



AUSTRIAN SUMMARY REPORT ON OLDER WORKERS AND INTRODUCTION OF CASE STUDY SECTORS

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INTRODUCTION

Due to a declining birth rate and an increasing life expectancy, Europe will face an increase of the average population age. This demographic development will have an impact on the labour market: the age composition of employees will change insofar as a decreasing number of young workers will be confronted with a high number of older workers. Austria will also have to deal with this development and get prepared for a labour market characterised by a different age structure.

It is a matter of fact that the question of older workers is not only a future challenge but has to be dealt with in the present too. Due to the abolishment of early retirement pensions, even today the older workforce is required to stay longer in the labour market. For this reason conditions must be established in companies but also by the government to allow this special group of employees to work longer and to avoid them having to leave the labour market due to ill health or being dismissed and remaining unemployed until they reach retirement age. Additionally, the older workers of the future are today's younger generations. Thus, the preconditions set by companies and the government must focus on all workers regardless of their age.

Measures enabling (older) workers to prolong the duration of their working life must, on the one hand, centre around raising awareness and, on the other hand, on working conditions, such as working-time arrangements, work organisation, training and job design.

The present report tries to highlight some of the specific aspects of the ageing workforce in Austria. It was prepared in the course of the European project "Creative Approaches to Workforce Ageing (CAWA)". CAWA is a project supported by the European Social Funds (Innovative approaches to the management of change – Article 6 of the European Social Fund Regulation). Its aim is to develop "European Codes of Innovative Practice" drawn up in close cooperation with the social partners. Besides workshops and case studies in selected sectors, a summary report is designed to not only present a background picture of the specific situation of older workers in Austria but also to provide some data on the selected sectors.

This report tries to meet these demands. In the first part, the employment situation of older workers will be described in a quantitative way. This is followed by a short description of the Austrian pension system and its reforms, which took place in the last years. This picture will be complemented by a presentation of the main measures set by the Austrian government to keep older workers longer in employment.

In the second part of this report the sectors in which the case studies will take place are addressed by highlighting some of the most interesting aspects of the sectors. The chosen sectors are the metal sector on the one hand and the hotel and restaurant sector, including travel agencies, on the other hand.

1. EMPLOYMENT SITUATION OF OLDER WORKERS

1.1. Employment rate and unemployment rate

When the focus is on older workers, the first question concerns the age structure of the workforce. The following tables and explanations try to answer this question by pointing out the share of older workers in employment and of those who are looking for a job.

In 2004, the employment rate of the total workforce (15 to 64 years old) amounted to 67.8% (Table 1) whereas it was only 28.8% among those aged 55 to 64. Thus, compared to the European average (41%), the Austrian employment rate of older workers can be considered as rather low. Besides, it decreased between 2003 and 2004 from 30.1% to 28.8%, even though there was a slight increase (28.9% to 30.1%) in the previous years (2001 to 2003).

Table 1: Employment rate by age and gender, 2001 to 2004

		2001	2002	2003	2004
Women	15-64	60.7	61.3	61.7	60.7
	55-64	18.4	19.3	20.6	19.3
Men	15-64	76.4	76.4	76.4	74.9
	55-64	40.1	39.6	40.2	38.9
Total	15-64	68.5	68.7	69.0	67.8
	55-64	28.9	29.1	30.1	28.8

Source: European Commission (2006): Employment in Europe 2005.

The employment rate of men is always higher than that of women, no matter whether we consider the rates at for all employees or older workers. Male employment was 74.9% in 2004 and is 14 percentage points above female employment, which amounted to 60.7%. Closer attention must be paid to the difference of the employment rate of older women and men. The employment rate of older women only amounts to 19.3%, whereas the employment rate of older men is twice as high and amounts to 38.9%. This considerable difference between the employment rates of older men and women reflects the different statutory pension age of women (60 years) and of men (65 years). But also the traditional understanding of the gendered division of labour can be made responsible for this situation.

Table 2: Extended employment rate¹ by age and gender 2001, in %

	55-59	60-64	>64	All age groups
Women	29.4	9.7	1.5	70.6
Men	53.1	18.2	2.7	74.9
Total	41.1	13.8	2.0	72.9

Source: Synthesis, in Enzenhofer et al. (2004).

Additional information on the employment rate of older workers is given in Table 2. It shows the employment rate of people above 55 years of age and clearly illustrates that the employment rate decreases by age: Thus in 2001, the employment rate of those aged between 55 and 59 was 41% , whereas that of the 60 - 64 years old was much lower (27 percentage points), amounting to 13.8%. The employment rate of workers who are older than 64 years old is negligible (2%).

Table 3 shows the unemployment rate of all employees and of older workers from 2001 to 2004. The unemployment rate of those aged 15 to 64 was 5.3% in 2004. The unemployment rate of both women and men also amounted to 5.3%. Interestingly, unemployment was lower among older workers than among all age groups, amounting to 4.5%. This is also true for unemployment among older women (4.1%) and older men (4.7%). An explanation for this peculiarity might be that unemployed persons are not counted in the official unemployment statistics if they are attending special training courses, which is frequently the case with older unemployed women and men.

Table 3: Unemployment rate by age and gender, 2001 to 2004

		2001	2002	2003	2004
Women	15-64	4.1	4.6	4.3	5.3
	55-64	5.2	3.8	4.1	4.1
Men	15-64	4.0	5.2	5.1	5.3
	55-64	5.7	6.7	7.3	4.7
Total	15-64	4.0	4.9	4.7	5.3
	55-64	5.6	5.7	6.2	4.5

Source: European Commission (2006): Employment in Europe 2005.

1 The extended employment rate shows the rate of all employees who were in standard or marginal employment at least once within the one year. It also includes persons employed through Freie Dienstverträge (quasi-freelance contracts).

Another remarkable fact is that between 2003 and 2004 unemployment among older men declined by 2.6 percentage points from 7.3% (!) to 4.7%. This decline can be explained by a new mode of calculation of unemployed persons and does not mean that there was such a huge decline of older unemployed men. During the same period, however, unemployment among older women remained unchanged (4.1%). Considering the fact that the mode of calculation has changed, it must be assumed that the unemployment rate of older women rose between 2003 and 2004 and did not stay the same.

1.2. *The Austrian pension system*

In connection with an ageing workforce the pension system is relevant for two reasons: First of all it outlines the conditions and requirements for leaving the labour market and retiring. Secondly, some of the measures set by the government have to be seen in close connection to the pension reforms. The following remarks try to outline some of the main features of the Austrian pension system and also refer to some of its recent reforms.

Austrian law provides for different statutory retirement ages for women and for men: Women can retire from age 60, men only from age 65. The female retirement age will be gradually raised to that of men between 2024 and 2033.

People are eligible to receive old-age pension if they have accumulated 45 years of insurance contributions. In recent pension reforms, the number of contributory years was first raised from 15 to 40 and, more recently, to 45 years of contributions. For people who were already 50 years old on January 1, 2005, the amount of contributory years will be successively raised from 40 to 45 years until 2009.

At present, there only exist two different forms of early retirement: the *vorzeitige Alterspension bei langer Versicherungsdauer* (early retirement due to extremely long insurance) and a special form of early retirement available to people working in physically extremely demanding jobs (*Schwerarbeiter*). Amongst other changes, options for retirement before the official retirement age were and will be abolished with the pension reform 2003, including *vorzeitige Alterspension bei Arbeitslosigkeit* (early retirement due to unemployment) and *Gleitpension* (flexible retirement) were abolished from the start of 2004.

Vorzeitige Alterspension bei langer Versicherungsdauer (early retirement due to extremely long insurance) will be gradually abolished until 2014. Between 2004 and 2014 the age limits for early retirement will be gradually raised from 56.5 (women) and 61.5 (men) years of age to the statutory retirement age (60 for women and 65 for men). As a consequence, older female and male workers have to remain in the labour market longer, even though, once they become unemployed, they have little prospect of getting back into employment.

Yet, a special form of early retirement is available for people working in physically extremely demanding jobs (*Schwerarbeiter*). These people are eligible to retire at the

age of 60 if they have worked in physically demanding jobs for ten years within the last 20 years and have accumulated 45 years of insurance contributions.

Old-age pensions are cut by 4.2% for each year that the pension is claimed prior to regular retirement age. This rate of reduction is lower for those working in physically extremely demanding jobs (1.8%). Besides retiring early, Austrian workers can also postpone retirement. In this case, old-age pensions are increased by 4.2% per calendar year.

1.3. *Political measures*

The Austrian government provides some measures that aim to keep older workers longer in employment. They mainly focus on three different aspects: working time, training and financial incentives. Additionally, we need to mention the protection of dismissal for older workers. The following description should give a brief overview on these measures.

Working time

Modified working time arrangements turned out to be one of the most important aspects to ensure that older workers stay longer in employment. If working time arrangements are adapted to their special needs, older workers are more productive than younger ones. This means that deficits in productivity can be put down to and be compensated by the design of the working time (Jepsen/Hutsebaut 2005).

The Austrian government also focuses on working time for older workers by a measure that is called *Altersteilzeit*. *Altersteilzeit* is one of the most popular measures in Austria. It enables older workers to reduce their working time, whereas the income reduction does not correspond to the extent of the working time reduction. Its aim was twofold: on the one hand it should help older workers to stay longer in employment and on the other side it was supposed to reduce the number of early retirees. Additionally, it was designed to aid a smooth transition into retirement.

Altersteilzeit expects workers to reduce their working time by 40% to a maximum of 60%. A prerequisite for *Altersteilzeit* is a minimum of 15 years of contributions paid to the unemployment insurance within the last 25 years. In principle, older workers can opt for *Altersteilzeit* for a maximum period of five years, at the end of which they must have reached retirement age. Employees and employers have to make an arrangement that the latter will pay a compensatory wage supplement for half of the reduction of the working time. Additionally, employers still pay social insurance contributions on the basis of the income the workers received before the reduction of the working time. The Austrian Labour Market Service (AMS) will refund half of the compensatory wage supplement and the additional costs caused by the social insurance contributions. If employers recruit an additional worker to stand in for the worker in *Altersteilzeit*, the AMS will pay the total costs (AKplus 2006, AMS 2006)

Altersteilzeit can be seen as a very good idea to facilitate older workers' transition into retirement. But an intra-enterprise adaptation of the daily working time scheme is not affected by this measure. It is also worth mentioning, that in the course of the pension reform 2003 it was not only extended (Heuberger 2004) to cushion the impact of the abolishment of early retirement due to unemployment (*vorzeitige Alterspension bei Arbeitslosigkeit*) and the gradual abolishment of early retirement due to extremely long insurance (*vorzeitige Alterspension bei langer Versicherungsdauer*) (Kaun 2003), but also its regulations were tightened. The reason was that *Altersteilzeit* was readily accepted by older workers and their employers and claimed by more people than the government expected. As a consequence the expenses exceeded the budget. Because of the new regulations it can be expected that the number of beneficiaries will decrease.

Training

Further training is another crucial aspect for older workers. They need to have the appropriate competencies to take advantage of making use of improved labour-market opportunities. Therefore it is necessary to give older workers the same training possibilities as their younger colleagues. Besides, a high rate of participation in training measures results in higher workability and motivation: Older trained employees want to work longer (Blumberger et al. 2005). It seems to be necessary to adapt training measures to the special learning needs of older people. Learning methods that are used in schools for example do not meet the requirements of older workers as the end of their education goes back a long time.

In terms of further training two measures are worth mentioning: *Bildungskarenz* and *Qualifizierungsförderung für Beschäftigte*. *Qualifizierungsförderung für Beschäftigte* is a special AMS measure available to companies, who can apply for up to 10,000 Euros for staff training measures. The AMS requires a training plan from the company and then decides whether the training makes sense from a labour-market policy point of view (AMS 2006b, AMS 2006c).

Another training option available is *Bildungskarenz*. It is a form of education or study leave enabling employees to participate in external training. Even though *Bildungskarenz* can be taken by workers of all age groups, special provisions apply for older workers. For the time of their leave, workers are paid a grant (*Weiterbildungsgeld*) corresponding to the amount of Austrian childcare benefit (*Kinderbetreuungsgeld*) of Euro 14.53 per day. Workers above the age of 45 are eligible to receive a grant to the amount of the unemployment benefit they would be entitled to (if the unemployment benefit exceeds the amount of *childcare benefit*). The training period must be taken for a minimum of three months and can not exceed twelve months. During this period of time employees do not have a protection of dismissal. Employees who want to take *Bildungskarenz* are required to have paid unemployment insurance contributions for 52 weeks within the last 24 months (AK Wien 2005, AMS 2006d, AMS 2006a).

Even though the grant is higher for older people, it means that they have to accept a reduction in income of 45 per cent. Employees with low incomes are naturally hit harder by this income reduction. This also applies to older workers receiving a grant to

the amount of the childcare benefit, i.e. only 436 Euros a month. Another aspect that seems to be difficult is the missing protection of dismissal as it will be more difficult for older workers to find another job if they were dismissed during the *Bildungskarenz*.

Considering the fact that older workers in Austria are not participating in internal training to the same extent as their younger colleagues do, it is questionable whether employers will agree to further training of their older workers. And finally, one needs to mention that both *Qualifizierungsförderung für Beschäftigte* and *Bildungskarenz* only provide money resp. time for training. But it remains unclear whether the training methods are adapted to the needs of older workers to ensure they are able to highly benefit from the training.

Financial incentives

The Austrian government offers financial incentives to companies employing older workers. There are two measures worth mentioning: the *Aktion 56/58 plus* and the *Bonus-Malus-System*. The *Aktion 56/58 plus* aims to keep older workers longer in employment by reducing non-wage labour costs. Like the *Altersteilzeit*, this measure was introduced to cushion the effects of abolishing the early retirement due to unemployment (*vorzeitige Alterspension bei Arbeitslosigkeit*). For employees as well as for employers the contribution to the unemployment insurance need not be paid if the worker reaches 56 (women) resp. 58 (men) years of age. This reduction equals 6% of the non-wage labour costs. If the employee turns 60, this percentage amounts to 12% as it also includes other forms of non-wage labour-cost reductions (BMSG 2003, WKO 2004).

The *Bonus-Malus-System* on the other hand offers a positive and a negative incentive for employers. If a company employs a person above 50 years of age, the contribution to the unemployment insurance is abolished. At the same time employers have to pay a “Malus” in case of dismissing a worker who is older than 50 years and has worked for the company for at least ten years. The “Malus” is a special contribution to the unemployment insurance and has to be paid once (WKO 2004).

As positive as well as negative financial incentives have only little impact on the personnel policy of enterprises, as experiences in Sweden and the Netherlands show (Vogt 2003), they are not sufficient to persuade employers not to dismiss or to employ older workers.

Regulatory measures

In principle, there is no particular legislation in laws on labour market policy in favour of older workers. The only exception in terms of protection of older workers is the protection against dismissal. It offers older workers to contest their dismissal for “social reasons”. This applies when “essential interests” of the employee are affected. In the process of looking into these “social reasons”, the duration of employment in the company in question but also the difficulties of finding another job must be considered. The employer on the other hand has to prove that the worker was dismissed on grounds

related to the employee and that further employment was against the company's interests (Heuberger 2004, WKO 2006, Schönbauer 1998).

1.4. Conclusions

The employment rate of older workers can be considered as rather low in Austria. Not even one third of people above the age of 55 are in employment today. Furthermore, the employment rate of the oldest age group on the labour market decreases with increasing age. On the one hand, the different retirement ages of women and men can definitely be made responsible for this situation, but on the other hand meanwhile abolished early retirement options still effect the low employment rate of the oldest workers.

But as early retirement is no longer an option, older workers will have to stay longer in the labour market. As a result, older workers must have the possibility to work until they reach statutory retirement age. Alternatively, older employees would either have to leave the labour market due to ill health or get unemployed. Considering the fact that the unemployment rate of older workers has been on the increase since the beginning of the millennium, the need for action seems to be enormous.

Political measures to keep older workers in employment are not outstanding in Austria. *Altersteilzeit* was very popular among employees and employers alike and it is in a way alienating that its eligibility criteria were tightened so that it can be expected that fewer people will be able to claim that measure. Attempts to facilitate training for older workers can be advantageous for this special group of employees. But as a matter of fact older workers do not participate in internal training to the same extent as their younger colleagues do. For this reason it is questionable whether employers will consider their older workforce for participation in training measures such as *Qualifizierungsförderung für Beschäftigte* or *Bildungskarenz*.

Awareness-raising campaigns would be essential, to ensure that employers become aware of the necessity of training measures for older workers or any measure that focuses on working conditions in general. However, these are not yet on the agenda in Austria. Furthermore, a coherent strategy on how to keep older workers longer in employment and on how older unemployed persons can find employment is missing. An alternative to the Austrian approach is Finland's method with the *Finnish National Program for Older Workers (FINPAW)*. The *FINPAW* must be considered as a coherent strategy that could serve Austria as an example for establishing a programme of emphasis for this special group of workers.

2. THE CASE STUDY SECTORS

The second part of this summary report aims to highlight the most important aspects of two different sectors: the metal sector (NACE DJ) on the one hand and the hotels and restaurants sector (NACE 55) and travel agencies (NACE 633001 and 633002) on the other hand.

2.1. Metal sector

There are 4,406 companies in the Austrian metal industry. Most companies (48%) have less than ten employees. The percentage of enterprises with 10 to 19 employees amounts to 11% and another 10% are companies with 20 to 49 employees. If these shares are added, nearly 70% of all enterprises in the metal sector have less than 50 employees. Thus, it can be said that the distribution of businesses by size is highly fragmented into small enterprises (Statistik Austria 2004).

Even though most enterprises in the sector are small companies, the share of workers in companies employing less than 50 staff amounts to 27% only. This means that most workers working in the metal sector (nearly 73%) are employed in medium sized and large companies (Statistik Austria 2004).

It is not surprising that most employees in the sector are male. The share of women amounts only to 18%. Compared to national data, men are overrepresented in the metal sector as “only” 57% of all Austrian workers are male. Also the vast majority of employees (70%) are blue-collar workers. Interestingly, men are overrepresented among blue-collar workers but underrepresented among white-collar workers (Statistik Austria 2004). The huge number of blue-collar workers is also reflected in the educational level of the employees. More than 75% of all workers have either completed nine years of compulsory school attendance or finished an apprenticeship. Only 4% graduated from colleges or universities (Statistik Austria 2005).

The age structure of workers in the metal sector shows that most employees (55%) are between 25 and 44 years of age. Only 16% of the workers are younger than 25 years and nearly 30% are above 44 years of age. A closer look at the age of the workers reveals that 15% are between 35 and 39 or 40 and 44 years of age each. Thus, in the near future, these two age groups, whose percentage amounts to 30%, will be the “older” workers. The percentages of 45-to-49-year-olds amounts to nearly 12% and that of the 50-to-54-year-olds to 10%. Only 7.5% of all employees are older than 55 years of age. Considering the fact that due to the abolishment of early retirement schemes, people will have to work longer. This means that not only the age group of the 35-to-44-year-olds, but also the age cohort of those aged between 45 and 54 will constitute the majority of employees in the next ten years. Therefore the metal sector will be characterised by a huge number of older workers and accordingly will need to prepare for these circumstances (AK-Wien, Hauptverbandsdaten 2003).

The majority of people employed in the metal sector are working full time, whereas 86% of all full-time employed persons are men. Only 5% of all people have a part-time job. With regard to gender, nearly three fourth of all part-time workers are female. Or the other way round: Not even 2% of all men, but 23% of all women in the sector are part timers (Statistik Austria 2005).

Most employees (85%) do not work overtime. Of those who do work overtime most (11%) work an additional three to ten hours per week. Even though overtime work is not common in the sector, another working time arrangement is: shift work. Nearly 30% of all workers have to work shifts, and 90% of them do this often. Another 7% of all employees who state that they perform shift work do this sometimes (Statistik Austria 2004a).

There is data on potentially adverse working conditions for specific occupational groups working in the metal sector. These include smiths, lock smiths and toolmakers on the one hand and machine setters and those employed in mechanical metal processing on the other hand. Both occupational groups report that they suffer most from industrial noise (37% resp. 48%), dirt, grease and oil (30% each), dust (26% resp. 32%) and vapours, gases and smoke (23% resp. 22%). Around 61% of smiths, lock smiths and toolmakers and 71% of machine setters and those employed in mechanical metal processing report that they are confronted with at least three adverse ambient working conditions. Both occupational groups also complain about work under time pressure (29% resp. 30%) and 24% resp. 33% name accident risk and risk of injury an occupational burden (Fasching 1999).

The income in the metal sector can be considered as rather high compared to the average income in Austria. The median gross income of workers in the metal sector is 2,445 Euros, whereas the Austrian median income is 1,992 Euros. Like in any other sector, there are also differences in the income of men and women in the metal sector. For example, the median income of men is higher by 750 Euros than that of women. But also the difference between the quarter of men and the quarter of women who earn least, amounts to 600 Euros. One explanation for these differences can be found in the fact that more women than men work part time (Statistik Austria 2006).

At the end of June 2006 nearly 4,900 people in the metal sector were looking for a job, compared to only 623 vacancies. In terms of annual averages, almost 6,500 people were unemployed in the year 2005. Between 2000 and 2005 the number of unemployed persons rose by 19% (1,040 people). However, this percentage is higher for all sectors, amounting to 30% (AMS 2005).

2.2. *Hotels and restaurants and travel agencies*

There are more than 50,000 companies in the hotel and restaurant sector and 1,700 travel agencies. Nearly 93% of all businesses in the hotel and restaurant sector employ less than 10 workers and not even one per cent has more than 50 employees. Thus, most enterprises are small businesses. In addition, the majority of travel agencies (89%) are

small companies with no more than 9 employees. The percentage of large companies here also amounts to only one per cent. Thus, both sectors are characterised by small businesses (Statistik Austria 2004).

Unlike the metal sector, most employees in the hotel and restaurant sector as well as in travel agencies work in small companies. Nearly 52% of all employees work in enterprises employing less than 10 workers. Another 35% work in businesses that have between 10 and 49 employees. These percentages are nearly the same for travel agencies: 50% of all employees work in companies with no more than 9 employees and 34% in enterprises with 10 to 49 workers (Statistik Austria 2004).

As it is not a surprise that the metal sector is male dominated, it is equally unsurprising that women are overrepresented in the hotel and restaurant sector and in travel agencies. 58% of all workers in the hotel and restaurant sector and 62% in travel agencies are women. Concerning the occupational status, most employees in the hotel and restaurant sector (71%) are blue-collar workers. Travel agencies on the other hand are dominated by white-collar workers (83%) (Statistik Austria 2004). Nearly 80% of all workers in the hotel and restaurant sector have either completed compulsory school attendance or an apprenticeship. Not even 3% have graduated from a college or a university. Thus, the education level of employees in the sector can be considered as rather low (Statistik Austria 2005). Unfortunately, there are no data on the education level of employees in travel agencies. But some information can be taken from the occupational data base of the AMS. Besides an apprenticeship, qualifications can also be obtained by graduating from a specific technical or higher professional school. They highly recommend prospects to obtain a school leaving qualification. As possibilities for further training are offered by colleges and universities, people who graduated from these schools can also be found in the sector (AMS Berufsdatenbank).

The age structure of employees in the hotel and restaurant sector shows that 55% are between 25 and 44 years of age. The percentage of workers below 25 and above 44 years of age is the same (22.5%). Most workers are either between 30 and 34 (14.3%) or between 35 and 39 (14.6%) years old. More than 12% of all employees in the sector are between 40 and 44 years of age and nearly 10% are between 45 and 49 years old. The percentage of persons aged between 50 and 59 amounts to 11%. Between 1989 and 1995 the percentage of workers below 25 years of age decreased from 43% to 30%. Today only 22% employees are in this age group. On the other hand, the percentage of workers who are older than 50 increased from 6.3% (1989) to 7% (1995) and has reached 13% today. Additionally, workers aged between 35 and 44 (27%) and between 45 and 54 (17%) will be the older workers group if they do not leave the sector. Therefore it is also necessary for the hotel and restaurant sector to be prepared for a higher percentage of older workers (AK-Wien, Hauptverbandsdaten 2003, Arbeiterkammer Österreich, unpublished).

Three fourths of all workers in the hotel and restaurant sector are employed full time. Nonetheless, the percentage of part timers increased by 10 percentage points (Statistik Austria 2005) between 1997 and 2003. There are two main tourist seasons in Austria, the winter and summer season. One starts in December and lasts until March and the

other one starts in May and ends in September. Thus, there are a lot of seasonal workers in the sector. Nearly 14% of all employees are seasonal workers. This percentage has to be considered as rather high, as only 2% of all Austrian employees are seasonal workers (Statistik Austria 2004a). But not only seasonal work is a special characteristic of the sector, also marginally employed people and workers who were recruited by an employment agency enter the sector. Between 1996 and 2001, the number of marginally employed people increased by 32% from 14,617 to 19,409 persons. The number of people who were recruited by an employment agency increased fifteen-fold between 1991 and 2001 (from 40 to 645 people) (Baumgartner et al. 2002, Arbeiterkammer Österreich 2006).

Most workers in the hotel and restaurant sector (85%) do not work overtime but of those who do work overtime most (5.3%) worked between six and 10 hours extra per week. The situation in the sector is thus similar to the national average (5.65%). But the impression that working time is quite the same in the sector as in all Austrian sectors is wrong. The data refer to the month of March. March is the last month of the winter season and working hours are already reduced by that time. Thus, we can assume that people working in hotels and restaurants work more hours during the season than indicated here. Such deceptive treatment of data also concerns shift work. Thus, the following explanations must be seen under that perspective. There is one common characteristic, if we looking at shift work, evening or night work or work on Saturdays and Sundays: If people employed in the hotel and restaurant sector work one of these shifts, they do this often. More than 70% of all employees often have to work shift work. About 42% often work evening shifts and about 21% often work night shifts. Nearly 57% of all employees often work on Saturdays and 46% often work on Sundays (Statistik Austria 2004a).

But not only can the working time be considered as an occupational burden. The three most named adverse working conditions are working under time pressure (60%), unbalanced workloads (56%) and continuous customer contact (52%). Furthermore, employees suffer from hot indoor conditions (39%), second-hand smoke (37%) and permanent artificial light or exposure to powerful light sources (29%) (Statistik Austria: Mikrozensus 1999, special survey of working conditions).

The income in the hotel and restaurant sector is much lower than the average income in Austria. The median income in the sector is 1,359 Euros compared to 1,972 Euros in Austria. This difference becomes even more apparent if we look at the quarter of employees who earn most: in the sector (1,752 Euros) it is less by 900 Euros than in all sectors (2,698 Euros) Statistik Austria 2006.

The number of unemployed people in the hotel and restaurant sector amounted to 36,000 in year 2005, or 14% of all unemployed in Austria. The hotel and restaurant sector has the highest unemployment rate of all sectors in Austria. The rate is 18% and is much higher than the national unemployment rate (7.2%) (Arbeiterkammer Österreich 2006). It is worth mentioning that the unemployment rate in the hotel and restaurant sector shows strong seasonal fluctuation and ranges between 10 and 30%. The lowest unemployment is in July, August and February and the highest in November

and April. Compared to national data, the fluctuations of seasonal unemployment in the hotel and restaurant sector is twice as high as in all other sectors (Baumgartner et al. 2002:40f). Personnel turnover in hotel and restaurant sector is much higher than in other sectors. In March 2003, only 28 percent of all employees in hotel and restaurant sector started their job in or before 1993. In comparison, in other economic sectors this figure hovers around 46%. Twenty-two percent of all employees in the hotel and restaurants sector started working in their current workplace within the last year. In all Austrian sectors this figure is much lower: Only 13% of all employees started to work for their current employer after 2002 (Statistik Austria 2004a).

2.3. *Conclusions*

The metal sector and the hotel and restaurant sector with travel agencies can be considered as well selected sectors for the case studies on age management in companies. On the one hand they differ in some aspects and on the other hand they have the same structure. Similarities can be found in the fact that in both sectors most employees are blue-collar workers and the education level is rather low. In the hotel and restaurant sector as well as in the metal sector employees often have to work shifts while in the hotel and restaurant industry it is also quite normal for people to work on Saturdays, Sundays as well as in the evening and in the night.

But the sectors also differ, for example, in the percentages of women and men. So there is one female and one male dominated sector. Accordingly, the income situation of the employees in the sectors also differs. Incomes in the metal sector are much higher than the average income in Austria while the income of the hotel and restaurant sector is much lower. Even though both sectors predominantly consist of small businesses, most employees work in large companies in the metal sector. In the hotel and restaurant sector and in travel agencies most workers are employed in small enterprises.

Finally, the age structure also differs in some points. There are more older workers (above 44 years of age) in the metal sector today than in the hotel and restaurant sector. But in both sectors the biggest age cohorts will be the future older workers. Nonetheless, the question of an ageing workforce emerges sooner in the metal sector than in the hotel and restaurant sector. But the hotel and restaurant sector will also face a greater number of older workers in the labour market. From these similarities and differences, we can expect a very interesting comparison on how age management is implemented in two specific companies in each of the sectors.

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