

## University of Minho & Work 4.0 Consortium



Source / Link: <http://work4-0.eu/>

### Thematic area:

- Transversal competences
- Technical skills
- Creative skills
- Social skills
- Contextual skills

### Type of good practice:

- Project
- Initiative
- Programme
- Methods
- Training materials
- Other: Policy

### Target group:

- VET and adult education trainers
- Labour market policy experts
- Human recourse management
- Others

### Summary:

The digital economy offers a lot of new opportunities and also important challenges that must be dealt with. One of those challenges is the need for innovative ways to ensure access to social protection for workers on atypical contracts. If we understand quality employment as a system which provides for a decent wage, occupational health and safety provision, acceptable working conditions, opportunities for training and promotion; and if a full-time and open-ended contract 'for all' is to remain the norm, then the impact of the digital revolution on labour markets triggers numerous concerns.

### Detailed description

Trade Unions, especially the European Trade Union Congress (ETUC), are concerned that not enough effort is being put in to analysing the social impact of digitalization on companies and the labour market, in particular labour laws, working conditions, work-life balance, social dialogue etc., which are considered to be the key to an innovative digital labour policy. However, initiatives and resolutions are emerging, both at national and European levels. The European Commission launched in April 2017 a consultation to social partners on the access to social protection for all as well as on labour contracts rules as part of its European Pillar of Social Rights, aiming to avoid that new precariousness and inequalities will emerge.

The strategic paths for adaptation of labour market policy and institutions to provide adequate protection for workers must be based on the following aspects:

- Clear definition of the contractual partners in any employment relationship.
- Formalization of contractual clauses that protect workers from being exploited in a new employment model.

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- Clarification of the concept of 'homeworker' and the duties and rights that are associated with this work model.
- Applicable law and fora to solve eventual conflicts between employer and employee.
- Terms and conditions that regulate the work performed on the web platforms (collaboration, sharing or crowdsourcing).
- Conditions for self-organisation and online entrepreneurship, including guidance on the mechanisms to establish reputation and trustworthiness.
- Innovative forms of unionization and collective bargaining for online work.
- Co-determination of work duties and rights by task owners, mediating platforms and online workers.

The policy implications of the emerging digitized economy also concern the regulatory framework of insurances. Of great importance in this context is how far self-employed workers are insured against various risks. For example, the German legislation already offers the option for independent workers to insure themselves against unemployment.

### Beneficial Results

The focus of social security systems on standard employment which is understood as work that is full time, indefinite, as well as part of a subordinate relationship between an employee and an employer, and the rapid growth of non-standard employment, will become not only a problem for the unemployment insurance but also for old-age insurance. Additional incentives or even obligations to enter the old-age insurance system need to be examined in the years to come. Addressing these challenges in a timely manner will allow countries to benefit from large-scale societal benefits in the form of an improved social security system and economic stability.

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