

# TEAL – Summary of 1<sup>ST</sup> Knowledge Café

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**13th December 2013**

## **OLDER LEARNERS DURING TRANSITIONS: IDENTIFYING AND TACKLING BARRIERS AND POSITIVE INTERVENTIONS FOR ENGAGING OLDER LEARNERS - SPANISH PERSPECTIVE**



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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This communication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

## 1st KNOWLEDGE CAFÉ: Analysis of the Current Situation – facilitated by Begoña Arenas

The main topic focused on during the first Learning Café was “*Analysis of the current situation*”. The ideas shared and debated from the different participants were very insightful.



The articles included in the first TEAL newsletter illustrating the situation in the 3 partner countries, Spain, UK and Germany, were used for motivating the participants.

We have included here below a summary of the articles and have underlined the sentences that have served as inspiration for the debate:

**In the UK,** The number of unemployed people older than 50 has increased since the economic crisis began. This makes sense if we take into account that during every economic crisis the level of unemployment is proportionate to the depth of difficulty the country is in. Today high unemployment is not the only issue; it is much more disturbing that the highest rates of unemployment are for young people and those over 50 years old.

However, the situation of the 50 + group could be considered more worrying. They often have higher family responsibilities that do not allow them simply to pack up and move elsewhere to find work; they also cannot count on economic support from family which often softens the situation in the case of young people. A report published by the Age and Employment Network, reveals that at the moment, around 177,000 people aged over 50 have been unemployed for more than 12 months, much worse compared to the year 2008 with 93,000.

One of the main reasons those over 50 suffer most from unemployment is that their salaries tend to be higher than those of younger workers; therefore, when companies want to tighten their belts those older workers are definitely in the spotlight to reduce costs. Advances in technology also do not help the situation; older people are frequently seen as being behind the times when it comes to IT and companies do not want to invest their resources when a younger person is willing to step in for less.



According to official statistics, in 2020 33% of the working population will be 50+. This means that due to the lack of job vacancies a large number of people of this age will have to live on benefits unless they find their own way through self-employment.



As to **SPAIN**, according to the data published by the Spanish National Statistics Institute (INE) for the second quarter of 2013 there are more than 6.8 million workers over 45 in Spain. This group ranks as one of the pillars of productivity and labor, contributing to over 40% of Spain’s employed workers, while in a wider age range , from 16 to 44 years, this percentage was 59.3%.

However, according to a recent study, *Spanish workers over 45 years old have lower expectations of finding another job*

when compared to neighboring countries. Only one in four believes they could find another job, which is the lowest rate since early 2010. Low expectations of finding a job leads to a decrease in active job searches by workers over the age of 45. Currently, the percentage of this type of search is at 7%, which is 4% less than in the same period under review in 2012.

With regards to employment status satisfaction, seven out of ten workers over 45 are satisfied with their current job, although there are differences between genders. The percentage of men who are happy in their jobs stood at 76%, whereas for women this was only 63%.

However, Spanish confidence in their ability to maintain their current job position has already declined nine percentage points from the first quarter of 2013. At the beginning of the year this stood at 76% for workers over 45 years whereas it currently only reaches 67%.

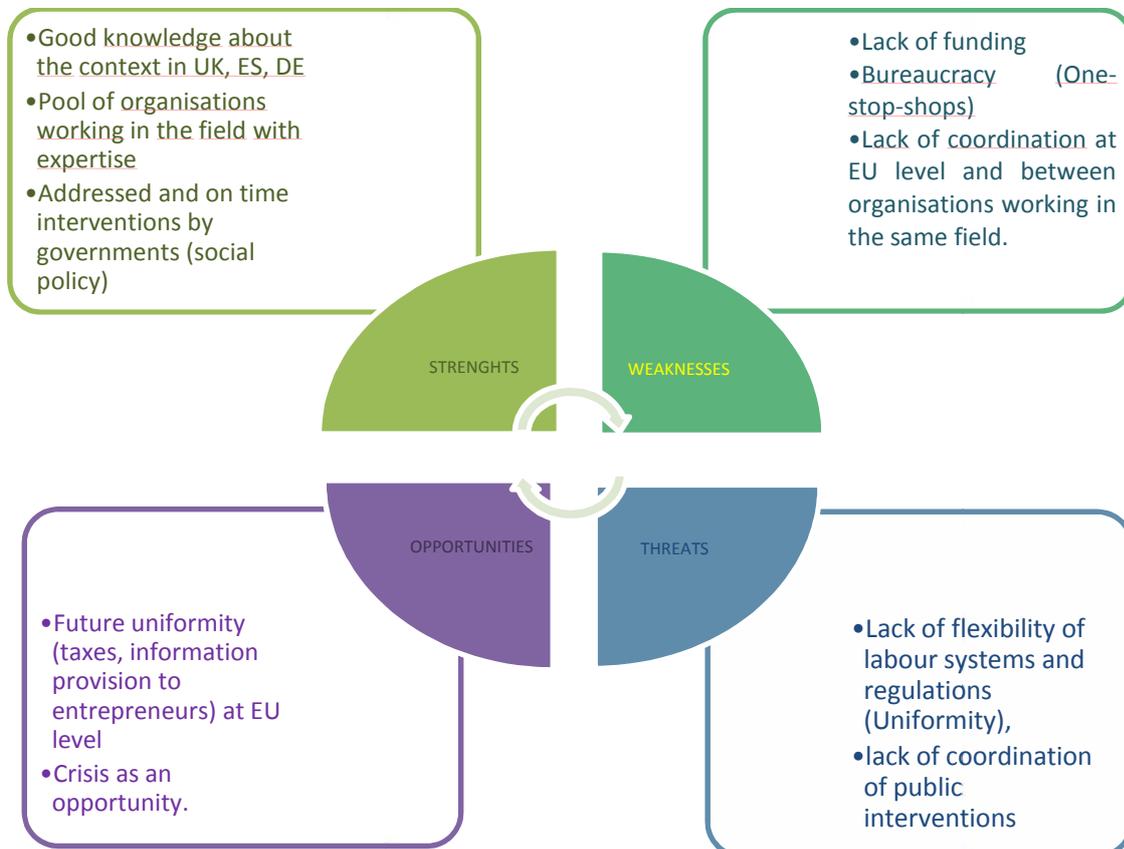
**In GERMANY**, demographic change is increasingly becoming an issue in German companies; nevertheless many employers are not yet prepared to accommodate an ageing work force.

Reaching the official retirement age in employment is still an exception. Only 10% of all retired Germans can look back on a direct transition from employment to retirement. According to the Federal Employment Agency 59.6% of the population aged 55 to 64 was in employment in 2011.

These statistics consist of jobs subject to social insurance contributions in addition to those of self-employed people and civil servants. When only looking at employment paying social security contributions, from which certain types of employees are exempt, the figures actually show a strong decrease in employment rates for those between the ages of 50 and 64. Although 58.5% of the population between 50 and 54 years of age are in employment, and there still being 51.0% of people employed aged 55 to 59, the proportion drops to only 27.5% in the 60 to 64 age category. Although a steady increase in employment amongst the older work force can be observed during more recent years, a substantial amount of employment is covered by marginal employment – either so-called ‘One-Euro-Jobs’ (supplementing unemployment benefits) or so called ‘Mini-’ or ‘400-Euro-Jobs’ (low-paid or short term employment). As Germany is pumping more money into start-up companies, encouraging experienced older people into enterprise seems like a good way to help combat this problem.



We present here below a summary of the exchange of ideas and debate emerged in the learning cafes during the 3 rotating rounds:



**LINK TO MULTIMEDIA MATERIALS FROM THE WORKSHOP:**

[http://www.teal-project.eu/teal/?page\\_id=9](http://www.teal-project.eu/teal/?page_id=9) and  
<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/pv8mjf2sglvukb4/bXkO6qrFek>