



Over 50s Entrepreneurs

FSB one page briefing

Many people over 50 want to work, rather than remain on benefits, but struggle to find employment because of their age.

Figures from July 2011 found that the over 50s continue to represent a disproportionately large, and growing, segment of the long-term unemployed. Nearly half (43%) of unemployed over 50s had been out of work for more than 12 months, compared with 38 per cent of people aged 25 to 49, and 25 per cent of those aged 18 to 24.

Yet we know that people who became self-employed in the first six months of unemployment are more likely to survive two years after startup than those who remained unemployed for longer.

While motivations for self-employment will vary, it is particularly attractive to older businesspeople and can also be more appropriate than conventional employment for individuals with certain family situations or health concerns.

Almost four million people (33.8%) aged 50-64 are out of work – of which 400,000 each year plan to start their own business.

The FSB and PRIME believe everyone aged 50+ has the opportunity for financial, social and personal fulfilment through sustainable self-employment. To achieve this, the following conditions need to be put in place:

- Older entrepreneurs should be able to access finance more easily – the Government should endorse PRIME in order to establish a grant and loan scheme to enable the long-term unemployed to more easily access start-up financing.
- Appropriate training to meet the needs of the older entrepreneur should be made available and it should be targeted to their needs – for example, focused on rebuilding confidence and self esteem, basic management and business planning, IT training etc.
- Older mentors should be promoted as a support network for older entrepreneurs.

Key Statistics

- The average age of an FSB member is 53 years
- 43 per cent of unemployed over 50s had been out of work for more than 12 months
- From the start of the recession to July 2011, the number of unemployed people over the age of 50 increased by 53.5 per cent, compared with 37.3 per cent for those aged 18 to 49
- People who became self-employed in the first six months of unemployment are more likely to survive two years after startup than those who remained unemployed for longer
- Nearly four million people (33.8%) aged 50-64 are out of work – of which 400,000 each year plan to start their own business

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