

# WORKFORCE AGING IN THE NEW ECONOMY

A Comparative Study of Information Technology Employment

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# This project examines five research themes.



1. The transformation of **employment relations** in Information Technology (IT) industries and occupations.
2. The dynamics of an **aging workforce** in IT labour markets.
3. **Diversity** (including gender, race, and ethnicity and age relations) in IT employment.
4. How IT employees negotiate and manage their careers as they age within the context of **life course transitions** involving: school, work, parenthood, retraining, job exit, retirement.
5. How **human resource management policy** and practice addresses issues of aging workforces, life course issues and barriers to employment.

The following slides outline the research questions that are associated with each of these themes.



# Employment Relations.

- What constitutes IT industries and employment cross-nationally?
- What industrial sectors are most heavily reliant on IT employment?
- How is IT work is changing and how do these changes affect relations between individuals and firms?
- How stable is employment in the IT industry?
- How do class, age, gender, and ethnicity influence IT employment relations?
- Are there company, industry, or government policies in place in IT employment that deal with employment relations and issues of class, age, gender, and ethnic diversity?

# Aging Workforce



- What is the age composition of the IT workforce?
  - Has it changed over the last 10 years?
- How do these age distributions break down by gender, ethnicity, and class?
- What is the relationship between workforce aging and the supply of and demand for IT workers?
  - Has it changed over the last 10 years

# Age diversity/ Age relations



- What is the relationship between an IT worker's age and their career trajectories, training pathways, or skill maintenance or enhancement opportunities?
- What policies are available for employees to engage in active skill maintenance and enhancement and what are the intended and unintended consequences of these policies on workers in various age, gender, and ethnic groups?



# Life course transitions

- What is the timing and sequencing of life course and career transitions and trajectories among IT employees?
- How are IT employees adapting to non-linear employment transitions and trajectories and how do they reconcile these with other life-course transitions and trajectories?
- What occupational, industry, or public resources can employees draw on to negotiate their careers throughout their lives?



# Human Resource Management

- Are there industry or company level policies that deal with issues of aging workforces and older workers?
- What recruitment strategies are used by firms and industries and are any targeted to particular groups of people on the basis of class, age, gender, or ethnicity?
- Are there unintended consequences of industry or company policy, especially with respect to aging workforces and older workers?
- How are IT employers adapting to non-linear employment trajectories and non-standard employment relations?
- Do IT employers have skill maintenance and enhancement programs in place for their employees?
  - Are these programs age neutral in policy and in practice?
- Do IT companies engage in human resource management strategies that help to reduce, or to increase, employee turn-over?
  - If so, what are these strategies and are they sensitive to life course transitions?
- Do IT companies have HR management strategies that address, or have unintended consequences for the life course transitions identified above?
  - If so, what are they?