



## COST Action IS1409

**Gender and health impacts of policies extending working life in western countries**

**web site: <http://genderewl.com/>**

**19 March 2016 - Fondazione Marco Biagi University of Modena & Reggio Emilia**

**The impact of working conditions and policies on well being of elderly workers.**

Local policy workshop

### REPORT

**Scope of the workshop:** The workshop aims to improve comparative understanding of the ways working conditions and policy interventions influence health and wellbeing during extended working lives to provide evidentiary basis for more effective policy-making. For this purpose together with an introduction on the aims of the COST action, evidence based on quantitative analysis and evaluation methods will be discussed with the objectives to increase public awareness and discuss policies implications.

**Location:** Fondazione Marco Biagi University of Modena & Reggio Emilia, Largo Marco Biagi, 10, Modena Italy

**Participants:** 42 participants including the lecturers and discussants. The participants included Ph.students, students from the University of Modena & Reggio Emilia, professors, experts and civil societies members.

**Summary:** The workshop has been opened with the welcoming addresses that have been made by Professor **Tindara Addabbo** on behalf of the Rector of Unimore and of the Dean of the Marco Biagi Foundation who were not able to attend due to the ceremony that has been held in Bologna to commemorate Professor Marco Biagi (to whom the Marco Biagi Foundation is entitled) death. Marco Biagi was a labour lawyer who was killed by the red Brigade on the 19 of March 2016 for his ideas and the Marco Biagi Foundation has been built in his memory to continue the research path on labour with the involvement of different disciplines. Professor **Tindara Addabbo** opened the meeting with an address that also contained a reference to the very mission of the Marco Biagi Foundation Local Organizer of the event and briefly summarizing the scope of the event in the COST Action. Dr **Michaela Gstrein** (COST Action IS1409 & Working Group 'Identify and map international data bases' Leader) has illustrated the content of the COST ACTION IS 1409 - 'Gender and Health Impacts of Policies Extending Working Life' and of the Working Group 3 illustrating also the Data Set Matrix and the content of the data sets whose information are already in the grid.

The floor has been opened to the presentation of the Short Term Scientific Mission host in Marco Biagi Foundation Dr. **Patricia Carney** (NUI, Galway) who presented to scope of the STSM, the procedure and the scope of her mission in Marco Biagi Foundation.

To explain the interdisciplinary scope of the Action other members of the Action who participate to the event present their role in the Action and their field of analysis: Professor

**Luciana Caenazzo** (Associate Professor in Legal Medicine, University of Padua, Italy), Professor **Vando Borghi** (Associate Professor, Sociology, University of Bologna) and **Erica Aloe** (Ph.d student in the European PhD in Socio-Economic and Statistical Studies, University of Rome La Sapienza).

This part of the local policy workshop has been particularly effective in making the participants aware of the aims of the action and the possibility to join it also by applying for STSM (many participants being doctorate students and young scholars who could be possible candidates and were very much stimulated by the presentation by Dr. Carney).

Professor **Tindara Addabbo** (COST Action IS1409, Fondazione Marco Biagi, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia) then presented the paper 'The effects of work activity on elderly health in a gender perspective. The case of Italy'. The paper based on joint research activities carried out with Dr Anna Maccagnan and Dr Marco Fuscaldo, by using factor and multivariate analyses on a sample of individuals aged 60 or more drawn from the Italian sample of the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe. The papers presented show significant long term effects of quality of work dimensions on health in Italy. Specifically that good quality of work in terms of the socioeconomic and control dimensions significantly decreases the probability of being globally unhealthy during the elder phase of one's life cycle as well as of displaying motivational problems, the effect being similar by gender and that a higher level of control in men's work increases their affective problems when they are older and retired, suggesting a loss in men's social sphere after retirement from a rewarding job and a likely underdevelopment of their relational dimension outside their work activity. The analysis presented dealt also with the effect of unpaid care work on health showing a significant effect for women in terms of deterioration of health later on in life. Professor Addabbo has also discussed the policies implications of the results of the research presented. Professor **Giacomo Pasini** (Ca' Foscari University of Venice) presentation allowed to reflect upon the maternity leave policies short and long term effects on mental health in European Countries by using the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe. The paper presented has been coauthored also by Mauricio Avendano (King's College London), Lisa Berkman (Harvard University) and Agar Brugiavini (Ca' Foscari University of Venice). Main results of the research presented show that psychosocial stress can lead to brain disorders in older ages, with important economic costs and that less than 5 months of leave at maternity «neutralize» the increase in stress incidence due to childbirth. Therefore this important piece of research suggests that cost-benefit analyses should take into account the mental health costs of diminishing the comprehensiveness of maternity leave benefits

A wider focus on public policies that can support the extension of working life has been taken by Dr **Pietro Checucci** (Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori - Isfol) who presented a joint paper with Dr Roberta Fefè: 'Old hopelessly in. The role of public policies in supporting the extension of working life'.

After the presentation of the papers Professor **Ralf Rogowski** (University of Warwick) and Professor **Vando Borghi** (University of Bologna) acted as discussants of the papers presented opening the debate on the results of the research with a special focus on their policies implications. Professor **Pasini** illustrated also the Venice International University Summer School on Ageing whose scope are very much in line with the COST Action. WG3 COST Action leader and co-leader expressed interest in the school and suggested possible future interaction with the research group coordinating the activity.

During Lunch the participants had the opportunity to interact in a fruitful way on the topics of the local policy workshop.