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Silver Economy Starts With the Older People's Right to Work
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Let me start with the assumption that ageing society is not a threat nor a mistake, on the contrary, it is an achievement and at the same time a privilege of the development.

Medicine has prolonged life. Atul Gawande, a surgeon and a university professor, the author of the book *Being Mortal, Medicine and What Matters in the End* argues that health does not mean the absence of disease or healed injury. It has much to do with the individual's feeling of freedom and independence and the feeling of being useful. Old age is not a disease. Only the systems of the body get less functional. The life curve displays a slow digression, though it takes a long time before we notice it. We can long remain productive. Moreover, it is easily forgotten that we are lifelong social beings with inborn social and psychological needs. Our wellbeing and health depend on how well the needs are met.

In the ageing society silver economy should be meeting the inborn psycho-social needs of older people in their last thirty or forty years of life. We are facing a new situation. Right now we do not really know what silver economy is or will become in the future, though we are aware that silver economy is a constituent part of the unavoidable development of the ageing society.

The development of silver economy will produce evermore flexible and creative forms of work and older people are not the only social layer to stimulate them. Both unemployment and delayed entrance of young people on the labour market are leading to great dynamics of work.

The biggest obstacle to the rise of silver economy are legislation and social stereotypes about older people and old age, one of the most persistent forms of discrimination being discrimination by age of old or young people.

Whatever and whoever takes away from us our fundamental right to be homo economicus, makes us vulnerable and unable to meet our psycho social needs, depriving us at the same time of our social status. Getting retired should not be the end of life (health and well being) and our abilities, experience and knowledge should not be getting retired at the same time. On condition they are used and appreciated, they remain a part of human and social capital which in today's society are more needed than raw materials, energy or food.

But how make a difference, how to make changes how to ensure active ageing and silver economy? This appears to be very complicated, but it is not. There is one simple rule to follow: *Let people continue, let them simply carry on their life as they want after they get retired.* The nature and the type of their work might change, but they will go on contributing to society in most different ways and provide for their own social status. Social relations depend on an exchange, on giving and receiving.

Speaking about silver economy and older people, no doubt, means speaking about other generations. Silver economy brings about new quality of both work and life. It should be remembered that in today's society quality and not quantity of the production counts. Silver economy is specifically based on quality production and contributes to the increase of GDP.

Which changes are needed? New legislation, decreasing social stereotypes about old age and older people, better intergenerational dialogue and co-operation of generations.

Now, let me finish by asking a question. *Who has the right to prevent older people from working?*

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