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Policy challenges: results from the COST action 'Dynamics of Virtual Work'

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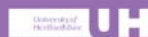


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The Dynamics of Virtual Work

An international interdisciplinary
research network on the
transformation of work in the
Internet Age.

Supported by:



A multidisciplinary research network in 31 European countries plus USA, Canada, Australia, China, India, Brazil

For more information go to: <http://dynamicsofvirtualwork.com/>

Overall impact on jobs

- Which jobs are at risk of disappearing because of automation?
- What new jobs are emerging and what are their characteristics?
- Where are they emerging?
- Which jobs are at risk of relocation?
- Are new forms of job polarisation emerging and, if so, what are their characteristics?
- What initiatives can policy makers take to anchor jobs in local economies?
- Is the concept of a 'job' becoming redundant?

Employment status and labour regulation

- What kinds of employment contracts are currently used for digital workers and how well do they correspond to the actualities of power and autonomy in new employment relationships?
- When work is carried out on online platforms, should the employer's responsibilities be vested in the employer, the client or the worker, and how can these be exercised in practice?
- What rights do self-employed workers have to free assembly and collective bargaining?
- What rights do public authorities have to inspect and regulate online platforms and the working conditions of their workers?
- Where crowd workers are delivering services to the general public, or working in public spaces, are potential hazards regarded as issues of public safety, consumer protection or occupational safety?
- How are existing European Directives (e.g. on working hours, part-time working, equal treatment or agency working) applied in the case of new forms of work such as crowd work, umbrella contracts or zero-hour contracts?
- How are national regulations (e.g. on minimum wages) applied to digital workers?

Quality of working life and sustainability of work

- What is the quality of the new jobs created in terms of security, pay and working conditions?
- What are the impacts on wellbeing of new forms of surveillance and monitoring?
- What psycho-social risks are created by new forms of labour market precariousness?
- Can digitalisation be used to improve work-family balance?
- How can working hours be managed when work is carried out outside traditional spatial and temporal boundaries?
- Can virtual work provide the basis for the development of stable new professions?
- To what extent do new forms of work provide the basis for sustainable careers throughout the lifecourse?
- How can new forms of digital work create the basis for career breaks and changes, compatible with work-life balance and family development?
- Can new forms of work provide levels of wellbeing to enable physical and psychological health over the long term?
- What pension rights are available to virtual workers?

Broader societal questions

- In the context of global free trade, and the increasingly transnational character of employers of digital labour, what kinds of tax and regulatory systems are appropriate?
- Is there a need to re-examine traditional concepts of 'employment' and 'unemployment' in Europe in a situation where growing numbers of workers do not know from one day, or even hour, to the next if, when and where they will be working?
- What kinds of social protection system can provide security and protection from destitution for just-in-time workers?
- How can the livelihoods of creative and knowledge workers be safeguarded to ensure a future for Europe's cultural industries and an independent intelligentsia?
- In the era of big data, how can the privacy of consumers and workers be protected in ways that are compatible with the broader public good?
- How can the positive potentialities of digital technologies be harnessed for social benefit and inclusion?

For more information

- <http://dynamicsofvirtualwork.com>
- http://www.cost.eu/domains_actions/isch/Actions/IS1202
- <http://www.feps-europe.eu/en/digital-footprint-project>