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University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland
School of Applied Psychology

**Flexible New World of Work:
Taking stock on a societal and economical level**
A TA-SWISS study

Dr. Johann Weichbrodt

University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland
School of Applied Psychology
Olten, Switzerland

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“Flexible work” – a variety of terms and ideas



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Research questions of the TA-Swiss study “Flexible New World of Work”

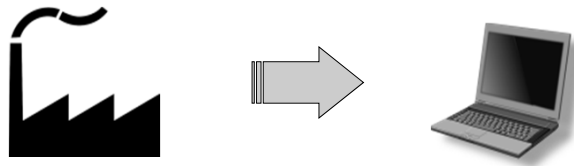
1. What is the **societal significance of work** today and in the future?
2. To what extent are the new forms of work **covered by the present legal framework**?
3. Which **macroeconomic consequences** can be expected?
4. What are the **societal conditions and recommended actions**, such that individual as well as economical benefits can be maximized?

Question no. 1: The societal significance of work?

Three grand trends identified:

- 1. Spatial and temporal boundaries of work are dissolving.**
- 2. Employees are becoming “entployees”.**
- 3. Crowdfunding and other new platform-based technologies**

Trend no. 1: Dissolution of the boundaries of work



- “Work anytime & anywhere” instead of “factory”
- Drawing boundaries becomes individual responsibility
- In many cases a win-win situation for employee and employer

Trend no. 2: “Entreployeeship”



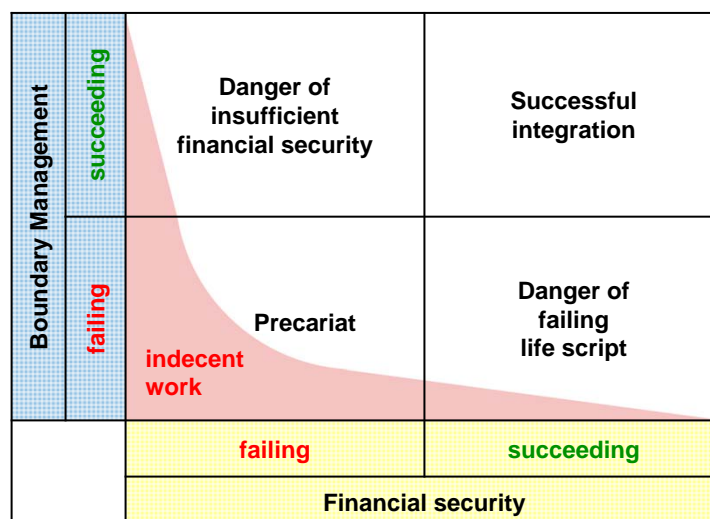
- Employees take on entrepreneurial responsibility
- Consequences for employees are ambivalent: freedom of action vs self-exploitation

Trend 3: Crowdfunding and platform-based work



- Crowdsourcing, Crowdfunding are new phenomena
- new flexible forms for work contracts
- advantages primarily for highly educated workers

Trend directions for the societal significance of work



Five prototypical personas



- Fictitious persons, each representing a specific flexwork configuration
- Covering a broad range of flexible forms of work
- Advantages and disadvantages are shown in “good days” and “bad days”
- No information about the prevalence of each persona

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Persona A: Roland Müller: „Home Office as part of a traditional work contract“



- Male, 46 years, married, 2 children
- Fulltime employment as head of finance in a small enterprise
- Works most of the time on site at his company, but once per week from home
- Is not required to record his working hours

- + Working from home saves traveling time → more breaks, more family time
- Working from home allows concentrated work → higher productivity

- Working from home requires self-discipline → lower productivity
- Closeness to family requires clearer boundaries → more stress
- Reduced informal exchange

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Persona B: Sandra Könitz „Mobile entreployeeship“



- Female, 35 years, married, 2 children
- Employed fulltime at consulting firm, highly mobile and flexible
- High level of entrepreneurial responsibility (client acquisition, performance-oriented pay)

- +
- Work is possible anywhere and anytime → greater productivity
 - Work flexibility allows for integration of private life
 - Highly identified with her work → greater productivity

-
- Work is possible anywhere and anytime → higher level of stress, health hazard
 - Distributed work requires more coordination efforts
 - High workload and high pressure to perform → other life domains suffer

Persona C: Ursula Meyerhans „Portfoliowork with several sources of income“



- Female, 57 years, long-term partnership, no children
- Part-time (60%) employment as editor at a newspaper
- Self-employed as copywriter
- Finds lots of jobs on crowdsourcing platforms

- +
- Work is possible anywhere and anytime → greater productivity
 - Self-employment → focus on jobs that interest her
 - Highly identified with her work → greater productivity, greater self-fulfillment

-
- Work is possible anywhere and anytime → higher level of stress, health hazard
 - Self-employment → high uncertainty, high dependency on others
 - Uncertain financial security (now and in the future)

Persona D: Noah Schmid „Entrepreneurship“



- Male, 31 years, long-term partnership, no children (yet)
- Self-employed as software developer
- Regular well-paying jobs; also ideas for his own app
- Working from home, at a Coworking Space, or other places

- +
- Self-employment → high level of autonomy
 - Highly identified with his work → greater satisfaction, greater self-fulfillment
 - Hopes for the ultimate entrepreneurial success

-
- Fluctuating job situation → phases with high workload & high level of stress; financial insecurity
 - Fulltime self-employment → often alone, little exchange
 - Uncertain financial security (now and in the future)

Persona E: Andrea Burri-Lötscher „Multiple employments and mini-jobs“

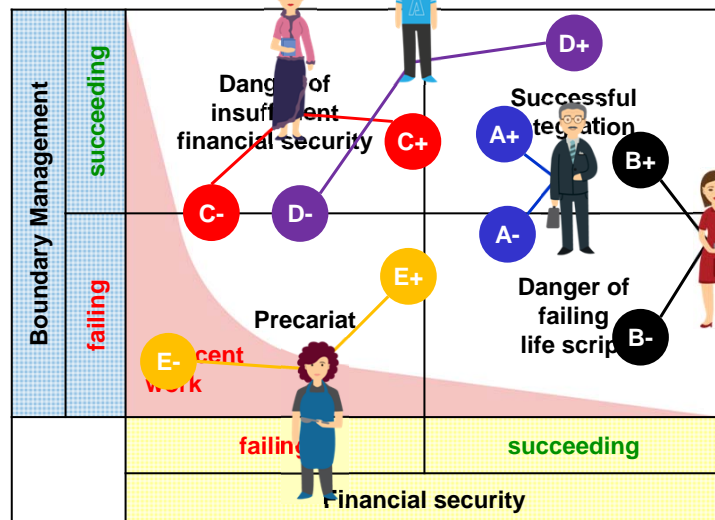


- Female, 43 years, married, 2 children, in-laws at home
- Part-time (50%) kitchen aid in a senior citizen's home
- Further freelance jobs as household help on an hourly basis (partly through job platforms)

- +
- Additional income through freelance jobs
 - Flexibility → compatibility with caretaking tasks
 - Platform-based job search → greater reach, better chances

-
- Shiftwork → less flexibility, high coordination effort
 - Additional income → high uncertainty, a lot of effort
 - Low qualification → only low wages

Personas positioned within the matrix



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Question no. 3: Macroeconomic consequences?

Method for economic projections

Assumption: *What would the economy look like in about 10 years, if Persona A [B, C, D, E] dominated the world of work?*

- Projection, not prognosis
- Fairly extreme and unlikely scenarios
- Qualitative estimation of 11 indicators
- Based on existing literature and statistics

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All economic indicators taken into account

Indikator/Messgrösse	Stärke und Richtung der Auswirkung in 10 bis 15 Jahren in der Arbeitswelt von				
	Roland Müller / Home Office in der Fest- anstellung	Sandra Könitz / Mobiles Arbeitskraftun- ternehmertum	Ursula Meyerhans / Portfoliowork auf mehreren Standbeinen	Noah Schmid / Entrepre- neurship	Andrea Burri-Lütscher / Mehrfach- anstellungen und Minijobs
Produktivität	~↓	↑	○	~↓	~↑
Erwerbseinkommen	○	~	↓	↓	↓
Kollektiver Organisationsgrad der Beschäftigten	○	○	~↓	↓↓	↓↓
Physische und psychische Gesundheit	~↓	↓	↓↓	↓	↓
Arbeitsbedingungen und -zufriedenheit	↑	↑	~↓	~↓	↓
Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und anderen Lebensbereichen	↑	~↓	~	↑	~↑
Erwerbsquote	○	○	~↓	↓	↓
Beschäftigte	~↑	○	~↓	↓	~
Steuererträge	○	~↑	~↓	~↓	↓
Transparenz der Zahlungsströme	○	~	↓	↓↓	↓
Situation der Systeme der sozialen Absicherung	○	○	↓	↓↓	↓↓

Zusammenfassung:

↑ T deutlicher Anstieg bzw. deutliche Verbesserung der Situation; ↑ leichter Anstieg bzw. leichte Verbesserung der Situation; ↓ deutlicher Rückgang bzw. deutliche Verschlechterung der Situation;
↓ leichter Rückgang bzw. leichte Verschlechterung der Situation; ○ keine oder unessentielle Veränderung; ~ Ergebnis sehr unsicher; ~↑ Ergebnis unsicher, Tendenz steigend; ~↓ Ergebnis unsicher,
Tendenz fallend

- Deteriorations on most indicators
- Even though (unlikely) projections, there is need for action

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Question no. 4: Social conditions and recommended actions?

Derived recommendations (excerpt)

Spatial-temp. flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal framework should be broad (no detailed regulation), preventing only extreme cases of abuse • Leave leeway for solutions on company and team level • Defining the specifics of work flexibility as participative organizational development
"Entrepreneur- ship"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Social partnership" as reliable foundation of labor regulation • Education, training, coaching etc. on critical topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subjectivation of work • Boundary Management • Social and financial security
Platform- based work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find solutions for new and undefined areas • Render the law regarding self-employment more precisely • Review regulation regarding personnel services

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If you are interested further...



Order book (in German) online or download eBook for free:
<http://vdf.ch/flexible-neue-arbeitswelt.html>



TA-Swiss website with abridged versions, videos, etc. (in German, English, French, Italian):
<https://www.ta-swiss.ch/projekte/informationsgesellschaft/flexible-neue-arbeitswelt/>

Thank you very much for your attention.

Prof. Dr. Jens O. Meissner
Hochschule Luzern - Wirtschaft
Institut für Betriebs- und Regionalökonomie
jens.meissner@hslu.ch

Dr. Johann Weichbrodt
Hochschule für Angewandte Psychologie FHNW
Institut für Kooperationsforschung und -entwicklung
johann.weichbrodt@fhnw.ch

