

# Lifelong Learning for Talent Management and Professional Development of Employees

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**Abstract.** The new challenges in almost all organisations are based on people. It is their competences, knowledge and skills that enable any organisation to grow. Personnel are a resource that must be properly taken care of. Effective talent management is mainly based on planning and building career paths. Talent management is one of the most important business priorities for organisations that care about achieving business goals, knowledge management and managing staff potential. Research shows that entities that identify and manage talent produce 15 per cent higher results for their stakeholders compared to pillars that do not run such programmes.

The aim of this article is to present the activities carried out within the framework of TALENT MANAGEMENT ERASMUS+ project nr 2021-2-ES01-KA210-ADU-000048687, which is dedicated to economically active employees over 45 years of age and promotes integration in the labour market.

**Keywords:** *inclusivity, DigComp, educationIT/ICT.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Today's businesses as well as society as a whole are currently in the midst of a digital transformation that is affecting all types of business [1]. This process is conditioning companies globally - not just in terms of their internal operations or processes. Adapting to increasingly complex digital environments is a complex challenge for

all companies and involves changing the way work is done, with significant implications for organisational behaviour, corporate culture, talent recruitment and leadership tactics [2], [3]. The potential benefits of digitisation are diverse and include increased sales or productivity, innovation in value creation, and new ways of interacting with customers [4], [5], [6]. Most digitisation strategies identify current and future operational activities, the required application systems and infrastructure, and the appropriate organisational and financial framework [7].

These elements can be attributed to four dimensions: technology use, changes in value creation, structural changes and financial aspects [8]. The potential benefits of digitalisation are manifold and include, among others, increased sales or productivity, innovation in value creation, and new ways of interacting with customers. Business models can therefore be reformed or replaced [9]. Without transformation of existing organisations, the economic and environmental challenges of the future cannot be sustainably met [10].

Digital competences have been recognised by the European Parliament as one of the eight key competences necessary for lifelong learning. They can be broadly defined as the competent, informed and creative use of ICT for work, learning, and active participation in society.

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Digital competences are specific as they directly contribute to and influence the acquisition of other key competences such as communication in the mother tongue and foreign languages, learning to learn, social and civic competences. They are linked to many of the skills that all citizens of 21st century Europe should possess in order to ensure their active participation in social and economic life.

The European Framework of Digital Competences for Citizens, known as DigComp, developed by the European Commission, is a tool for the development of digital competences of citizens. They present the characteristics of digital competences and group them into 5 thematic areas: Information and Data, Communication and Collaboration, Digital Content Creation, Security, Problem-Solving. In today's world, every digitally competent person must be fluent in these five areas

The purpose of Elene project [11] is to improve and expand the offer of high quality learning opportunities adapted to the needs of older people to improve their multilingual skills and digital skills. DigIN project aims to develop, test and implement an innovative digital education ecosystem to let educators create and share attractive learning activities for adults [12]. Talent Management seeks to develop training materials so that people over 45 years of age acquire the necessary skills that allow them to exploit their skills and competencies, thus strengthening their position in the working market [13].

These projects implemented by INBIE are strictly connected to digital transformation that is important for supporting the adaptation of one's business model. Transformation generates internal organisational resistance [14] and in order to cope with this resistance, transformational leadership skills are needed, which require the active involvement of the different actors affected by the transformation [15]. The aim of this article is to present mainly the activities carried out within the framework of TALENT MANAGEMENT project, which is dedicated to active workers over 45 years of age and promotes integration in the labour market.

## II. THE ESSENCE OF TALENT MANAGEMENT

In 1998, a group of McKinsey consultants proposed the term 'war for talent' and noted that talent is the key to organisational excellence [16]. Since then, talent management has been seen as key to organisational success [17] and essential to the maintenance and sustainability of organisations [18]. Initially, the focus was mainly on educating and hiring candidates with above-average capabilities.

Creating an attractive workplace, i.e. an organisation that attracts potential talent, is done by creating, through public relations, an image of the company as an 'employer of choice'. The conditions for harmonious and targeted development must then be created through, for example, career planning, training, self-development, motivation or appraisal. No less of a problem is retaining talent within the organisation, as attractive offers from the external

labour market are constantly waiting for them [19]. An important aspect in this area is the ability to manage the talents of employees over 45.

Senior talent refers to people with work experience and maturity who continue to work as they age. The participation of older people in the labour market has increased in recent decades, rising from 37% in 2008 to 42% in 2018 in the European Union. This is due to a combination of factors, such as improved health and life expectancy, the need to supplement pension and the search for new challenges and meaning in working life [20].

However, there are also barriers to older people's participation in the labour market. Age discrimination is one of the most common barriers, followed by a lack of training and development opportunities, and the perception that they are less productive and technologically obsolete [21].

## III. TALENT MANAGEMENT IN SELECTED COUNTRIES

To overcome these obstacles and harness the potential of senior workers, many countries have adopted policies and programmes to encourage the active participation of older people in the labour market. According to a study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [22], these initiatives include measures to improve training and reskilling, as well as to promote a more inclusive and diverse corporate culture.

It is difficult to pinpoint specific regions that have the best policies to promote senior talent, as this can vary depending on factors such as work culture, economics and pension systems. However, some countries have adopted effective policies to harness the potential of senior workers and improve their participation in the labour market.

Senior talent refers to people over 45 years of age who find it difficult to develop their professional life; sometimes due to the processes of digitalization and high technification of organizations.

In the context of the European project Talent Management, integrated by partners from Spain, Turkey and Poland, a study has been carried out to know the actions implemented by their companies in the field of Talent Management in people over 45 years old (Senior Talent Management).

For this purpose, a survey was designed and sent to Spanish, Turkish and Polish companies. Data has been collected from both CEOs and employees about people management policies and their perception, aimed at recruiting, developing and retaining talent. A representative sample of 122 people managers and 102 employees from the three participating countries was collected.

For the analysis of senior talent management in Spanish, Turkish and Polish companies, a representative sample of 122 heads of Talent Management was collected, of which 50.82% were women and 49.18% men. Of these, 50% were Spanish, 29.51% Turkish and 20.49% Polish. The Spanish respondents come from two of the most

economically important regions of the Spanish government: Aragon and the Valencian Community.

Organisations have strategically driven human resource activities to improve organisational performance [23]. Thus, management programmes that integrate HR activities related to recruitment and selection, extensive training and development, regular performance appraisal, contingent performance rewards and high levels of employee involvement [24].

The results obtained indicate that practically all the companies surveyed indicate that they carry out some type of Talent Management (TM) action in their organisation. Either following a strategic or an intuitive approach, regardless of the size of the company (fig 1).

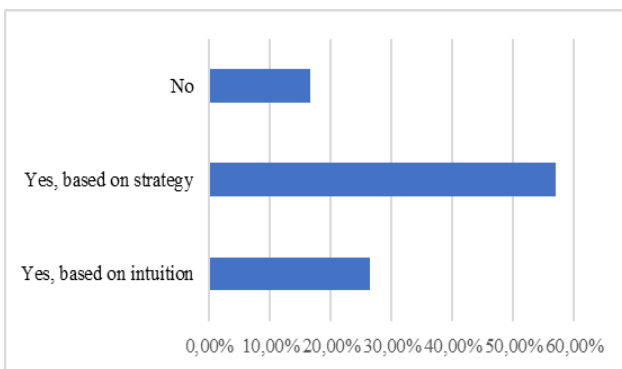


Fig. 1 Talent management activities.

The areas in which the company predominantly employs TMs are recruitment (32.79%), training and development (25.41%) and career management (25.41%) (fig 2).

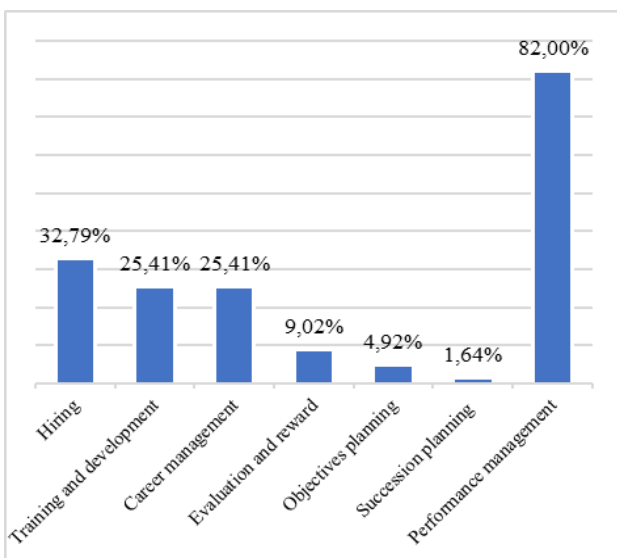


Fig. 1 Organisational areas in which TM is used.

The following are Talent Management performance maps of the managers of the companies consulted. Each of the maps represents variables with which the success or failure of Talent Management is identified. The maps

graphically represent the average rating of each of the statements that make up the variables.

- Identification of critical positions.
- Talent acquisition.
- Talent development.
- Talent engagement.
- Talent retention.

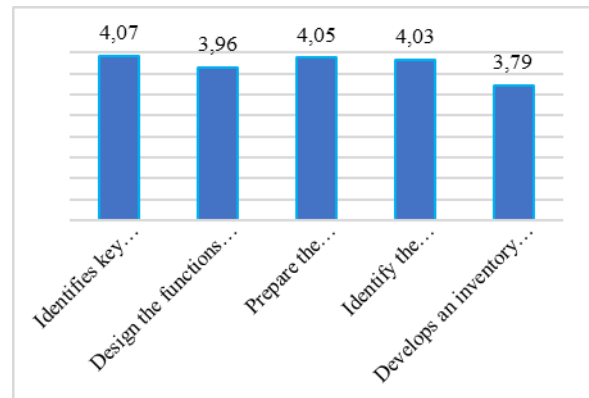


Fig. 3 Identification of critical positions.

With regard to the identification of critical positions by talent managers, we observe that companies score better in the task of identifying key positions according to the strategic lines defined by the organisation, while they perform less well in the task of drawing up the inventory of competencies required for these key positions.

The results also show gender differences. Men perceive the selection processes and the demands of the job to be more demanding. With regard to differences between countries, the results show that Polish women experience a greater monitoring of their training needs, especially in comparison to Turkish women.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

Research studies emphasise the importance of implementing people management systems, not only to improve production processes and productivity, but also employee satisfaction. Specifically, the results of this study show that in order to manage talent well, it is essential to identify those key positions in production processes and organizational development, with the aim of providing them with greater resources, so that people management is as optimal as possible. Above all, given the enormous difficulty companies have in selecting people for these types of positions. [25].

This points to the importance of adequate and consistent management of people, not only with the organisation's objectives, but also based on generating working environments that enable personal and professional development of employees.

In addition, due to the socio-geographical changes of recent decades, it is necessary for people management to take into account both the coexistence of different

generations and to pay attention to the different needs that each generation may have. Added to this is the increase in life expectancy and the consequent extension of working life, which will bring with it the need to take even greater care of the talents of senior citizens.

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