

## **11th session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing**

### **Substantive discussion on the focus areas of the 11th working session : Right to work and access to the labour market**

The International Federation of the Associations of the Elderly fights daily for the rights of active or retired seniors to dignity, consent, citizenship, the promotion of an inclusive society. In fact, the development of citizens' awareness is also an indispensable factor towards the establishment of a system of social policy for work and well-being that is truly sustainable and that also benefits future generations. The challenges in this area are significant :

- Age discrimination

Today, this discrimination is a reality faced by older workers who are considered "old". Despite evidence of this, age discrimination among job seekers is a cruel reality that few believe. On average, job seekers aged 45 are the most discriminated. Older people are perceived as less flexible, not up to date with new technologies or with health problems.

Directive 2000/78/EC of the European Union provides a general framework for non-discrimination at work, age is one of the factors of non-discrimination, but despite this, Member States have introduced age-related exemptions that confuse what constitutes legally discriminatory behavior.

- Working longer

The working age is gradually increasing in each country. In order to be able to work longer, measures must be adapted to the needs of older workers while respecting the needs of market objectives. In practice, the Member States of the European Union have fixed a mandatory retirement age in the various occupational sectors. Despite the existence of certain programs to help job seekers find jobs, such as the reduction in employers' social security contributions, targeted training and placement measures by public employment agencies or a combination of these measures.

- The active role of older people in society

For older people, work is not always just a source of income but an opportunity to contribute actively to society. The social dimension of work, such as inclusion, quality relations and solidarity between generations, is just as important as the economic dimension.

- Work adapted to the opportunities of the aging person

The EU Employment Directive requires employers to make reasonable adjustments to include disabled workers. This does not apply to older workers who may have simple functional limitations due to physical wear.

- Fight against ageism

FIAPA filed a collective claim against France under the Additional Protocol to the European Social Charter providing for a system of collective claim against the French government which fixes the age limit of 71 years for candidates in an election as a member of a board of health professionals. The abandonment of this age limit by the Council of State and professional orders confirmed the validity of our appeal.

It is therefore necessary to step up the fight against any discrimination based on age within and outside working environments. Countries need to build a real national paradigm shift strategy that promotes human development and inclusive economic growth.

