. It displays the authors of each study with the corresponding publishing journal as well as the country where the study was conducted or whether the manuscript refers to an overview of literature.

Table 6: End of career opportunities for older workers

Author(s) / Year	Journal	Country
Grødem & Kitterød (2021)	Ageing & Society	Norway
Handley & den Outer (2021)	Ageing & Society	England
Börsch-Supan et al. (2021)	Ageing & Society	France, Germany, Netherlands, UK, Japan, Singapore
Weber & Loichinger (2022)	European Journal of Ageing	Europe/Literature
Hess et al. (2021)	European Journal of Ageing	Germany
Wanka (2020)	European Journal of Ageing	Germany
Platts et al. (2021)	Ageing & Society	Sweden
Tambellini (2021)	Ageing & Society	Europe
Sacco et al. (2021)	Ageing & Society	England
Abrams et al. (2022)	Ageing & Society	America
Qvist (2021)	Ageing & Society	Denmark
Edge et al. (2021)	Ageing & Society	England
Jensen (2021)	Ageing & Society	Denmark, Sweden
Nivalainen (2022)	Ageing & Society	Finland
Apouey (2022)	Ageing & Society	France
Melesk (2021)	Ageing & Society	Europe
Rowson & Phillipson (2020)	Journal of Aging Studies	Brazil, England
Froidevaux et al. (2022)	Research on Aging	Israel
Platts et al. (2022)	Research on Aging	Sweden, Japan, America
Carr et al. (2022)	Research on Aging	America
Kobayashi et al. (2022)	Research on Aging	Japan
Floridi (2022b)	Research on Aging	Italy, South Korea
Lewis & Hill (2020)	Psychology and Aging	America
Lassen & Vrangbæk (2021)	International Journal of Ageing and Later Life	Literature
Pirani et al. (2022)	Journal of Aging and Health	Europe

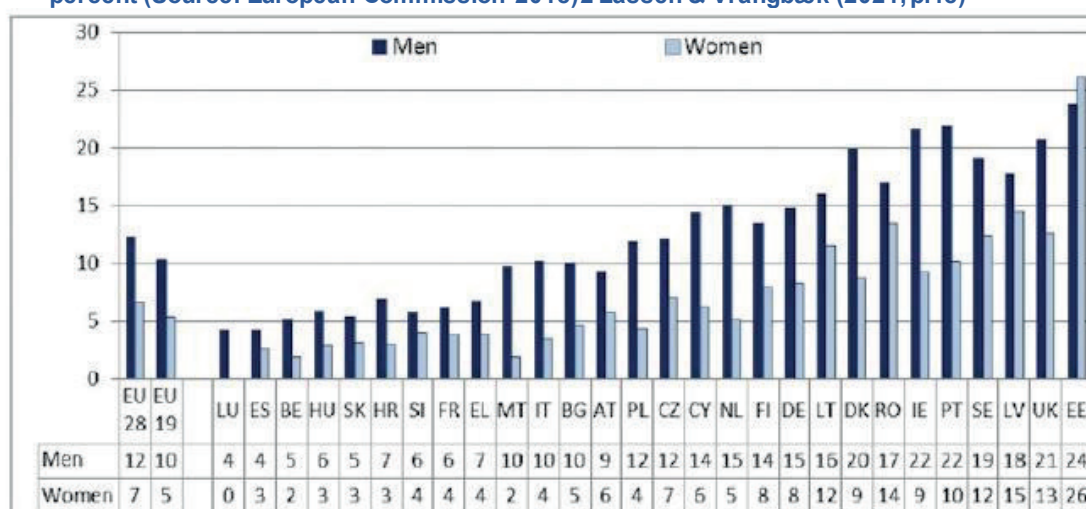
van Solinge et al. (2022)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	Netherlands
Micheel (2021)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	Germany
Farrants et al. (2022)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	Sweden
Nagy et al. (2022)	European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology	Germany

This section is divided into the following subsections: work-retirement transition; perceptions and effects of retirement among older workers; and the impact of an ageing workforce on society.

4.4.1 Work-retirement transition

Lassen & Vrangbæk (2021) conducted a systematic literature review on the tendencies of the transitions from work to retirement in Europe since 2001, where the selected studies illustrate “associational relationships rather than causal explanations” (p.61). Figure 6 below presents the employment rate of older people in different EU countries.

Figure 6: Employment rate of older people in different EU countries in 2016 aged 65–74 in percent (Source: European Commission 2018)² Lassen & Vrangbæk (2021, p.48)



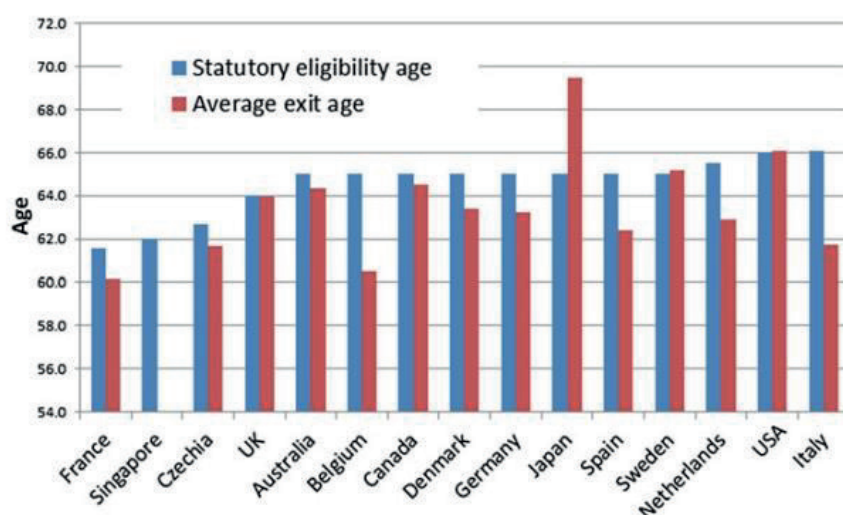
Lassen & Vrangbæk (2021) delineate some tendencies in relation to 21st-century retirement transitions despite being an understudied and highly complex thematic. The agency of macro-, meso- and micro-level factors (economic, policy, labour market and personal context) impact on

² European Commission. (2018). *Pension Adequacy Report 2018: Current and Future Income Adequacy in Old Age in the EU*, vol. 1, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

retirement decision-making in the form of “push”, “pull”, “maintain” and “create” factors. While “pull” and “maintain” (voluntary factors) are important for highly skilled, healthy and well-connected workers, “push” and “need” (involuntary factors) appear to be the reality for many other worker groups. In this sense, flexible retirement schemes favour the former and hinders the latter, who may associate those retirement schemes with labour market deterioration.

Retrieving data from a 2017 OECD’s report, Börsch-Supan et al. (2021) demonstrate the statutory eligibility age and average exit age from a series of countries, as follows (figure7)

Figure 7: Statutory eligibility age and average exit age (Source: OECD 20173) (Börsch-Supan et al., 2021, p.920)




Börsch-Supan et al. (2021) illuminate the important role of country-specific regulations governing pension receipt and old-age labour force participation. Besides the statutory eligibility age for a pension, such country-specific regulations include the following:

(...) earnings tests that limit the amount of earnings when pension benefits are received; the amount of benefit deductions for early retirement; the availability of part-time pensions before normal retirement; special regulations that permit early retirement for certain population groups; and either subsidies or extra costs for employers if they keep older employees in their labour force (Börsch-Supan et al. (2021, p.917).

Making use of the largest sample on adult education of European countries (n=26), Melesk’s (2021) study shows that highly educated men and women participation in non-formal training is higher when the


³ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2017) Pensions at a Glance. Paris: OECD.



retirement age in the country is expected at 65 years or over. Less educated men would not necessarily benefit from a higher retirement age as their participation in training is not considered by retirement policies. Moreover, men after the age of 50 find themselves at risk of unemployment given the increasing higher retirement age in Europe as well as the new required skills to engage with technological advancements (ibid).

Furthermore, using data from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), Pirani et al. (2022) investigates the effect of retirement on health, suggesting that health outcomes are highly dependent on one's context, such as socio-economic and job-related characteristics. The transition from work to retirement years shows to be highly complex, which warrants future research focusing on the causes of premature retirement as well as the economic and health consequences of such a phenomenon (Pirani et al., 2022; Lassen & Vrangbæk, 2021). Pirani et al. (2022) conclude that "while health does not change significantly for those who formally retire, it worsens considerably for those who leave the labour market for other reasons" (p.221). Similarly, Weber & Loichinger (2022) examine the relationship between "partial working life expectancy" and health expectancies that are seen as important for a healthy working life between ages 50 and 59 as well as 60 and 69 for women and men in 26 European countries since 2004. The results show that the years in good physical and cognitive health have increased over time. Moreover, the study confirms the already known positive relationship among education attainment, economic activity and good health, which favours the extension of one's working life. Weber & Loichinger (2022) call attention to the need to enact policies that account for the difference between people's levels of education.


Wanka (2020), Hess et al. (2021), and Micheel (2021) examine the German landscape of work-retirement transition. Drawing on data from the German Time Use Survey (over 6,000 participants aged 55+), Wanka (2020) considers older workers' work-retirement transition to study their everyday lives, leisure activities and lifestyles. The results demonstrate that household chores, media use and personal activities occupy the time one used to spend at work. A series of lifestyles was categorised, as follows: "(1) a passive leisure lifestyle, (2) an active leisure lifestyle, (3) a paid work-centred lifestyle and (4) a housework-centred lifestyle" (p.81). Wanka (2020) highlights the "active leisure" cluster as being formed by an equal share of working and non-working individuals, which in turn shows the potential of this lifestyle to facilitate continuity from work to retirement. Such a continuity was more smoothly negotiated by well educated women who live separated from their partners. Moreover, Hess et al. (2021) analyse the expectations on ideal work arrangements of older workers, particularly as to possible post-retirement employment in Germany, where 50% of participants intend to work while receiving a pension (with a higher share among men and the well-educated). The reasons for keeping



working after retirement may be (1) financially driven, (2) status-driven, (3) contact and fun-driven, and (4) generativity-driven. Highly educated men prefer to work as self-employed, while women and those with lower qualifications would like to remain in their jobs. Hess et al. (2021) highlight that employers should consider the preferences of the “fastest growing labour market group” (p.357) on post-retirement job opportunities. Yet in Germany, a country faced with the challenging active ageing discourse, Micheel (2021) draws on data from the German national survey “Transitions and Old Age Potentials” to assess whether older people are willing to engage in active retirement and the influential factors around this issue. Analysing 1,313 blue- and white-collar workers born between 1946 and 1956, results indicate that older people prioritise unpaid post-retirement activities, which in turn would appear as an important element of the active ageing discourse.

In Sweden and Denmark, Jensen (2021) analyse older workers’ work patterns using a conceptual framework of “push” (involuntary retirement due to poor health), “pull” (voluntary retirement because of welfare benefits), “jump” (exit due to a search for life conditions that are more fulfilling than paid work), “stay” (older workers remain voluntarily in the labour market because work is fulfilling and well paid) and “stuck” (older workers remain involuntarily in the labour market because they cannot afford to retire). Jensen (2021) concludes that low employment rates in Denmark are an effect of a combination of “push–pull–jump factors”, while in Sweden, the high employment rate is due to a combination of “stay–stuck” conditions. In Denmark, Qvist (2021) seeks to quantify the extent to which push factors may serve as an explanation for the working-class’ higher risk of early retirement compared to professionals, where factors, such as poor health, previous experiences of unemployment and low job quality also may contribute to early retirement. In Norway, accounting for the changing work and retirement landscape, Grødem & Kitterød (2021) analyse interviews with 28 private sector employees. Based on the interviews and on the idea of suitable approaches to the work-retirement transition, the authors propose three ideal-typical approaches to the work–retirement transition: “the logic of deadline”, “the logic of negotiation” and “the logic of averting retirement” (p.1). The ideal types are defined by the degree to which informants assume agency in the workplace, their orientation towards work versus retirement and the degree to which they expect to exercise agency in retirement. Retirement decision-making is concomitantly guided by subjective meanings of ageing as well as work and family relationships (ibid).

In Britain, Handley & den Outer (2021) study the narratives of 24 knowledge workers (where work consists of non-routine problem solving) aged 48–58 as they anticipate their future employment and employability. The authors sustain that a person’s age influences others’ evaluations of their employment potential, such that the relationship between attributed merit (based largely on past experience) and attributed potential (based on



assumptions about a person's future) is inverted as workers become older. The findings have implications for public policies such as "Extending Working Lives". Policies that remove legal and institutional barriers to extended working lives may be only partially successful without changes to cultural attitudes about older workers' employment potential (Handley & den Outer, 2021). Furthermore, Sacco et al. (2021) found that engagement in productive activities (paid and non-paid) was more common for those who are wealthy and in good health in Britain. As the benefits from the engagement in productive activities are mainly harvested by the wealthy, policies should boost participation in these initiatives and activities, avoiding taking a "blanket approach" (p.25).


From an individual analytical perspective, Floridi (2022b) conceptualises two possible rationales for engaging with productive work in later life stages: capacity and necessity. The author makes use of the SHARE and KLoSa surveys to compare men and women aged 50–75 in Italy and South Korea. In Italy, the "generous" "later-life social protection" (p.01) allows the wealthier and higher-educated individuals to engage more with productive activities. In Korea, on the other hand, given its limitations in social protection, disadvantaged women have the necessity to continue performing "economically productive" tasks (ibid).

In the US, Carr et al. (2022) follow Frank Caro and colleagues' foundational work on productive ageing (PA) literature to move beyond the focus on the health benefits associated with work and volunteering. Drawing on data from the US Health and Retirement Study (n = 6,239 and 8,002), Carr et al. (2022) investigate whether or not such a productive engagement lasts over a long period of time by considering participants' (aged 56-68) work and volunteer activities over 12 years. This quantitative study suggests the creation of programs and interventions that motivate volunteering among full-time workers planning to retire in the subsequent 5 years, which could then increase quality of life in retirement as a result of a retirement period with "long-term phases of part-time work and moderate levels of volunteering" (p.11).

4.4.2 Perceptions and effects of retirement among older workers

Also drawing on data from SHARE, Tambellini (2021) analyses how the transition to retirement affects female subjective wellbeing. The results show that some of the trajectories (constituted of discontinuity or part-time periods), exhibit a continuous increase in life satisfaction, passing from employment (or unemployment) to retirement. For other trajectories, such as the full-time one, retirement seems not to have implications for subjective wellbeing.

In France, Apouey (2022) investigates subjective perceptions of retirement among individuals aged 40-84 who are either working (n= 923) or retired




(n=705). The results show that both populations face the “retirement transition” positively, defining it as “a period of freedom”. Most importantly, the study uncovers that perceptions of retirement are influenced by social conditions and characteristics, where a higher level of education and income, greater wealth, better health and stronger social involvement configure beneficial perceptions of such a life stage. In Germany, delving into the subjectivity inherent to age – “the perceived age” in the context of work and retirement, Nagy et al. (2022) examine the relationship between subjective age and retirement intentions given their influence on career outcomes. This longitudinal study encompassed 337 workers with six measurement waves across 15 months using “between- person” and “within-person” as levels of analysis. Unsurprisingly, the authors found a positive relation between subjective age and retirement intentions (at between-person level). Further on, subjective age is predicted by retirement intentions but not vice versa (at within-person level).

Van Solinge et al. (2022) draw on data from 1,247 Dutch older workers, delving into the effects of phased retirement on vitality. The results demonstrate that overall phased retirement augments vitality for workers. Intriguingly, phased retirement produced similar, positive effects among workers with and without serious health conditions and caregiving commitments. On premature retirement in Finland, Nivalainen (2022) defends the decrease of work tasks for, and the increase of a sense of control of, older workers as a way to prevent it. According to the author, retention of older workers is facilitated by the support of continued employment, where layoffs would contribute to the shortening of one’s working life.

Furthermore, exploring the factors that enable or inhibit older workers to extend their working life in the UK, Edge et al. (2021) found that good health, the perception that older workers are of value, flexibility and choice, and the need for an ongoing conversation across the life course posed as facilitators of extending working life. On the other hand, perceived barriers were poor health, negative impacts of work on health, and a lack of respect and support.

Through biographical-narrative interviews with 20 retired male academics in Brazil and the UK, Rowson & Phillipson (2020) discusses the transition towards retirement and the continuity of academic work in retirement. The results demonstrate the high degree of uniqueness and subjectivity of the transition in light of each participant’s trajectory and sense making of their own experiences. While the characteristics of the job role and organisational retirement policies play a key role in the narratives, cultural and social context factors were perceived as less important in the continuity of academic work in retirement.

Abrams et al. (2022) delves into the retirement implications of the 2008 Great Recession on the ageing baby-boomers and how such a process



has influenced the American perception of, and expectations from, retirement as well as its timing. With a sample of 12,049 respondents, the following results were found: 34% completely decided not to work at age 62, while 21% firmly affirmed it was very likely to do so at that age. Overall, the participants reported to have met their expectations about their work status (present and future). Abrams et al.'s (2022) illustrate how important it is to pay attention to the high rates of participants not envisaging to be active at work at age 62. Further on, Lewis & Hill (2020) address whether engagement in leisure activities can be associated with purpose in life and whether this association changes as to retirement status. Using data from the US Health and Retirement Study between 2008 and 2016, participants demonstrated enhanced sense of purpose when engaging in leisure activities. Although retirees reported a decline in sense of purpose, this was attenuated by greater activity engagement. Lewis & Hill's (2020) study sheds light on the importance of older people's engagement in leisure activities in order to keep their sense of purpose during retirement.

In Israel, Froidevaux et al. (2022) considers the negative effects of “retirement anxiety”, which contributes to older workers' concerns as to the consequences of their retirement. The authors evaluate 327 older workers' subjective “nearness-to-death” and its relationship with retirement anxiety, uncovering a positive association between the latter and the former when self-definition and self-investment were both high or were both low. Froidevaux et al. (2022) suggest that retirement planning workshops should be offered to workers from the age of 45 or 50, allowing for reflections on their concerns with future retirement transition.

4.4.3 The impact of an ageing workforce on society

What is the impact of an increased retirement age on individuals and communities? Considering a nationwide longitudinal survey with a probability sample of Japanese aged 60 and over (n 1/4 3,493), Kobayashi et al. (2022) examine how age influences the association between transition into retirement and participation in social activities after retirement. The results show that retired people were more likely to engage in social activities than older workers – but only if retirement is reached around their early seventies. The study illuminates the necessity to encourage engagement in social activities before retirement, pointing out to the need to remove psychosocial barriers for older people to start a new activity.

The Swedish work context is an object of analysis for Farrants et al. (2022), Platts et al. (2021), and Platts et al. (2022). Farrants et al. (2022) use longitudinal data of all residents aged 60+ in Sweden to analyse the impact of the increasing workforce on social insurance systems. Despite the expansion in paid work from 2000 to 2010, the authors highlight the

need to strengthen the possibilities to remain in paid work with different health conditions, which in turn is crucial to reduce inequalities when extending the retirement age. Similarly, Platts et al. (2021) studies the work context of those in their mid- to late sixties and early seventies who were working and claiming pension. The authors found that paid work at this stage is characterised by a sense of intrinsic reward, where job commitment is reaffirmed. The oldest workers were able to manage the temporal flexibility of their jobs in order to maintain the autonomy and freedom that retirement represents, while employees on short-term contracts or self-employed continuously reassessed their decision to work. Subsequently, Platts et al. (2022) look at the increasing numbers of older workers who keep working despite being eligible to claim a state pension to examine how satisfied they feel with their careers. The authors draw on data from the Swedish Longitudinal Occupational Survey of Health (n = 13,936–15,520), Japanese Study of Ageing and Retirement (n= 3,704) and the US Health and Retirement Study (n = 6,239 and 8,002). Considering the analysis of job quality (psychosocial and physical) and job satisfaction, the results in each country show that regardless of gender or educational attainment, such “post-pensionable-age jobs” were “generally less stressful, freer and more satisfying than jobs held by younger workers” (p.01).

The next section delves into the recruitment, training and promotion of older adults.

4.5 Recruitment, training and promotion of older adults

Table 7 below shows the 10 selected studies included in this section. It displays the authors of each study with the corresponding publishing journal as well as the country where the study was conducted or whether the manuscript refers to an overview of literature.

Table 7: Recruitment, training and promotion of older adults

Author(s) / Year	Journal	Country
Previtali & Spedale (2021)	Journal of Aging studies	Italy
Garthe & Hasselhorn (2021)	Ageing & Society	Germany
Laliberte Rudman & Aldrich (2021)	Journal of Aging studies	America
Halvorsen et al. (2022)	Research on Aging	America
<u>Neumark (2022)</u>	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	America

Helleseeter et al. (2020)	Journal of Human Resources	Mexico, China
Hebl et al. (2020)	Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior.	Literature
World Health Organization's Global Report on Ageism 2021	Report	Global
Berger (2021)	Book	Canada
Ciampa & Chernesky (2021)	Book Chapter	Multicountry

Age discrimination in hiring is a major obstacle for older workers to (re)join the job market (Berger, 2021; Neumark, 2022; Hebl et al., 2020; WHO, 2021). Many employment policies and practices have implicit age biases with regard to recruitment, selection, performance appraisal and assignment to training opportunities (Ciampa & Chernesky, 2021). In her study, Berger (2021) observes the preponderance of negative age stereotypes that manifest in recruitment and training opportunities over positive attitudes towards older workers. The author illustrates how older adults seeking employment perceived ageist attitudes in the hiring process, developing a stigma about their own age. Canadian employers examined participants' CV in a discriminatory fashion, for example by selecting candidates to interview based on the year their degree was obtained or the number of years of experience they had. Moreover, participants felt that employers guessed their age during the job interview and used "ageist language during the hiring process" (Berger, 2021, p.73). Facing discrimination by potential employers, the participants in Berger's study developed a series of strategies to reduce the influence of ageism on employment opportunities, such as keeping up to date with training (especially IT related), concealing age by eliminating previous work experience on the CV, making alterations towards a youthful appearance (i.e., hair dye), and reducing expectations and employment goals – that which Laliberte Rudman & Aldrich (2021) attributed as a "realistic" employment possibility, as portrayed by employers..

Based on longitudinal data from 2,835 participants ("baby-boomers"), Garthe & Hasselhorn (2021) provide evidence on occupational changes in the older workforce in Germany, highlighting that change among older workers is common (13.4% changed employer, 10.5% profession and 45.1% work tasks). Moreover, the unfulfilled desire to change was 17.6% for profession, 13.2% for employer and 8.9% for work. Garthe & Hasselhorn (2021) argue for the need of a greater attention to occupational change of older workers, particularly to those who would like to engage in change but perceive it as an impossible goal. Considering the Chinese and Mexican work contexts, Helleseeter et al. (2020) found that employers explicitly use age and gender in specific requests for jobs, more specifically in less-skilled ones. The way employers make such requests

varies in accordance with task-specific differences in the “relative productivity of men and women”, revealing that ongoing skill upgrading can reduce “negative skill–targeting relationship” in those economies (p.428).


Previtali & Spedale (2021) see change in the organisational culture as the most efficient way to tackle ageism in the workplace, therefore nurturing a space where discriminatory age stereotypes are suppressed, allowing for the implementation of workplace policies based on equality and inclusion. Analysing the US Federal Senior Community Service Employment Program, Halvorsen et al. (2022) explores how “on-the-job training” to people over 55 positively influences participation and well-being. The implementation of health and well-being outcomes to achieve older employees’ satisfaction and performance is deemed as pivotal (ibid). In this sense, intergenerational initiatives in the workplace may augment not only well-being but also productivity of workers, as the next section shows.

4.6 Intergenerational initiatives in organisations

Table 8 below shows the 8 selected studies included in this section. It displays the authors of each study with the corresponding publishing journal as well as the country where the study was conducted or whether the manuscript refers to an overview of literature.

Table 8: Intergenerational initiatives in organisations

Author(s) / Year	Journal	Country
Jarrott & Lee (2022)	Research on Aging	Literature
Hsu et al. (2022)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	Taiwan, South Korea, Japan
Fasbender & Gerpott (2021)	European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology	Germany
Fasbender & Drury (2021)	European Journal of work and Organizational Psychology	Germany
Yeung et al. (2021)	Frontiers in Psychology	Hong Kong
Rožman & Milfelner (2022)	Frontiers in Psychology	Slovenia
World Health Organization’s Global Report on Ageism (2021)	Report	Global
Jarrot et al. (2021)	Research on Aging	Literature



Intergenerational relations and “mutual understanding” would be beneficial in tackling ageism or age discrimination in the workplace (Hsu et al., 2022; WHO, 2021). Studies have illuminated that focused intergenerational leadership has a positive impact on older employees’ work engagement. In a Slovenian study with 583 older employees, Rožman & Milfelner (2022) illustrate how important it is to consider the needs of older workers by applying age specific management tools, as also shown by Fasbender & Gerpott (2021) and Reed & Thomas (2021). Rožman & Milfelner (2022) found that the negative impact of intergenerational leadership on emotional burnout is stronger in large organisations than small ones.

Despite the understanding that intergenerational knowledge sharing is beneficial to organisational performance, Fasbender & Gerpott (2021) investigate the reasons why such a process is usually hindered in German organisations. Considering a sample of over 400 older workers, the latter perceive age discrimination as a detrimental factor to their job performance and capabilities, therefore reducing their interaction with younger workers. Fasbender & Gerpott’s (2021) findings dialogue with Fasbender & Drury (2021) and Yeung et al. (2021). Yet in Germany, Fasbender & Drury (2021) examine age-diverse friendship in the workplace and its related organisational consequences. The authors argue that age-diverse friendship may generate the perception of “oneness” by both younger and older actors (N=186). Such a perception offers a positive outcome (facilitation to cooperate, therefore slightly increasing job satisfaction and reducing turnover) as well as a negative one (occurrence of “interrole conflict” which leads to lower job satisfaction and turnover intentions). In Hong Kong, Yeung et al. (2021) explain that older workers manage their emotional reactions to organisational intergenerational conflicts by decreasing their attention to negative stimuli.

Jarrott & Lee (2022) point out to the need of intergenerational programme practitioners of having access to evaluation, interprofessional, and programming resources. Similarly, Jarrott et al. (2021) explain the overall difficulty to identify evidence-based intergenerational practices as “intergenerational program research frequently consists of small samples and pre-post analyses of attitudinal data with little attention to implementation characteristics” (p. 283).

In what follows, the issue of health and well-being of older workers is examined.


4.7 Health and well-being of older workers

Table 9 below shows the 15 selected studies included in this section. It displays the authors of each study with the corresponding publishing journal as well as the country where the study was conducted or whether the manuscript refers to an overview of literature.

Table 9: Health and well-being of older workers

Author(s) / Year	Journal	Country
Kauppi et al. (2021a)	European journal of Ageing	Finland
Kauppi et al. (2021b)	European journal of Ageing	Finland
Mutambudzi & Henkens (2020)	European journal of Ageing	Netherlands
Doan et al. (2022)	Ageing & Society	Australia
Rodriguez & Saenz (2021)	Ageing & Society	Mexico
Ågotnes et al. (2021)	Ageing & Society	Norway
Sellon (2021)	Ageing & Society	America
Vanajan et al. (2020)	Age and Ageing	Netherlands
Schimmel et al. (2022)	Research on Aging	America
Lim-Soh & Lee (2022)	Research on Aging	Korea
Frazier & Brown (2022)	Journal of Aging and Health	America
Voss et al. (2020)	Journal of Aging and Health	America
Morris (2020)	Journal of Aging and Health	Europe
Scheibe (2021)	European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology	Netherlands
World Health Organization's Global Report on Ageism (2021)	Report	Global

Social networks are associated with an individual's health and well-being, playing a key role in active ageing (WHO, 2021). While work life facilitates the creation and maintenance of social networks, retirement may act in detriment to the latter's expansion (Kauppi et al. 2021a; Lim-Soh & Lee 2022). In Korea, Lim-Soh & Lee (2022) examine retirees' formal and informal social participation over time with interesting results. In comparison with their working peers, retirees gradually decrease the frequency in which they meet friends and abruptly decrease the frequency in which they attend social gatherings. Based on the findings, the authors point out the risk of social isolation and health deterioration among Korean retirees. In Finland, Kauppi et al. (2021a) studied the changes occurring in social networks (inner, middle and outer ties) across retirement and post retirement periods. The research involved 2,319 participants (84% women, mean age 63.2 years) from the Finnish Retirement and Aging Study and concluded that the number of outer circle ties decreased by 95% during the pre-retirement period – but not during the post retirement period. Changes in the inner and the middle circle were not significantly decreased. This suggests that reduction in social networks ties may be associated with retirement rather than aging. Findings from Kauppi et al.




(2021a) corroborate Kauppi et al. (2021b). Yet drawing on data from the Finnish Retirement and Aging Study followed between 2014 and 2019 (with a sample of 4,014 Finnish public sector workers where 83% were women, aged 62.56 ± 1.21), Kauppi et al. (2021b) concluded that a range of characteristics of social relationships, “such as having a working spouse, living alone, and high frequency of social engagement, predicted an extension of employment beyond the pensionable age” (p. 491).

Drawing on data from the 2013 and 2015 waves of the Survey of Health, Aging, and Retirement in Europe (encompassing 10,154 workers between the ages of 50 and 65 from 14 countries), Morris (2020) found that “loneliness was predictive of future work disability onset when adjusting for other factors in the disablement process” (p. 554). Moreover, depression may mediate the longitudinal relationship between loneliness and work disability. Therefore, addressing older workers’ loneliness decreases the risk of depression, which in turn diminishes disability onset.

Ågotnes et al. (2021) propose a greater involvement of volunteers to enhance health and care services for older adults in Norway, while Sellon (2021) endorses the same in the US, particularly for those with disabilities. Yet in the US, Voss et al. (2020) investigate the negative impacts on older workers’ physical and mental health brought by job loss. While late-career unemployment was not associated with decline in physical health in retirement, unemployment was related with involuntary retirement timing and mental health declines in the retirement period. Voss et al. (2020) conclude that late unemployment in one’s working career should therefore be addressed as a “public mental health concern” (p. 106). Moreover, considering data from the Health and Retirement Study (HRS) on Black workers aged 51 and older in the US ($N = 924$), Frazier & Brown (2022) examine the relation between work-related stress and insomnia. The results show that “job lock” (due to financial reasons) and “job stress” increased the occurrence of insomnia among Black workers, while participation in religious activities decreased the harmful effects of job lock. Interestingly, Frazier & Brown (2022) found that “religiosity exacerbates the effects of job stress on insomnia symptoms” (p. 424). Also drawing on the Health and Retirement Study, Schimmel et al. (2022) investigates the link between disability onset and occupational transition at age 55. The results show that 25% of workers experience a disability before retirement age. Compared to those who do not have a disability, disabled workers tend to stop working and go through more occupational changes. Schimmel et al. (2022) highlight the need for policies that help workers remain in their jobs despite their experience of new disabilities.

In a Mexican longitudinal study, Rodriguez & Saenz (2021) explores the relationship between work and cognitive functioning, investigating whether cognitive benefits are harvested by those who work later into life. Sourcing data from the Mexican Health and Aging Study (MHAS with 7,375 adults age 50+) and assessing cognitive functioning by verbal learning, delayed



recall and visual scanning, Rodriguez & Saenz (2021) concluded that working actively can be “associated with cognitive performance only in context with occupation” (p.1). The decline in verbal learning occurs faster for domestic workers than administrative staff, salespeople and educators, illuminating that either protection or harm of cognitive functioning depends on the type of work being performed.

In the Netherlands, Mutambudzi & Henkens (2020), Vanajan et al. (2020), and Scheibe (2021) examine the health and well-being of older workers with poor health conditions. Mutambudzi & Henkens (2020) investigate the context of 6,793 adults aged 60-65 years and their relationship with chronic health conditions (CHCs). Based on the premise that there will be an increase in the percentage of older workers with CHCs performing demanding tasks, the results were, as follows: “1) sleep disorders and arthritis were significantly associated with general stress. 2) respiratory disorders, sleep disorders, and arthritis were significantly associated with physical demands. 3) diabetes, sleep disorders, and arthritis were significantly associated with emotional demands” (ibid, p.499). The authors advocate public health interventions in the workplace to guarantee physical and mental health as well as productivity of older workers. In parallel, Vanajan et al. (2020) analyse how health related working limitations and vitality influence the retirement preferences of older workers experiencing chronic health conditions. While older workers with arthritis and cardiovascular disease may retire early due to health-related work limitations, older workers with sleep and psychological disorders may retire early due to low levels of vitality. Further on, Scheibe (2021) investigates if advanced age gives employees an advantage when facing negative work experiences through their higher emotion-regulation skills. As negative work events impact on attention, motivation, and well-being, the research recruited 123 older workers (aged 22 to 63 years) who then wrote 1,092 daily reports on “affective work events, emotion regulation, attentional focus, persistence, and end-of-day affect” for two weeks (p.872). The findings showed that the association of high intensity events with emotion-regulation goals were reduced at higher age, demonstrating older workers’ greater resilience to daily stress.

In Australia, Doan et al. (2022) explore the number of hours relatively healthy older workers can work before compromising their health. Considering older workers aged 50–70 years and using data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA 2005-2016 with 44,900 participants), Doan et al. (2022) explain that age is not the most influential limiting factor for how many hours older adults can work. Rather, their health and the types of jobs are critical, and likely widen the gap in who ages successfully or not. Crucially relevant to the well-being of workers is the experience of an (ideally) ageism-free work context, as follows.

4.8 Experiences of ageism in the workplace

Table 10 below shows the 22 selected studies included in this section. It displays the authors of each study with the corresponding publishing journal as well as the country where the study was conducted or whether the manuscript refers to an overview of literature.

Table 10: Experiences of ageism in the workplace

Author(s) / Year	Journal	Country
Previtali & Spedale (2021)	Journal of Aging Studies	Italy
Sugisawa (2022)	Ageing & Society	Japan
Cebola et al. (2021)	Ageing & Society	Literature
Taylor & Earl (2021)	Ageing & Society	Australia
Van der Horst & Vickerstaff (2021)	Ageing & Society	Literature
Kleissner & Jahn (2020a)	Frontiers in Psychology	Germany
Kleissner & Jahn (2020b)	Research on Aging	Germany
Axelrad (2021)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	Israel
Hsu et al. (2022)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	Taiwan, South Korea, Japan
Kim et al. (2021)	Journal of Aging & Social Policy	15 OECD countries
Fasbender & Gerpott (2021)	European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology	Germany
Goecke & Kunze (2020)	European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology	America
Hebl et al. (2020)	Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior	Literature
Kreiner et al. (2022)	Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior	Literature
Reed & Thomas (2021)	Management Learning	Literature
Crozier & Woolnough (2020)	Management Learning	England
North (2022)	Frontiers in Psychology	China, America
Manzi et al. (2021)	Frontiers in Psychology	Italy


World Health Organization's Global Report on Ageism (2021)	Report	Global
Berger, E. (2021)	Book	Canada
Blackstone, A. (2021)	Book Chapter	Multicountry
Corrigan & Morgan (2020)	Report	Multicountry

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) used to bill itself as “the place to work for millennials” with a “strikingly young” workforce. The firm’s unabashedly direct appeal for youth landed them in court with a class action lawsuit. In the relentless pursuit of the young that helps them feel like they’re shoring up their DI (digital intelligence), many companies have put themselves at risk not just of lawsuits, but of creating exclusionary workplaces that marginalize women, minorities, and, yes, middle-aged workers.” (Conley, 2018, p.410)

Agreeing with the WHO’s (2021) concept that age is a fluid rather than strictly chronological phenomenon, Goecke & Kunze (2020) characterise subjective age as an ever-changing social construct, varying “between- and within-person” throughout time. Currently, based on the fact that older workers are often the target of discrimination in the workplace (Axelrad, 2021; Berger, 2021; Corrigan & Morgan, 2020; Fasbender & Gerpott, 2021; Hebl et al., 2020; Kreiner et al., 2022; North, 2022; WHO, 2021), Taylor & Earl (2021) identify the emergence of a “fake age advocacy” that hinders an informed, public discussion on older workers’ employment in Australia. Aiming at providing a base for a responsible debate on this thematic, the authors elaborate the following “five underlying principles” concerning older workers:

(...) countering myths concerning the extent and nature of age barriers in the labour market; avoiding and challenging the use of age stereotypes in making the business case for older workers’ employment; recognition that age interacts in complex ways with a range of other factors in determining people’s experiences of the labour market; challenging public understanding that is grounded in the notion that generational conflict is inevitable; and discarding traditional notions of the life course in order to overcome disjunctions and contradictions that hamper efforts to encourage and support longer working lives (Taylor & Earl, 2021, p.1).

Combining 33 quantitative and 21 qualitative studies, Cebola et al. (2021) present a systematic literature review on work-related ageism. The multifaceted, transversal nature of ageism in the workplace is observed, as it is present in various work contexts, such as IT, advertising, financial, education, health care, journalism, hospitality, employment tribunal court and human resources. Ageism is detectable in a plurality of aspects, such as obstacles in the hiring process, employability and performance evaluation of older workers. While older workers may suffer mentally and




physically due to ageism, organisational frameworks, such as “age management” and “management by generation” (Reed & Thomas, 2021) are still scarcely used. Intergenerational activities are seen as effective to tackle ageism, changing the overall perception of older workers as inefficient (Cebola et al., 2021).

In Italy, Manzi et al. (2021) study with over 8,000 participants analyses the combined consequences of “age-based” and “gender stereotype threat” on work identity processes and work performance of older adults. The results indicate that ageism negatively impacts older workers’ authenticity as well as their sense of organisational identification. For women over 50, ageism and gender stereotypes are twice more likely to appear in the workplace than for men in the same age range (ibid). Yet in Italy, Previtali & Spedale (2021) hold a discussion on age as an influential “ordering”, “divisive” element” in the organisational context, defining hierarchies, career paths, and the employer-employee relationship. Through analysis of video recordings of performance appraisal interviews at a labour union, and based on the idea of age as a “constructed social category”, they identify three ways of “doing age” (p.01): “*quantification* (e.g., number of years in the organisation), *ageing within the organisation*, and *age-group membership identification* (e.g., ‘young’ vs. ‘old’)” (ibid, authors’ italics). Previtali & Spedale (2021) argue that ageism in work relations acts in detriment of a modern, inclusive workplace, highlighting the malleable social context through and by which ageism is enacted and suggesting that the latter is reproduced by the practices of both employers and employees via a given organisational culture that allows the organisation to function.

Corroborating Manzi et al. (2021) and Previtali & Spedale (2021), Kleissner & Jahn (2020a) observe that ageism can lead to discrimination and low productivity in the German context. The results of the Implicit Association Test show “a stable, moderate implicitly measurable preference for younger over older workers” (p.01). Yet, while younger workers were positively classified as to performance and adaptability, older workers scored well on competence, reliability, and warmth. Furthermore, Kleissner & Jahn (2020b) investigate the main elements of work-related age stereotypes (performance, adaptability, reliability, and warmth) and how they vary across 180 nurses aged between 19 and 63 in Germany. While older nurses were perceived as “more competent, less physically strong, and less adaptable”, younger nurses were characterised as “less reliable and less warm”. Furthermore, “in-group bolstering” occurred in all age groups, albeit accentuated among older professionals (ibid, p.126).

Hebl et al. (2020) and Kreiner et al. (2022) observe how the particularities of one’s cultural and organisational context affect stigma and discrimination. Kreiner et al. (2022) discuss how stigma is an effect of workplace related issues (such as occupation and status) and/or relates to




personal characteristics, such as age and disability. On the other hand, Previtali & Spedale (2021) expose that employers' ageist attitudes towards older workers is based on the "negative attributes socially attached to older persons as a homogenous group" (p.01) rather than emerging from the particularities of the work context. Furthermore, Hebl et al. (2020) conduct a review of the history, current state, and future of modern discrimination in organisations in the US, bringing the following four key lessons: (1) the number of older workers keep increasing as people are working longer before retiring, (2) despite evidence of the benefits older workers may bring to organisations, they are seen as less productive, more resistant to change, and more costly, (3) negative stereotypes in relation to older workers are "deeply embedded", and many experience age discrimination at work or during recruitment. At work, Blackstone (2021, p.37) shows that her study participants experienced offensive age-related joking (about themselves and others), "comments or behaviors that demeaned participants' age; and unwanted questions about participants' private lives". In addition, participants were "isolated from important work activities" (ibid, p.37).

With a sample of 1,619 participants, Hsu et al. (2022) examine the relationship of active ageing behaviour with the perceptions of older adults across Taiwan, South Korea and Japan. While the Taiwanese attributed more importance to health, social participation, and security, Koreans and Japanese people favoured social connectedness and work. Moreover, Japanese display more negative attitudes towards older people than Taiwanese people, and Koreans were less prone to live with older adults than the Taiwanese. Similar to Hebl et al.'s (2020) findings in the US, public stigma of ageing was observable in the three analysed countries, where intergenerational relations and "mutual understanding" would be beneficial in tackling ageism or age discrimination (Hsu et al., 2022).

Kim et al. (2021) compared the occurrence of ageism in 15 OECD countries using the Comparative Macro-Level Ageism Index. The results showed that Turkey presented the highest ageism score, while Japan displayed the lowest due to its favourable conditions for older adults' economic and health status as well as social participation. In the workplace, South Korea was indicated as the least likely country to engage in discrimination, albeit it scored high in discrimination against older adults as per economic status. In Japan, Sugisawa (2022) considered four models to examine the psychosocial predictors of discrimination against older workers (Intergroup Contact Theory, Knowledge–Attitude–Behaviour Model, Terror Management Theory and Frustration–Aggression Theory). The study suggests that enhancing the quality of interactions and, at the same time, reducing bad interactions with older workers can contribute to lower levels of discrimination against the latter.

As an example of the multidirectional nature of ageism (WHO, 2021), Crozier & Woolnough (2020) point out how ageism experienced by young



academics in universities contribute to the former's development of a conflict between internal and external perceptions of required identities, imposter syndrome, and feelings of marginalisation in the workplace. Furthermore, van der Horst & Vickerstaff (2021) propose a redefinition of the term “ageism” as a way to distinguish it from “ableism” (the discrimination in favour of able-bodied people). While seeing a close relation between those two nomenclatures, the authors claim that making such a differentiation would allow for the design of more specific and effective policy on how to support older workers.

This chapter discussed the following predefined themes: (1) macro level policy on older workers (the influence of policy on the individual perception of healthy ageing; older adults providing care; unemployment among older adults; policies concerning older workers; tackling ageism in the workplace), (2) organisational policy on older workers, (3) end of career opportunities (work-retirement transition; perceptions and effects of retirement among older workers; the impact of an ageing workforce on society), (4) recruitment, training and promotion of older adults, (5) intergenerational initiatives in organisations, (6) health and well-being of older workers, and (7) experiences of ageism in the workplace. The next chapter presents the concluding remarks and recommendations aiming to tackle ageism in the workplace.

5. Concluding Remarks & Recommendations

This chapter assembles the key learning outcomes from the selected studies of the systematic literature review. It presents the concluding remarks and recommendations in accordance with the role of government, civil society and organisations in tackling ageism.

5.1. The role of government and civil society in tackling ageism


Recommendations:

Redesign and enact policy to (1) enhance the understanding and scope of healthy, active ageing; (2) augment social security networks; (3) facilitate working life extension; (4) increase awareness of, and damage under anti-discrimination legislation; (5) support more evidence-based research on the implementation of public-private partnerships, gathering more knowledge on

(a) the costs and benefits for older adults, (b) factors influencing their decision making process towards employment continuity, (c) as well as their functional capacity and performance needs.

There is a real need to consider the socio-demographic changes in the workforce as well as to support the process of population ageing, as they affect retirement structures, employment and social policies, labour market trends, global workforces, work environments, and social insurance programs workplaces (Ciampa & Chernesky, 2021). The increasing institutional concern with active ageing in western industrialised nations, which enhances the visibility of older adults and their role in society, appears as a positive shift towards the recognition of older people's human rights and productive capabilities. Active aging policies may reduce the public stigma toward older adults (Hsu et al., 2022), however, it is relevant to increase the understanding and scope of healthy ageing not to marginalise those who are unable to age healthy (Mandville-Anstey et al., 2022).

Reducing stigma and challenging stereotypes of older people should occur in a faster and more substantial manner. Older workers are still encouraged to be "realistic" as to their limited, precarious employment possibilities. Moreover, prioritising salary demands from younger employees is seen as "normal" as much as ceasing training efforts of older workers (Laliberte Rudman & Aldrich, 2021; Liff & Wikström, 2020). The productive ageing policies and programs built upon public-private partnerships are an effective way of moving forward, albeit far from being an all-encompassing solution. The state has the responsibility to take comprehensive action as to more structural issues, such as inequality, poverty and the scarcity of job opportunities within the universe of older workers (Uribe & Flores, 2021). After the age of 50, workers find themselves at risk of unemployment given the increasing higher retirement age in Europe as well as the new required skills to engage with technological advancements (Melesk, 2021). Factors such as good health, the perception that older workers are of value, flexibility and choice, and the need for an ongoing conversation across the life course facilitate working life extension. On the other hand, poor health, negative impacts of work on health, ageism, and a lack of respect and support are the perceived barriers (Edge et al., 2021). Research has demonstrated that "health does not change significantly for those who formally retire but worsens considerably for those who leave the labour market for other reasons" (Pirani et al., 2022, p.221). For those who intend to work while receiving a pension, the reasons for doing so may be (1) financially driven, (2) status-driven, (3) contact and fun-driven, and (4) generativity-driven. Policies that remove legal and institutional barriers to extended working lives may be only partially successful without changes to cultural attitudes



about older workers' employment potential (Handley & den Outer, 2021; Hess et al., 2021).

Furthermore, observing the holistic reality of older workers, it is paramount to enact and redesign policies and support systems that allow one to concomitantly manage work and family life, which may include caregiving responsibilities. As people may become grandparents while still employed, there is a conflict between the roles of active grandparent and worker, which warrants the creation of a comprehensive social security network. Research has shown that governmental support to childcare may facilitate the retention of grandparents in the labour market. Additionally, it is crucial to enact policies that help workers remain in their jobs despite their experience of new disabilities (Koreshi & Alpass, 2022; Hyde et al., 2022; Floridi, 2022a).

The general population's lack of knowledge on demographic changes, ageing labour force participation, health status, and retirement age impact on the collective perception towards older workers, which in turn stands as a possible explanation for the obstacles the latter face. Therefore, it is recommended the careful elaboration of educational measures and policies to increase employers' awareness of the official data on the ageing workforce in all its detail (Axelrad, 2021). As observed by the WHO (2021), increasing public awareness about anti-discrimination legislation seems to be the most effective way to tackle ageism, guaranteeing the existence of healthy workplace environments. The positive, instrumental effects of policy on communities are conditioned to the overall knowledge that anti-discrimination legal frameworks exist and penalties will apply in case of deviation from the former. Individuals need to feel safe to report ageism cases, particularly given the very low number of people reporting discrimination on the grounds of age in the workplace (Kellaway, 2022). Furthermore, as much as Neumark (2022) recommends the adoption of increasing damages under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) in the US, Ireland can act similarly in regard to the Employment Equality Acts (1998-2015).

Ireland has a strong network of organisations for older adults. Social activism on older people's rights and well-being should continue, influencing the overall perception of communities as well as reducing stigma of older people. The media and the educational sector also play a key role in such a process. According to the WHO (2021), it is the combination of efforts that may harvest the best results towards a culture that respects and values older people. While the media hold the agential means to portray older people in a more inclusive manner – therefore increasing empathy – educational interventions across primary, post-primary, higher, and adult education are not only effective but also affordable. The WHO (2021) highlights the heterogeneity of such educational initiatives that can be built upon elements of intergenerational learning and human rights, “such as those that seek to transmit

information and knowledge in a classroom setting or online and empathy-enhancing activities that include role-play, simulation games and immersive virtual reality” (WHO, 2021, p.120).

5.2. The role of organisations in tackling ageism

Recommendations:

What we need

(1) Redesign and enact policy and regulations to (1.1) accommodate the needs of older workers, (1.2) support and encourage older workers’ work performance, intrinsic motivation, and physical and psychological health, (1.3) eliminate prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination against them; (2) engage with older workers rather than removing them from the organisation; (3) promote organisational intergenerational “oneness”; (4) eliminate “age norming of jobs”


How we can do it

- Offer phased retirement options (progressive reduction of hours until retirement)
- Offer flexible work schedules (part-time, full-time, allocation of hours)
- Offer “flex location” (remote mode of work)
- Facilitate intergenerational interaction (older workers can coach and or mentor younger workers and vice-versa. This promotes the benefits of well-being and sense of purpose for both older and younger employees, therefore increasing commitment and productivity)
- Allow job crafting (also known as job alignment, HR departments can provide an invaluable service by matching older workers with jobs that correspond to their expertise and creative thinking skills and that ignite their intrinsic motivation to be more innovative and productive in their jobs)
- Provide conflict resolution structures

- Provide ongoing feedback on performance
- Promote visible leadership related to ageing workforce issues
- Offer high quality training to all employees (including CPD for older workers)
- Adapt the physical environment according to older workers' needs (i.e., by providing ergonomic structures, adequate lighting and acoustics)
- Build an ethics framework, communicating it thoroughly throughout the organisation. Organisational values are clearly defined as well as the consequences from their deviation. Ethical core values would help shape all phases of human resource activity, including goal setting, allocation of resources, gathering and dispersal of communication, evaluation of performances and job promotion. Ethics training and education should be incorporated as an integral element of all employees' professional development, and the ethics framework should go through ongoing review.

All these recommendations are based on the results of the systematic literature review (Manzi et al., 2021; Reed & Thomas, 2021; Ciampa & Chernesky, 2021; Taylor & Earl, 2021), partially following the framework established by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) (as shown in Ciampa & Chernesky, 2021) and the ethics framework developed by Woolever (2021). The recommendations fall under the umbrella of the abstract but essential idea of organisational culture and its influence on employees' well-being and productivity (Schein, 1989). An inevitably ageing workforce illuminates the relevance of the development of organisational intergenerational structures and age-friendly policies. It is false to believe the notion that older workers cost more to, and produce less in organisations (Ciampa & Chernesky, 2021). Many employment policies and practices have implicit age biases with regard to recruitment, selection, performance appraisal and assignment to training opportunities. Therefore, there is a real demand to change these unfair organisational policies. According to Ciampa & Chernesky, (2021, p.95), "it is ageism, rather than labor cost and performance considerations, that is the reason corporations force out older workers".


Although the detailed analysis of each organisational context is paramount to the development of an age-friendly work environment, it is possible to imagine a series of strategies that can work in a variety of professional environments. The most important step is to establish a solid organisational ethics framework, as previously displayed. Over the past



two decades, several companies have attempted to implement various “integrity strategies” with varying degrees of success, such as General Dynamics, Mercedes Benz, BMW, Martin Marietta, Southwest Airlines, Starbucks, and Hewlett-Packard (Blackstone, 2021; Ciampa & Chernesky, 2021). Research has shown that the key concern with an ethical organisation lies in understanding ethics as a core value rather than a mere complement or appendix of organisational life. Understandably, it would be naively ambitious to view the organisational code of ethics as a “panacea that will prevent all forms of unethical conduct or personal indiscretions” (Woolever, 2021, p.119). However, ethics frameworks act as a medium where organisations may manage unethical attitudes and or behaviours, ensuring a fair, responsible performance (ibid).

Previtali & Spedale (2021) observe that employers’ ageist attitudes towards older workers is based on the “negative attributes socially attached to older persons as a homogenous group” (p.01). The systematic review of the literature on the universe of older workers sheds light on two convergent but slightly distinct approaches to help thinking about the creation of a fair, age-friendly workplace: one proposed by Manzi et al. (2021), and the other presented by Reed & Thomas (2021). According to Manzi et al. (2021), workers must be assessed on the basis of their skills, competences, motivation and output – not on age itself. On the other hand, Reed & Thomas’s (2021) highlight “management by generation” as a positive management tool towards achieving inclusive organisations. Despite our acknowledgment of the benefits emerging from matching employees’ characteristics with the job specifications (job crafting), we, the authors of this report, would rather favour Manzi’s et al. (2021) approach – which dialogues with Taylor & Earl’s (2021) and Woolever (2021): to try reducing the significance attributed to “age barriers” or “age norming”. In this sense, the agency of age would be decreased when producing social interaction outcomes, allowing for other more important organisational related concerns to receive increased management attention. In this way, stereotypical views on older workers would become progressively less relevant in the organisational space and consequently, within the organisational culture. However, we understand our view on this issue as a futuristic possibility, given, inter alia, the high occurrence of ageism in cognitive, emotional and behavioural dimensions around the globe (WHO, 2021). Therefore, it is the experimental combination of age-friendly, fair approaches within organisations (Manzi et al., 2021; Fasbender & Drury, 2021; Reed & Thomas, 2021; Ciampa & Chernesky, 2021; Taylor & Earl, 2021; Woolever, 2021) that may accomplish the best results.

The previously discussed paragraphs bring conclusions and recommendations towards setting an ethical workplace, requiring time, labour and financial investment. Costs are a reality. They are however compensated by the generation of greater outcomes in relation to employee well-being and productivity. Moreover, ethical organisations would positively reverberate ethical behaviour through society more



broadly. If the goal of setting fairer workplaces alone is not enough to promote real leadership change and investment in age-friendly organisations, the economic rationale remains unshakeable: the growing number of older workers is a reality. They demand a fair workplace where they can be productive, and where their age does not make them a victim of discrimination.

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Appendix

PRISMA checklist

Section and Topic	Item #	Checklist item	Information reported?
TITLE			
Title	1	Identify the report as a systematic review.	Yes
ABSTRACT			
Abstract	2	See the PRISMA 2020 for Abstracts checklist.	Yes
INTRODUCTION			
Rationale	3	Describe the rationale for the review in the context of existing knowledge.	Yes
Objectives	4	Provide an explicit statement of the objective(s) or question(s) the review addresses.	
METHODS			
Eligibility criteria	5	Specify the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the review and how studies were grouped for the syntheses.	Yes
Information sources	6	Specify all databases, registers, websites, organisations, reference lists and other sources searched or consulted to identify studies. Specify the date when each source was last searched or consulted.	Yes
Search strategy	7	Present the full search strategies for all databases, registers and websites, including any filters and limits used.	Yes
Selection process	8	Specify the methods used to decide whether a study met the inclusion criteria of the review, including how many reviewers screened each record and each report retrieved, whether they worked independently, and if applicable, details of automation tools used in the process.	Yes
Data collection process	9	Specify the methods used to collect data from reports, including how many reviewers collected data from each report, whether they worked independently, any processes for obtaining or confirming data from study investigators, and if applicable, details of automation tools used in the process.	Yes
Data items	10a	List and define all outcomes for which data were sought. Specify whether all results that were compatible with each outcome domain in each study were sought (e.g. for all measures, time points, analyses), and if not, the methods used to decide which results to collect.	Yes
	10b	List and define all other variables for which data were sought (e.g. participant and intervention characteristics, funding sources). Describe any assumptions made about any missing or unclear information.	N/A
Study risk of bias assessment	11	Specify the methods used to assess risk of bias in the included studies, including details of the tool(s) used, how many reviewers assessed each study and whether they worked independently, and if applicable, details of automation tools used in the process.	Yes

Section and Topic	Item #	Checklist item	Information reported?
Effect measures	12	Specify for each outcome the effect measure(s) (e.g. risk ratio, mean difference) used in the synthesis or presentation of results.	N/A
Synthesis methods	13a	Describe the processes used to decide which studies were eligible for each synthesis (e.g. tabulating the study intervention characteristics and comparing against the planned groups for each synthesis (item #5)).	Yes
	13b	Describe any methods required to prepare the data for presentation or synthesis, such as handling of missing summary statistics, or data conversions.	N/A
	13c	Describe any methods used to tabulate or visually display results of individual studies and syntheses.	Yes
	13d	Describe any methods used to synthesize results and provide a rationale for the choice(s). If meta-analysis was performed, describe the model(s), method(s) to identify the presence and extent of statistical heterogeneity, and software package(s) used.	Yes
	13e	Describe any methods used to explore possible causes of heterogeneity among study results (e.g. subgroup analysis, meta-regression).	Yes
	13f	Describe any sensitivity analyses conducted to assess robustness of the synthesized results.	N/A
Reporting bias assessment	14	Describe any methods used to assess risk of bias due to missing results in a synthesis (arising from reporting biases).	N/A
Certainty assessment	15	Describe any methods used to assess certainty (or confidence) in the body of evidence for an outcome.	N/A
RESULTS			
Study selection	16a	Describe the results of the search and selection process, from the number of records identified in the search to the number of studies included in the review, ideally using a flow diagram.	Yes
	16b	Cite studies that might appear to meet the inclusion criteria, but which were excluded, and explain why they were excluded.	
Study characteristics	17	Cite each included study and present its characteristics.	Yes
Risk of bias in studies	18	Present assessments of risk of bias for each included study.	Yes
Results of individual studies	19	For all outcomes, present, for each study: (a) summary statistics for each group (where appropriate) and (b) an effect estimate and its precision (e.g. confidence/credible interval), ideally using structured tables or plots.	Yes
Results of syntheses	20a	For each synthesis, briefly summarise the characteristics and risk of bias among contributing studies.	Yes
	20b	Present results of all statistical syntheses conducted. If meta-analysis was done, present for each the summary estimate and its precision (e.g.	N/A

Section and Topic	Item #	Checklist item	Information reported?
		confidence/credible interval) and measures of statistical heterogeneity. If comparing groups, describe the direction of the effect.	
	20c	Present results of all investigations of possible causes of heterogeneity among study results.	N/A
	20d	Present results of all sensitivity analyses conducted to assess the robustness of the synthesized results.	N/A
Reporting biases	21	Present assessments of risk of bias due to missing results (arising from reporting biases) for each synthesis assessed.	Yes
Certainty of evidence	22	Present assessments of certainty (or confidence) in the body of evidence for each outcome assessed.	N/A
DISCUSSION			
Discussion	23a	Provide a general interpretation of the results in the context of other evidence.	N/A
	23b	Discuss any limitations of the evidence included in the review.	Yes
	23c	Discuss any limitations of the review processes used.	Yes
	23d	Discuss implications of the results for practice, policy, and future research.	Yes
OTHER INFORMATION			
Registration and protocol	24a	Provide registration information for the review, including register name and registration number, or state that the review was not registered.	The review was not registered
	24b	Indicate where the review protocol can be accessed, or state that a protocol was not prepared.	A protocol was not prepared
	24c	Describe and explain any amendments to information provided at registration or in the protocol.	N/A
Support	25	Describe sources of financial or non-financial support for the review, and the role of the funders or sponsors in the review.	Yes
Competing interests	26	Declare any competing interests of review authors.	Yes
Availability of data, code and other materials	27	Report which of the following are publicly available and where they can be found: template data collection forms; data extracted from included studies; data used for all analyses; analytic code; any other materials used in the review.	Yes

From: Page MJ, McKenzie JE, Bossuyt PM, Boutron I, Hoffmann TC, Mulrow CD, et al. The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ* 2021;372:n71. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71

