

1. Introduction: older workers in an ageing society

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INTRODUCTION

For long-standing students of the relationship between age and the labour market it would hardly seem worth mentioning that until relatively recently an 'early exit' culture was pervasive among the industrialized economies, with one or two exceptions. But this still provides an important backdrop to present debates and social policy, having had a hand in shaping attitudes and approaches at a time when the emphasis is increasingly on prolonging working lives. This volume is concerned with the labour market status of older workers and how they should be considered by employers and public policymakers. The volume also aims to contribute to wider public debate, particularly as it pertains to societal representations of older workers and what it means to retire and grow old. Its aim, put simply, was to provide critical commentary in some important areas of social policy and academic debate: emerging public policies for an ageing workforce, employer attitudes and behaviour in a globalizing economy, the promotion and utilization of human capital at older ages, managing ageing workforces, and the concept of generations.

This chapter briefly describes the changing position of older workers in labour markets. Working longer is high on the agenda of policymakers in most of the industrialized nations as they wish to minimize the 'burden' presented by the ageing of populations, namely the sustainability of pension and healthcare systems, while there are also supposed threats to the labour supply as the 'Baby Boomers' retire and young labour market entrants are fewer. However, critical thinking on the issue of ageing and work has been lacking in current debates, in particular how policy objectives are to be achieved, at what cost, and in particular, what the role of employers and the risks for older workers will be. The volume considers current critical research themes in the field of age and work. Leading international experts focus on the employment continuum and organizational responses to the changing demography.

The volume is divided into themed parts consisting of author chapters. The parts aim to be somewhat comparative, for example, exploring country, sector, occupational and individual differences where possible. The chapter authors, who are well known experts in their fields, aim to provide a 'state of the art' in their given area, drawing out the strands of the academic debate while considering implications for policy and practice.

The volume begins by considering how older workers have fared in labour market terms in recent times, the extent of their participation in the labour market and trends in this, and how they compare with other age groups in terms of their experiences of joblessness. Providing a scene setting for the rest of this volume, comparative statistical indicators are presented charting recent trends in labour force participation of older workers and comparing them with younger ones.

OLDER WORKERS: KEY STATISTICAL INDICATORS

The employment landscape for older workers has undergone dramatic shifts in the last few decades. At the end of the 1970s employment rates among older men in the Western developed nations and Japan were relatively high, by the 1990s they had dropped, sometimes markedly so, in many countries, and at the end of the first decade of the new century, had climbed back to something near where they had been at the end of the 1970s. This rollercoaster ride in their fortunes is explained to a large extent by economic restructuring initially, coupled with the availability of access to early pensions, in many cases resulting in a sharp decline in employment, followed by the closure of early retirement pathways and an increasing emphasis on working longer, resulting in a more recent upward trend. Due to recent policy reforms, many who might hitherto have exited employment involuntarily may now have the opportunity to work on, while others who might have hoped to retire early are now preparing to work on reluctantly due to the closure of early exit pathways. But the present situation is complex, with the recent global downturn and ongoing economic turbulence meaning that many are forced to work on due to a collapse in their projected retirement income, while others are working but vulnerable to insecure employment and joblessness. The situation for women is somewhat different, with a broad upward trend in employment rates, although that is not to say that some older women were not subject to the same forces that were affecting men during this period.

Table 1.1 presents trends in employment/population ratios among older workers since the year 2000. It is clear that overall there has been a long-

Table 1.1 Trends in employment/population ratios among people aged 55–64 among selected countries (%)

Men											
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Australia	57.7	57.3	58.9	60.8	62.1	63.8	64.9	65.8	65.7	66.7	68.6
Austria	40.5	39.5	39.7	40.4	38.9	41.3	45.3	49.8	51.8	51.0	51.6
Belgium	35.1	35.1	36.0	37.8	39.1	41.7	40.9	42.9	42.8	42.9	45.6
Canada	57.4	57.3	59.1	60.8	61.9	63.1	62.7	63.6	63.3	62.2	63.3
Chile	71.6	71.8	71.8	72.3	73.1	73.8	76.1	77.2	78.2	76.7	78.5
Czech											
Republic	51.7	52.6	57.3	57.5	57.2	59.4	59.5	59.6	61.9	59.6	58.4
Denmark	61.9	63.0	64.5	67.3	67.3	65.6	67.1	64.9	64.6	64.1	62.7
Estonia	54.7	54.5	58.1	58.9	56.1	58.6	57.2	58.6	64.9	59.4	52.2
Finland	43.7	46.7	48.3	51.4	51.5	52.5	54.8	55.1	57.0	54.7	55.6
France	32.8	34.9	38.1	40.8	41.4	41.5	40.5	40.5	40.6	41.3	42.1
Germany	46.4	46.4	47.2	47.1	50.7	53.6	56.1	59.4	61.7	63.8	65.0
Greece	55.3	54.6	55.9	58.7	56.4	58.8	59.2	59.1	59.1	57.7	56.5
Hungary	32.8	34.1	35.4	37.9	38.4	40.6	41.4	41.7	38.5	39.9	39.6
Iceland	94.2	91.0	89.9	87.6	87.1	89.3	89.3	89.6	88.7	85.0	83.9
Ireland	63.3	64.9	65.0	64.9	64.9	65.6	66.4	68.1	66.5	62.2	58.4
Israel	58.7	60.5	60.9	61.0	63.0	62.9	65.3	67.2	68.4	68.0	68.8
Italy	40.9	40.4	41.2	42.8	42.2	42.7	43.7	45.1	45.5	46.7	47.7
Japan	78.4	77.5	76.8	77.4	78.1	78.9	80.0	81.5	81.4	79.8	78.8
Korea	68.5	69.7	72.2	70.9	71.6	72.2	72.6	74.7	74.3	74.5	75.1
Luxembourg	37.9	35.3	37.6	39.7	38.3	38.3	38.7	35.6	38.7	46.5	47.7
Mexico	78.1	77.6	78.3	78.4	78.2	77.3	80.6	79.2	78.2	74.7	75.8
Netherlands	49.7	48.5	53.7	55.1	55.5	56.1	56.2	60.0	63.4	64.6	64.8
New Zealand	67.9	70.8	74.6	73.3	76.1	78.0	79.6	80.7	79.9	79.5	79.6
Norway	73.1	72.3	72.8	73.5	73.2	73.1	73.2	73.9	74.2	72.8	72.2
Poland	36.7	37.1	35.8	36.8	36.0	37.9	38.4	41.4	44.1	44.3	45.2
Portugal	62.1	61.6	61.9	62.1	59.1	58.1	58.2	58.6	58.5	57.5	55.6
Slovak											
Republic	35.4	37.6	39.1	41.0	43.8	47.9	49.9	52.6	56.7	55.0	54.1
Slovenia	–	–	35.4	33.2	40.9	43.1	44.5	45.3	44.7	46.4	45.5
Spain	55.2	57.9	58.6	59.3	58.9	59.7	60.4	60.0	60.9	56.7	54.7
Sweden	67.7	69.6	70.8	71.1	71.6	72.2	72.4	73.1	73.6	73.3	74.3
Switzerland	76.7	81.3	77.3	77.7	76.6	74.9	74.9	76.4	77.0	77.1	77.9
Turkey	51.9	51.1	48.5	44.7	43.7	42.5	41.6	40.5	40.9	41.1	42.7
United											
Kingdom	59.7	61.5	62.0	64.9	65.4	65.7	66.0	66.1	67.7	66.1	64.9
United States	65.7	66.0	66.3	65.6	66.0	67.0	67.5	67.4	67.7	65.2	64.4
Brazil	–	68.1	70.0	69.0	69.5	70.0	69.4	70.1	70.9	69.8	–
Russian											
Federation	47.5	43.4	47.2	50.4	51.9	54.2	58.2	60.1	58.7	55.7	55.4

Table 1.1 (continued)

Men											
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
European Union 21	46.7	47.5	48.7	50.0	50.7	51.9	52.6	53.9	55.0	54.8	54.8
European Union 15	47.8	48.6	49.9	51.3	52.1	53.2	54.0	55.2	56.2	56.1	56.2
Europe	47.8	48.5	49.3	50.3	50.8	51.7	52.4	53.4	54.4	54.2	54.3
G7 countries	59.9	60.2	60.8	61.5	62.5	63.7	64.4	65.3	65.7	64.5	64.2
North America	67.0	67.1	67.6	67.3	67.6	68.3	69.1	68.9	68.9	66.4	66.1
Oceania	74.9	74.3	74.4	74.8	75.6	76.5	77.4	78.9	78.7	77.6	77.1
OECD countries	59.2	59.6	60.2	60.8	61.5	62.4	63.2	63.9	64.3	63.2	63.0
Women											
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Australia	34.5	36.0	38.0	39.6	41.1	43.2	46.0	47.4	49.2	51.4	52.8
Austria	16.8	17.7	19.4	20.8	19.3	22.9	26.3	28.0	30.8	31.7	33.7
Belgium	15.4	15.6	17.5	18.7	21.1	22.1	23.2	26.0	26.3	27.7	29.2
Canada	39.1	39.4	41.4	45.5	46.1	46.6	48.6	50.7	51.9	53.1	53.5
Chile	24.6	25.1	24.6	27.0	28.5	30.0	31.8	32.5	34.2	35.1	39.2
Czech Republic	22.4	23.2	26.0	28.4	29.4	31.0	32.1	33.5	34.4	35.0	35.5
Denmark	46.2	49.8	50.4	52.9	53.3	53.5	54.3	52.4	50.1	50.9	52.5
Estonia	36.0	39.1	46.4	47.0	49.1	53.4	59.0	60.3	60.1	61.1	54.9
Finland	40.9	45.1	47.3	48.5	50.4	52.7	54.3	54.8	55.8	56.5	56.9
France	26.0	26.7	29.6	33.3	34.0	35.7	35.8	36.0	35.9	36.5	37.5
Germany	29.0	29.4	30.1	30.9	33.0	37.6	40.3	43.4	46.0	48.6	50.5
Greece	24.4	22.7	24.0	25.5	24.0	25.8	26.6	26.9	27.5	27.7	28.9
Hungary	13.1	14.9	17.6	21.8	25.0	26.8	27.1	26.2	25.7	27.0	30.1
Iceland	74.4	80.2	84.4	78.9	76.9	80.2	80.3	80.0	77.6	76.4	77.0
Ireland	27.0	28.6	30.7	33.6	34.0	37.4	39.8	40.0	41.4	41.4	43.0
Israel	35.9	37.9	38.6	40.8	41.1	42.8	45.4	48.0	49.3	50.3	51.6
Italy	15.3	16.2	17.3	18.5	19.6	20.8	21.9	23.0	24.0	25.4	26.2
Japan	47.9	47.3	47.1	47.5	48.6	49.4	50.1	51.2	51.7	51.7	52.1
Korea	47.9	47.7	47.6	45.4	45.9	45.7	46.4	46.9	47.4	46.7	47.1
Luxembourg	16.8	14.4	18.1	20.6	22.2	24.9	27.8	28.6	29.3	29.4	31.3
Mexico	27.7	27.1	28.7	29.6	31.3	30.4	31.8	32.7	34.3	32.8	35.4
Netherlands	25.5	25.9	29.3	29.7	31.7	33.4	35.1	37.5	39.9	42.0	43.3
New Zealand	46.1	50.2	52.1	55.4	58.0	61.2	61.0	63.1	63.7	65.0	67.2
Norway	61.2	62.3	64.0	63.5	62.7	62.1	61.6	64.0	64.3	64.6	65.0
Poland	21.4	22.0	21.1	21.5	21.0	21.4	19.0	19.4	20.7	21.9	24.2

Table 1.1 (continued)

Women											
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Slovak Republic	9.8	9.8	9.6	11.2	12.6	15.7	19.0	21.2	24.2	26.2	28.8
Slovenia	–	–	14.2	14.6	17.8	18.5	21.0	22.2	21.1	24.8	24.5
Spain	20.1	21.8	22.0	23.4	24.6	27.4	28.7	30.0	31.1	32.3	33.2
Sweden	62.4	64.3	65.9	66.8	67.4	66.9	67.1	67.2	66.9	66.8	66.8
Switzerland	50.3	53.7	52.3	54.0	54.0	55.6	56.6	58.1	60.0	59.6	58.8
Turkey	21.5	21.4	22.6	21.2	16.6	14.7	14.8	14.6	14.8	16.0	17.1
United Kingdom	41.4	43.1	44.5	46.3	47.3	48.1	49.0	49.0	49.0	49.3	48.9
United States	50.6	51.7	53.2	54.5	54.3	55.1	56.5	56.6	57.0	56.4	56.4
Brazil	–	36.5	37.2	37.8	37.7	40.1	40.7	39.5	41.6	40.0	–
Russian Federation	26.2	23.7	28.5	30.3	32.6	36.0	37.6	40.3	38.6	37.2	36.2
European Union 21	26.8	27.7	29.0	30.6	31.7	33.8	34.7	35.8	36.7	37.7	38.8
European Union 15	27.9	28.9	30.4	32.0	33.2	35.4	36.7	37.9	38.9	40.0	40.9
Europe	27.0	27.9	29.2	30.6	31.2	32.9	33.8	34.7	35.5	36.5	37.5
G7 countries	40.4	41.2	42.4	44.0	44.9	46.4	47.7	48.6	49.3	49.6	50.1
North America	45.9	46.6	48.1	49.6	49.8	50.3	51.8	52.2	52.8	52.2	52.8
Oceania	46.9	46.6	46.5	46.6	47.7	48.5	49.3	50.4	50.9	51.0	51.5
OECD countries	36.7	37.3	38.5	39.8	40.5	41.7	42.8	43.6	44.4	44.6	45.4

Source: OECD.Stat Extracts.

term increase in employment rates, but that this has stalled of late in many countries, at least among men, and there have been sharp reversals in the case of Ireland and Spain as the global economic downturn has taken hold.

Table 1.2 reports unemployment rates for selected countries. It is well known that rates of youth unemployment usually exceed those for 'prime age' and older age groups. This is clear from this table, with some remarkable age differences in a number of countries. There are also notable variations in unemployment rates across age groups between countries. Also included in this table are rates from 1994 at a time when industrialized economies were last emerging from a major global economic downturn. Here we can see that rates for 2010 show strong similarities, although

Table 1.2 Unemployment rates by age group in selected OECD countries in 1994 (in parentheses) and 2010 (%)

	Men			Women		
	15–23	25–54	55–64	15–24	25–54	55–64
Australia	(17.7)11.9	(7.8) 3.7	(11.4) 3.7	(16.4)11.1	(7.3) 4.4	(5.5) 2.6
Austria	(4.7) 8.9	(2.9) 4.2	(3.8) 2.5	(5.2) 8.8	(3.8) 3.8	(2.7) 1.6
Belgium	(20.5)22.4	(6.4) 7.2	(4.5) 4.2	(23.4)22.4	(11.2) 7.5	(5.9) 5.2
Canada	(17.9)17.1	(9.6) 7.3	(9.7) 7.5	(13.7)12.4	(9.0) 6.4	(8.4) 5.6
Czech Republic	(7.9)18.3	(2.5) 5.2	(3.5) 6.5	(9.8)18.5	(4.4) 8.0	(3.7) 6.5
Denmark	(10.2)15.8	(6.7) 7.1	(6.3) 6.8	(10.2)11.7	(9.0) 5.9	(6.7) 4.6
Finland	(31.5)21.6	(15.5) 7.4	(20.4) 7.3	(30.7)18.9	(12.5) 6.3	(17.5) 5.8
France	(24.1)21.9	(9.6) 7.5	(7.2) 6.9	(31.7)23.3	(13.1) 8.5	(6.6) 6.4
Germany	(8.2)10.4	(6.5) 7.1	(10.5) 8.1	(8.3) 8.8	(10.1) 6.2	(13.5) 7.3
Greece	(19.8)26.7	(4.8) 9.4	(3.3) 6.2	(36.9)40.6	(10.7)15.5	(2.6) 6.5
Hungary	(24.6)27.9	(10.2)10.6	(6.8) 8.2	(16.5)24.9	(8.1)10.1	(7.2) 7.3
Iceland	(13.0)18.3	(3.5) 7.0	(3.8) 5.1	(10.1)14.1	(5.0) 5.6	(3.8) 3.5
Ireland	(25.4)34.8	(13.4)15.9	(8.6)10.5	(22.5)22.4	(13.4) 8.5	(8.1) 5.0
Italy	(26.3)26.8	(6.1) 6.6	(3.4) 3.9	(36.5)29.4	(11.8) 8.9	(3.4) 3.0
Japan	(5.6)10.4	(2.0) 4.9	(4.5) 6.1	(5.3) 8.0	(2.8) 4.8	(1.9) 3.3
Korea	(9.2)11.2	(2.5) 3.8	(0.8) 3.4	(6.0) 9.0	(1.0) 2.9	(0.2) 2.2
Luxembourg	(8.5)17.6	(2.5) 3.0	(0.4) 2.4	(7.2)10.2	(3.9) 5.0	(1.2) 2.2
Mexico	(6.5) 9.1	(3.2) 4.5	(2.0) 3.9	(8.3)10.2	(3.5) 4.5	(1.6) 1.8
Netherlands	(10.9) 8.8	(5.2) 3.6	(2.7) 4.1	(9.4) 8.6	(7.8) 3.6	(5.2) 3.7
New Zealand	(16.1)16.8	(7.3) 4.4	(5.5) 3.8	(14.7)17.4	(6.1) 5.4	(3.6) 2.9
Norway	(13.1)10.9	(5.0) 3.5	(3.1) 1.8	(12.1) 7.7	(3.8) 2.6	(1.9) 0.9
Poland	(30.8)22.4	(11.3) 7.9	(7.5) 7.5	(34.7)25.4	(14.5) 8.7	(6.4) 6.5
Portugal	(12.3)21.1	(5.0) 9.3	(5.0)10.0	(16.3)23.7	(7.2)12.2	(2.4) 7.6
Slovak Republic	(28.0)34.7	(10.4)12.4	(8.1) 9.6	(26.5)32.0	(11.6)13.3	(12.3)11.0
Spain	(37.4)43.2	(16.4)18.1	(13.3)14.3	(50.1)39.8	(28.6)19.2	(9.9)13.8
Sweden	(25.3)26.7	(9.3) 6.0	(8.5) 6.2	(19.9)23.7	(6.8) 6.3	(5.2) 4.4
Switzerland	(5.4) 6.8	(3.1) 3.4	(4.6) 3.4	(6.1) 7.6	(4.2) 4.7	(3.2) 3.5
Turkey	(17.5)21.0	(6.2)10.1	(3.0) 7.5	(13.4)23.0	(6.0) 11.4	(0.7) 1.5
UK	(19.2)21.2	(9.7) 6.7	(11.6) 6.3	(12.6)16.8	(6.4) 5.4	(5.3) 3.0
USA	(13.2)20.8	(4.9) 9.3	(4.4) 8.0	(11.6)15.8	(5.0) 7.8	(3.9) 6.2

Source: OECD Employment Outlook, Statistical Annex, 2010 and OECD.Stat Extracts.

there are some notable differences; for instance, Australia, Finland and Norway weathered the storm comparatively well in 2010 compared with 1994, while the situation in Greece, Iceland, Japan, Portugal, Luxembourg and the USA in 2010 tended to be much worse. Ireland, Portugal and

Spain performed comparatively poorly in terms of rates of unemployment among male older workers in 2010. The Slovak Republic and Spain were comparatively poor performers in terms of female older workers in 2010.

In contrast to overall unemployment rates it is also well known that rates of long-term unemployment are rather higher among older workers. This is demonstrated in Table 1.3. Again however, there are significant country and regional variations. Notable are high rates of male youth unemployment in Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy and the Slovak Republic, for instance, which, while lower than for older adults, still far exceed those of other countries. Also notable is a substantial difference between Europe and North America, with rates of youth long-term unemployment for the former far exceeding those for the latter, with Oceania in between. In a number of countries rates of long-term unemployment among older adults are far in excess of 50 per cent.

Overall, the labour market situation of older workers over more than a decade has changed, with increasing labour force participation. In many countries this increase has stalled of late, and older workers still tend to have an extremely disadvantaged status when long-term unemployment is considered. The next section of this chapter considers how a new perspective on later working life is taking shape and the challenges this will bring, before introducing the contents of this volume.

OLDER WORKERS UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT?

The 'whole society is obsessed with age' (p. 14); so wrote Michael Young and Tom Schuller in 1991. That this is still the case can be observed no more strongly in recent efforts to define and develop policy for 'generations'. Generations X, Y and the Baby Boomers are all viewed as jockeying for labour market position and resources. Much media commentary and popular business discourse proceed as if such categorizations have utility. Consultants advise eager employers on how to recruit and manage 'Gen-Ys' and so on. Likewise, public policies are often targeted at 'older' (or 'younger') workers. Scarce have been attempts to critically appraise such approaches. Yet workforce ageing is now high on the agenda of policymakers in most developed countries and so it would seem essential to devise effective means of describing the relationship between ageing and work. But it appears that it is still early days. Demographic trends, coupled with projections concerning rising welfare burdens alongside efforts to draw 'a fresh map of life' (Laslett, 1996) are encouraging commentators and policymakers to develop and propagate the notion of 'productive' or 'active' ageing. This stance contrasts sharply with that

Table 1.3 Incidence of unemployment by duration, age group and gender, 2010

Age group	Men			Women			
	15–24	25–54	55+	15–24	25–54	55+	
Australia	< 1 month	26.7	22.9	20.7	28.9	24.1	23.3
	> 1 month and < 3 months	27.6	22.8	19.9	29.3	25.7	17.8
	> 3 month and < 6 months	17.5	15.7	15.5	17.4	15.8	15.3
	> 6 month and < 1 year	14.1	15.6	12.8	13.3	15.5	15.1
	1 year and over	14.1	23.1	31.1	11.1	18.8	28.5
Austria	< 1 month	11.5	7.8	5.9	16.1	8.5	7.4
	> 1 month and < 3 months	31.5	24.4	12.7	24.5	28.3	12.8
	> 3 month and < 6 months	20.8	21.6	11.9	25.7	20.7	11.1
	> 6 month and < 1 year	17.5	17.5	11.3	17.9	19.1	21.7
	1 year and over	18.6	28.6	58.2	15.7	23.4	46.9
Belgium	< 1 month	6.2	4.6	0.7	10.7	4.9	1.4
	> 1 month and < 3 months	23.1	13.8	6.1	24.0	13.8	3.6
	> 3 month and < 6 months	16.3	12.6	0.5	14.7	13.3	8.2
	> 6 month and < 1 year	22.6	16.2	9.5	22.4	16.1	11.6
	1 year and over	31.7	52.8	83.3	28.2	51.8	75.2
Canada	< 1 month	31.6	19.9	15.6	35.1	22.3	18.2
	> 1 month and < 3 months	44.9	34.8	31.1	44.0	37.5	32.4
	> 3 month and < 6 months	13.0	20.0	18.0	12.1	17.1	18.0
	> 6 month and < 1 year	6.1	12.9	14.7	4.7	11.8	14.5
	1 year and over	4.4	12.4	20.6	4.0	11.3	16.9
Czech Republic	< 1 month	9.8	5.8	5.7	9.8	5.8	5.7
	> 1 month and < 3 months	18.7	10.6	11.6	18.7	10.6	11.6
	> 3 month and < 6 months	18.5	14.6	16.7	18.5	14.6	16.7
	> 6 month and < 1 year	22.9	22.6	25.1	22.9	22.6	25.1
	1 year and over	30.2	46.4	40.8	30.2	46.4	40.8
Denmark	< 1 month	26.5	10.9	10.1	35.5	13.2	11.0
	> 1 month and < 3 months	30.6	20.3	14.7	29.5	24.8	14.9
	> 3 month and < 6 months	23.8	21.5	13.9	18.3	23.2	22.0
	> 6 month and < 1 year	13.4	22.6	25.1	10.4	19.4	19.2
	1 year and over	5.8	24.6	36.3	6.2	19.4	32.9
Estonia	< 1 month	9.2	4.1	7.0	11.5	9.1	8.4
	> 1 month and < 3 months	13.8	8.8	6.2	18.0	9.4	9.4
	> 3 month and < 6 months	12.1	15.0	21.2	16.6	17.2	9.9
	> 6 month and < 1 year	23.9	18.9	29.5	22.6	22.6	22.3
	1 year and over	41.1	53.2	36.1	31.2	41.8	50.1
Finland	< 1 month	16.9	8.5	5.2	22.1	12.5	5.8
	> 1 month and < 3 months	40.9	21.1	15.6	44.1	29.2	19.6
	> 3 month and < 6 months	21.5	18.4	15.6	21.7	19.4	18.1
	> 6 month and < 1 year	10.9	20.4	19.1	7.0	17.1	15.9
	1 year and over	9.8	31.6	44.5	5.0	21.8	40.6

Table 1.3 (continued)

Age group	Men			Women			
	15-24	25-54	55+	15-24	25-54	55+	
France	< 1 month	15.7	10.2	7.0	19.7	11.3	5.6
	> 1 month and < 3 months	20.4	15.4	9.0	24.4	16.3	12.4
	> 3 month and < 6 months	12.0	10.5	10.1	12.1	11.7	7.2
	> 6 month and < 1 year	12.0	20.6	18.4	17.23	20.2	17.6
	1 year and over	32.5	43.2	55.5	26.7	40.4	57.3
Germany	< 1 month	13.4	6.9	3.8	14.9	7.3	3.9
	> 1 month and < 3 months	23.8	14.1	8.1	22.6	14.8	7.3
	> 3 month and < 6 months	16.4	13.7	11.4	19.2	15.1	10.3
	> 6 month and < 1 year	18.3	16.0	15.1	18.1	15.7	15.3
	1 year and over	28.1	49.4	61.6	25.2	47.1	63.2
Greece	< 1 month	9.9	7.2	8.5	6.6	4.7	6.4
	> 1 month and < 3 months	23.8	17.2	15.6	22.6	13.5	8.2
	> 3 month and < 6 months	20.0	17.1	12.2	20.7	13.0	11.8
	> 6 month and < 1 year	18.7	19.7	16.1	20.1	15.9	13.8
	1 year and over	34.1	38.8	47.6	36.9	52.9	59.8
Hungary	< 1 month	3.9	3.3	2.2	5.1	4.0	4.6
	> 1 month and < 3 months	13.4	8.7	7.5	13.2	9.0	7.4
	> 3 month and < 6 months	16.3	13.5	11.2	16.6	12.2	13.0
	> 6 month and < 1 year	24.1	22.3	19.1	28.1	22.4	24.7
	1 year and over	42.3	52.3	60.0	37.1	52.4	50.2
Iceland	< 1 month	23.3	8.8	9.4	27.4	17.8	5.4
	> 1 month and < 3 months	30.6	24.5	10.1	29.6	16.0	14.4
	> 3 month and < 6 months	15.5	19.2	17.1	18.6	21.2	11.8
	> 6 month and < 1 year	19.0	22.5	21.3	28.1	24.4	29.3
	1 year and over	11.6	25.0	42.1	10.5	20.7	39.1
Ireland	< 1 month	13.8	7.1	7.1	21.1	11.8	11.3
	> 1 month and < 3 months	7.6	5.1	5.1	9.2	8.6	6.8
	> 3 month and < 6 months	14.7	11.7	10.8	17.3	17.5	15.1
	> 6 month and < 1 year	18.1	20.5	18.7	18.5	22.7	22.4
	1 year and over	45.8	55.6	58.3	33.9	39.3	44.4
Israel	< 1 month	33.1	17.7	9.2	41.3	21.0	15.3
	> 1 month and < 3 months	26.1	22.5	17.0	29.9	25.0	23.7
	> 3 month and < 6 months	14.2	18.0	12.7	9.6	19.3	11.0
	> 6 month and < 1 year	11.3	15.6	20.6	10.9	13.6	21.7
	1 year and over	15.4	26.2	40.5	8.4	21.0	28.3
Italy	< 1 month	6.9	6.6	7.2	5.6	7.5	9.3
	> 1 month and < 3 months	13.8	13.5	10.4	17.1	12.0	6.8
	> 3 month and < 6 months	18.0	15.3	11.2	16.5	14.8	10.8
	> 6 month and < 1 year	17.2	17.3	13.0	15.9	15.0	11.5
	1 year and over	44.1	47.3	58.2	44.8	50.7	61.6
Japan	< 1 month	10.7	7.6	7.0	14.3	14.8	5.9
	> 1 month and < 3 months	21.4	13.6	15.8	23.8	25.9	23.5

Table 1.3 (continued)

Age group	Men			Women			
	15–24	25–54	55+	15–24	25–54	55+	
Japan	> 3 month and < 6 months	14.3	12.7	15.8	19.0	18.5	17.6
	> 6 month and < 1 year	21.4	16.9	19.3	19.0	17.3	17.6
	1 year and over	32.1	49.2	42.1	23.8	23.5	35.3
Korea	< 1 month	–	–	–	–	–	–
	> 1 month and < 3 months	78.2	59.7	69.8	75.4	71.4	81.3
	> 3 month and < 6 months	18.5	30.4	23.9	20.9	24.1	15.2
	> 6 month and < 1 year	3.3	9.2	6.2	3.7	4.5	3.4
	1 year and over	–	0.7	0.2	–	–	–
Luxembourg	< 1 month	18.8	10.6	36.8	16.0	11.3	13.6
	> 1 month and < 3 months	37.0	19.0	10.7	18.5	20.4	13.6
	> 3 month and < 6 months	37.0	21.1	6.3	11.9	23.7	18.2
	> 6 month and < 1 year	8.1	14.1	7.9	24.1	19.4	10.4
	1 year and over	23.8	35.1	38.4	29.5	25.3	44.1
Mexico	< 1 month	33.9	29.7	25.3	35.3	28.8	26.6
	> 1 month and < 3 months	44.6	40.2	34.4	41.6	39.8	22.9
	> 3 month and < 6 months	17.0	20.8	25.9	19.3	22.7	31.3
	> 6 month and < 1 year	3.1	6.7	5.9	2.9	6.2	15.0
	1 year and over	1.4	2.7	8.5	0.9	2.6	4.3
Netherlands	< 1 month	9.9	5.2	5.0	11.7	5.3	3.7
	> 1 month and < 3 months	37.8	21.2	9.2	40.9	22.0	10.0
	> 3 month and < 6 months	21.9	21.3	12.4	20.2	18.4	14.3
	> 6 month and < 1 year	18.4	23.2	21.5	15.9	22.4	19.9
	1 year and over	11.9	29.1	52.0	11.2	31.9	52.1
New Zealand	< 1 month	30.9	15.7	14.1	28.8	22.3	20.4
	> 1 month and < 3 months	29.3	29.8	23.1	31.8	27.0	24.5
	> 3 month and < 6 months	19.7	19.6	20.5	19.2	19.7	16.3
	> 6 month and < 1 year	15.9	23.7	23.1	15.1	19.7	22.4
	1 year and over	4.1	11.2	19.2	5.1	11.3	16.3
Norway	< 1 month	35.9	16.3	8.9	50.2	21.8	17.0
	> 1 month and < 3 months	26.6	21.9	16.7	25.6	30.9	12.1
	> 3 month and < 6 months	16.3	20.4	12.4	13.3	16.9	9.2
	> 6 month and < 1 year	16.6	27.9	44.3	8.3	21.3	33.0
	1 year and over	4.5	13.6	17.7	2.6	9.1	28.7
Poland	< 1 month	16.7	12.1	9.7	18.6	11.9	9.4
	> 1 month and < 3 months	23.8	18.2	15.6	23.7	17.8	15.5
	> 3 month and < 6 months	21.5	20.7	20.9	23.3	20.7	18.8
	> 6 month and < 1 year	21.9	21.4	19.9	19.6	21.2	17.2
	1 year and over	16.1	27.6	33.8	14.8	28.3	39.1
Portugal	< 1 month	10.0	4.1	2.3	9.6	4.9	3.0
	> 1 month and < 3 months	15.1	11.4	3.5	23.9	10.1	5.0
	> 3 month and < 6 months	19.7	13.7	7.4	20.4	11.3	6.2
	> 6 month and < 1 year	21.3	18.8	14.2	19.2	17.9	14.2
	1 year and over	34.0	52.1	72.5	26.9	55.8	71.6

Table 1.3 (continued)

Age group		Men			Women		
		15–24	25–54	55+	15–24	25–54	55+
Slovak Republic	< 1 month	7.7	6.9	7.5	10.2	5.5	2.0
	> 1 month and < 3 months	9.0	5.7	4.7	10.6	5.6	3.3
	> 3 month and < 6 months	10.0	9.4	8.8	14.5	8.5	6.6
	> 6 month and < 1 year	18.7	18.9	15.8	21.4	16.6	18.6
	1 year and over	54.6	59.0	63.1	43.3	63.8	69.4
Slovenia	< 1 month	4.4	3.9	8.0	6.1	3.2	6.9
	> 1 month and < 3 months	17.0	10.6	7.5	26.6	14.3	6.7
	> 3 month and < 6 months	23.2	16.1	9.5	24.1	21.4	4.5
	> 6 month and < 1 year	19.1	23.1	17.1	13.4	18.8	15.1
	1 year and over	36.2	46.3	58.0	29.9	42.4	66.7
Spain	< 1 month	6.1	5.6	3.2	8.0	4.8	2.4
	> 1 month and < 3 months	17.1	14.1	8.7	21.4	14.8	6.9
	> 3 month and < 6 months	15.9	15.0	9.9	18.0	13.8	9.3
	> 6 month and < 1 year	21.2	21.2	18.9	19.1	20.0	14.5
	1 year and over	39.6	44.1	59.3	33.5	46.6	66.9
Sweden	< 1 month	37.9	15.5	11.0	40.6	17.4	14.1
	> 1 month and < 3 months	24.1	22.0	19.2	26.3	25.4	20.7
	> 3 month and < 6 months	17.4	18.5	17.8	16.0	18.4	15.2
	> 6 month and < 1 year	12.8	20.8	21.7	12.0	19.8	21.2
	1 year and over	7.8	23.2	30.2	5.1	19.0	28.8
Turkey	< 1 month	5.1	4.2	4.0	3.9	2.9	–
	> 1 month and < 3 months	30.3	28.4	20.0	26.1	18.5	14.3
	> 3 month and < 6 months	27.5	24.4	20.0	22.4	21.2	28.6
	> 6 month and < 1 year	17.9	17.0	15.0	18.2	16.0	14.3
	1 year and over	19.1	26.0	41.0	29.4	41.4	42.9
United Kingdom	< 1 month	11.6	7.2	6.1	16.2	10.8	12.2
	> 1 month and < 3 months	21.2	16.0	12.2	26.1	21.4	17.8
	> 3 month and < 6 months	18.8	15.0	16.9	21.0	17.4	10.9
	> 6 month and < 1 year	20.4	19.9	19.7	19.0	20.1	21.8
	1 year and over	28.0	41.9	45.2	17.7	30.3	37.3
United States	< 1 month	23.9	16.8	13.8	28.1	16.7	14.6
	> 1 month and < 3 months	27.0	19.9	17.6	29.3	21.2	18.4
	> 3 month and < 6 months	17.0	15.6	16.9	16.5	16.8	14.2
	> 6 month and < 1 year	12.3	15.4	19.7	10.1	15.0	15.6
	1 year and over	19.9	32.3	38.7	16.0	30.4	37.2
European Union 21	< 1 month	12.0	7.3	5.4	14.5	7.8	5.6
	> 1 month and < 3 months	20.3	14.6	10.0	23.2	15.3	10.0
	> 3 month and < 6 months	17.2	14.8	12.6	16.5	14.8	10.8
	> 6 month and < 1 year	19.5	19.6	17.8	18.2	18.8	16.9
	1 year and over	31.0	43.7	54.3	25.9	43.2	56.6
European Union 15	< 1 month	11.9	7.0	5.1	14.5	7.7	5.4
	> 1 month and < 3 months	20.4	14.8	9.6	23.6	15.6	9.8

Table 1.3 (continued)

Age group		Men			Women		
		15-24	25-54	55+	15-24	25-54	55+
European Union 15	> 3 month and < 6 months	16.9	14.5	11.8	17.8	14.4	10.1
	> 6 month and < 1 year	19.2	19.3	17.4	17.7	18.4	16.3
	1 year and over	31.6	44.4	56.1	26.4	43.9	58.4
Europe	< 1 month	10.9	6.8	5.3	13.2	7.5	5.6
	> 1 month and < 3 months	22.2	16.7	10.7	23.6	15.6	10.1
	> 3 month and < 6 months	19.1	16.4	13.1	18.8	15.4	11.0
	> 6 month and < 1 year	19.2	19.3	17.7	18.1	18.6	16.9
	1 year and over	28.6	40.7	53.1	26.2	42.9	56.4
G7 countries	< 1 month	19.5	12.7	10.6	22.9	13.8	12.0
	> 1 month and < 3 months	25.3	17.8	16.7	27.6	20.1	18.5
	> 3 month and < 6 months	16.4	14.7	14.6	16.7	16.1	13.9
	> 6 month and < 1 year	14.9	16.5	16.5	13.1	16.1	15.9
	1 year and over	24.0	38.3	41.6	19.6	34.0	39.7
North America	< 1 month	26.2	18.5	15.0	29.7	18.3	15.4
	> 1 month and < 3 months	31.4	23.1	21.1	32.3	24.2	20.9
	> 3 month and < 6 months	16.7	16.4	15.8	16.5	17.5	15.2
	> 6 month and < 1 year	10.2	14.2	14.7	8.6	13.8	15.4
	1 year and over	15.5	27.7	33.4	19.6	26.2	33.1
Oceania	< 1 month	14.8	7.3	6.9	16.3	13.6	6.6
	> 1 month and < 3 months	30.7	25.6	17.7	35.8	34.0	33.2
	> 3 month and < 6 months	16.0	17.3	16.8	19.0	19.2	17.0
	> 6 month and < 1 year	16.9	15.1	17.3	14.3	14.9	15.0
	1 year and over	21.6	34.7	36.0	14.6	18.4	28.1
OECD countries	< 1 month	18.0	11.2	9.9	20.5	11.8	10.9
	> 1 month and < 3 months	26.9	20.0	17.7	28.3	20.3	18.3
	> 3 month and < 6 months	17.8	16.5	15.0	17.9	16.5	13.9
	> 6 month and < 1 year	15.1	17.0	16.3	13.8	16.6	15.9
	1 year and over	22.3	35.3	41.0	19.5	34.9	41.0

Source: OECD.Stat Extracts.

of the 1970s through to the 1990s when public policies were focused on the need to remove older workers from the labour market in order to reduce high youth unemployment. With increasing policy interest in the issue, the question arises as to whether we are on the verge of a new era of employment characterized by a prolongation of working life. Important changes are clearly underway. Internationally there is a broad consensus on the economic and social benefits of longer working lives. Against this backdrop a range of measures are aiming to encourage later retirement, promote skills acquisition, and generally improve the employability of

older workers, with new policy approaches emerging around the world. The foundations for the present policy focus seem reasonable: social welfare costs due to population ageing are predicted to mushroom in coming decades. Delaying the date of retirement, even a little, could offset these costs substantially. A staggering amount of effort has thus been devoted to turning the tide of early retirement and there is considerable public debate about what working later will mean for economies, employers and older workers. The 'right' to work on is strongly promoted, which is somewhat ironic if one considers that only relatively recently many were arguing in favour of the right to withdraw early from the labour market. Examples of public initiatives include the *Finnish Programme on Ageing Workers (FINPAW)*, which aimed to address the whole work environment rather than isolated features, developing good practice around the retention of older workers, as well as adapting employment services to better serve their needs. In Germany a range of reforms have focused on raising the age of exit from the labour force, including closing off early retirement pathways, increasing the retirement age (to 67 by 2029) and introducing new labour market programs. In Japan, legislation requires that employers actualize extension of employment up to age 65 and a ministerial committee has recommended that the government's next policy target should extend the employment age to 70. In the Netherlands, policy objectives include making paid employment more attractive, preventing involuntary retirement, and giving the responsibility for funding early retirement to individual workers. Supporting the employability of older workers has been a major policy theme internationally. In the UK, for instance, New Deal 50 Plus has offered support and advice for people aged over 50 to find work.

A more flexible approach to retirement has also come in efforts to promote versions of 'gradual' retirement. There would appear to be a strong case for policies that offer a phased transition from work to retirement. For employers, gradual retirement allows skill and knowledge retention; for older workers, it may facilitate an easier adjustment to retirement and governments can increase tax revenues and reduce social welfare expenditure. Surveys demonstrate a willingness amongst older workers to continue working under certain conditions, namely if they can reduce their hours or work more flexible hours. What are the realities of flexible working for older people? For some, undoubtedly, flexibility offers certain benefits, but neglected in current debates is consideration of those for whom a gradual switch from work to non-work is not an option. There remain significant constraints on the choices of many older workers, and therefore a much more nuanced position is required. Present approaches may be characterized as naive, perhaps even ageist, assuming as they do

that a gradual winding down is an option or even advisable for many older people. In some instances working part-time or in a 'bridge' role might be better characterized as a form of unemployment or underemployment, as the individuals concerned may have had little opportunity to shape their own future, being obliged to accept what their disadvantaged labour market status affords them.

Concerns about labour supply as numbers of young people dwindle may have lessened somewhat due to the present economic slump afflicting most developed economies. However, long-term projections suggest that many employers should get used to the notion of older workforces. On the other hand, a backward glance at recent history would suggest that while policymakers are trying to reshape the retirement landscape, both older workers and employers are likely to be reluctant partners, at least until economic imperatives persuade them otherwise.

The present policy scene is certainly an exciting one for observers and commentators. A raft of government measures and political policy positions are emerging, not all of them well-founded in evidence. Some policies may even serve to confirm ageist stereotypes rather than counter them. One such example is wage subsidies for firms who take on older workers, which may imply that the latter are only considered deserving of a job if supported by a financial incentive. This may motivate neither older people nor firms. Likewise, the management literature concerning worker ageing and proposals to make firms age-friendly is growing and contains much good advice. On the other hand, it is certainly based on some false assumptions and shaky premises. As it is often presented, the business case for employing older people is such an example, not standing very close scrutiny, unfortunately (Taylor, 2008). As with public policy, efforts to convince firms often stray into ageist territory, begging the employer to believe, for instance, that it is only older workers who are reliable, experienced, keepers of corporate wisdom, or indeed that these characteristics are valued by the modern impatient firm aspiring to be at the cutting edge, which commentators such as Sennett (2006, 2008) believe they are not. Younger workers, on the other hand, we are told by those advocating on behalf of older workers, will only be a fleeting presence in their firm and cannot be trusted to do the job well. This betrays another problem with the present approach, a reliance on shallow arguments that are unlikely to elicit much interest from the intelligent employer and which leave their proponents wide open to accusations of ageism. In fact Sennett argues that many employers are attracted to younger workers precisely because 'flexible firms expect employees to move around, and just because these firms do not reward service and longevity' (2006, p. 97).

In the area of advocacy likewise, the suggestion often is that only

'older people' experience ageism, there seemingly being little interest in how ageism is manifested over the life course. That only older people are presented as victims of ageism suggests that they have limited scope to shape their own labour market destiny, and the public debate is often so framed as to preclude other factors that undermine their labour market status. There is much evidence that indicates that older workers experience ageism, they certainly claim in surveys that they do, while studies indicate that managers are often guided by ageist assumptions about abilities and motivations. However, it seems unlikely that ageism alone is the cause of the labour market disadvantage experienced by many older workers. The sharp decline in labour force participation of older workers that was observed in a number of the industrialized economies in the early 1980s and 1990s certainly had ageist overtones, although the massive restructuring of industry over that period played a major part. Personal preferences for retirement over continued employment are another explanation. Cumulative disadvantage built up over a lifetime may also lead some older workers towards a precarious coda to their careers. Skills deficits, illness and injury may also be pointed to.

Thus, the chapters presented in this volume aim to take a critical perspective on the changing labour market position of older workers. They are divided into interlinked parts. Part I considers issues of public policy. Here Sara Rix (Chapter 2) provides an international comparative perspective, while Gerd Naegele (Chapter 3) considers the specific case of Germany, although offering solutions that have wider applicability. Masato Oka (Chapter 4) considers the issue of recent public policy reforms surrounding retirement and their effects on Japanese employers. Finally, Jonas Edlund and Mikael Stattin (Chapter 5) explore the age neutrality of labour markets in selected countries. Part II considers the issue of investing in ageing human capital. Harvey L. Sterns and Diane M. Spokus (Chapter 6) widen the lens through which to view issues of age and the labour market and to increase the set of tools to respond to the experiences of older workers and the changing dynamics of individual careers. Neil Charness (Chapter 7) elaborates a critique of Sterns and Spokus' chapter, drawing on evidence from the IT industry. Finally, Gerard Evers and Peter Ester (Chapter 8) consider the issue of the productivity of older workers, pointing to the importance and reinforcing nature of investing in human capital. Part III considers the management of ageing workforces. The workability construct, as set out by Juhani Ilmarinen (Chapter 9) takes a holistic view on the needs of older workers. He elucidates the construct and its benefits for workers, employers and society as a whole. Elizabeth Brooke (Chapter 10) considers employers' management of ageing workforces in the IT sector, considering the role of HRM theory

and concepts in the smaller firm. Anthony Chiva (Chapter 11) considers how older employees may be supported to work longer and Victoria Büsch (Chapter 12) considers the need to rethink the role age plays in the recruitment process. The popular concept of generations is explored and critiqued in chapters in Part IV by Victor W. Marshall and Amber L. Wells (Chapter 13) and MarciePitt-Catsouphe, Christina Matz-Costa and Elyssa Besen (Chapter 14) respectively. Part V provides perspectives on the role older labour will play in a globalizing economy. Philip Taylor and Christopher McLoughlin (Chapter 15) ask whether ageing workforces will necessarily eventuate or whether some industry sectors will be resistant, while Donald M. Atwater (Chapter 16) considers how manageable movements in labour supply will be. Finally, Stephen Little and Frank Go (Chapter 17) explore the mobility of older labour and their potential role as a development resource and as a medium of knowledge transfer before Philip Taylor concludes in Chapter 18 with a summary of lessons from the preceding chapters.

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