

P ROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION OF PERSONS WITH ADDITIONAL HARDSHIPS

There are certain groups of persons that, apart from the difficulties that are inherent to all employment search processes, have other hardships relative to their personal circumstances or characteristics.

This documents contains brief references to three of these groups: women, persons over the age of 45 and disabled persons. We have also provided some addresses of interest.

There are certain groups who because of their characteristics or personal circumstances have to overcome added obstacles, compared to the population in general, when they join the labour market. In order to minimize these inequalities, the public administration has offered different incentive to companies for them to contract these people, and to gain an economic advantage.

For more information about this, we also recommend the following web pages:

- ✓ Department of work: www.gencat.cat/treball
- ✓ Employment Service of Catalunya: www.oficinadetreball.cat
- ✓ Instituto Catalán de Asistencia y Services Sociales (Catalan Institute for help and social services):
www.gencat.cat/dasc
- ✓ Instituto Catalán de las Mujeres (Catalan Institute for women):
<http://www.gencat.net/icdona/>
- ✓ Ministerio de Trabajo e inmigración (Ministry of Work and Immigration):
www.mtas.es
- ✓ Ministerio de Education, Política Social y Deporte (Ministry of Education, Social Policy and Sport): www.mec.es
- ✓ Instituto de Empleo (Employment institute): www.inem.es
- ✓ Instituto de la Mujer (Institute for women): www.mtas.es/mujer



PEOPLE OVER THE AGE OF 45

Access to the current labour market is more complicated for people over 45 years old. Therefore it is worth them using different strategies to enable them to find work.

Working for themselves. On many occasions the people of a certain age are good professionals working in what they have done all their professional life. All these skills have to be taken advantage of, and one way of doing this is through selfemployment, either as a self-employed worker, or as part of a collective.

Working for somebody else. If you want to work as an employee, do not forget that the government, with the objective of offering incentives to hire people over the age of 45, has granted companies tax advantages for contracting people from this group. It is important that in the job interview you make clear the economic advantages that contracting you would represent for the company.

In addition, take into account that there are certain personal skills that are acquired over one's life and are therefore more common in people of a certain age: maturity, responsibility, consistency, emotional control, etc. For certain types of work these skills can mean an advantage over younger people.

Creating a company on your own or as part of a group is a challenge for professionals who have a particular vision of the world of work.

PEOPLE WITH HANDICAPS

People with handicaps, like any other worker, can effectively perform any type of work in line with their capacities.

Many have received an education or training which has made them capable of carrying out a job. They can work in any field, as qualified workers (in the bank sector, human resources, as lawyers) and in unskilled work positions (kitchen helpers, printers, telephone receptionists, gardeners, carpenters, cleaners, production line workers, handlers, ...).

In a selection process it is necessary to bear in mind that these people are productive and constant. This guarantees the quality and effectiveness of their professional work.

Some of these people (especially the most affected) work in Special Work Centres with the support of qualified technical personnel. These companies work like any other company, offering a series of services or selling goods. They are governed by strict business, profit making criteria.

Any company that contracts these workers can take advantage of economic benefits:



- ✓ Subsidies in the national insurance and social security payable, both for indefinite and temporary contracts.
- ✓ Contracts for practices and for training.
- ✓ Subsidies to adapt the work place.

Another question is that the government has taken positive action measures (positive discrimination) under which companies with over 50 workers are obliged to reserve 2% of the jobs for handicapped people.

Addresses that may be of interest to you:

- ✓ **Evaluation and orientation services for handicapped people:** information and orientation. Evaluation and certification of the degree of incapacity.
- ✓ **Special work centres:** there are numerous such centres. You will find them classified for each county (comarca) and with the productive activity stated.

Another important route into the labour market for people with incapacities is through a standard company. Working with support has made this alternative possible.

WOMEN

One of the most significant changes that first world societies have experienced over the last few decades is that of the entrance into paid employment of an ever greater number of women. This has led to unprecedented activity and employment rates being attained.

However, the increase in the number of women in work has not necessarily been accompanied by greater equality between men and women. Just the opposite, and this reflects that women are joining the paid labour market but taking the most precarious jobs. Unequal salaries, strong segregation by sexes and the greater presence of women in part time or temporary jobs, or in the lower work categories are some of the inequalities that women have to confront in today's labour market.

To encourage the incorporation of women into the labour market there are several types of contracts offering economic incentives to the business person or companies to contract a women worker. Some of these incentives are aimed at women with few professional qualifications, others at women entrepreneurs, and others at women from certain defined collectives.