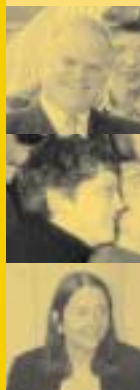




Past it at 40?

**A grassroots view of ageism and
discrimination in employment**

A report undertaken for Third Age Foundation
by SMA Associates



Past it at 40?

A grassroots view of ageism and discrimination in employment

A report undertaken for Third Age Foundation by SMA Associates, a specialist organisation focusing on socioeconomic and regeneration issues, poverty, social exclusion and equal access for all

Sylvia Francis, Third Age Foundation, Lucy Gaster (writer) with research by Margaret Bass (jobseekers) and Kemal Ahson (employers) Foreword by The Lord Tope, CBE, Greater London Authority

There is a growing recognition that people over the age of fifty experience discrimination in the labour market. This ground-breaking report provides new evidence that ageism and discrimination are also having devastating effects on the lives of people as young as forty, with a cost to the economy of up to £31 billion per year.

Why do so many 'older' people who want to work find it difficult to do so? Why are employers reluctant to employ them? Is it purely the effect of discrimination and ageist attitudes? Or are there some other reasons? What can and should be done to achieve change for the better in the future?

Past it at 40? provides answers to these questions. It explores, in detail, the experiences of people over forty trying to enter the labour market, including: people who have been made redundant; the long-term unemployed; women returners; people with disabilities; and people still in a job but needing new skills to keep going. Employers' attitudes, policies and practices are examined, revealing a worrying lack of awareness of national and European legislation in relation to the employment of older people.

The report suggests a series of practical recommendations for government, employers, job seekers, employment agencies and other relevant organisations to ensure that as many people as possible, from all age groups, can find suitable work which benefits both employers and the wider economy. In particular it advocates an holistic approach to helping older people into work.

With current concerns about the effects of the ageing population on future pension provision, and, as this report shows, the striking lack of pension provision for many people now in their forties and fifties, the policy implications are more significant than ever.

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