

NEW FORMS OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CHANGE OF THE WORK PARADIGM

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Abstract. The present scientific research aims to discuss the new forms of employment, as a premise of the workforce enhancement. In an increasingly digitalized environment, the new conditions in which national economies are developing, are requiring policymakers at the national level to improve the legal framework of employment reports and to regulate their new forms. Thus, by elaborating this paper, we are aiming to put forward new forms of employment, recently implemented on the labor market, but which have direct implications on employers and employees. In this research work, we refer to the following new forms of employment: employee sharing, job sharing, casual work, ICT-based mobile work, interim management, crowd employment, portfolio work and voucher work. Each of these new forms of employment has certain effects on the labor market, and by applying one or another form, employers intend to ensure their demands in terms of human resources and national governments- to reduce unemployment and undeclared activities.

Keywords: labour market, employment, forms of employment, employers, workforce.

JEL Classification: J21; J53; J54; J62;

Introduction

New trends on the labour market are leading to the reform of the content of our work, but also to the expansion of new employment alternatives, differing from the traditional ones. As well, the digitalisation of work determined many employers to identify new forms of recruitment, by diversifying their methods of work organization in order to satisfy workforce needs.

These new forms of employment are characterized by flexibility, which represents the first element of the work flexicurity. At the organisational level, flexicurity has been examined from an economic perspective, that of spendings, as a result of the implementation of flexibility policies in employment (Rubery et al., 2016). The authors' thesis is that flexibility could enhance incomes and limit public spendings by stimulating employment thus, raising tax revenues and reducing social support costs. Heggebø, K. (2016) analyzed employment and the general state of health in Scandinavia in the light of the Danish model of flexicurity, upholding that employers are more reluctant to recruit someone with a sensitive health. Indeed, this could only further damage the person's state of health, also conducting to a long-term medical leave.

In their analysis of work flexibility, Hill et al (2008) adopted two perspectives: organizational and the employees' view. According to the authors, the organizational perspective of flexibility does not pay enough attention to employees. As a matter of fact, it prioritizes practices such as: „just in time”

flexible production systems (Beyers & Lindahl, 1999); dynamic adjustments of the personnel by using temporary workers or contractors, unlike full-time, permanent employees. (Huang & Cullen, 2001); the adoption of alternative processes of work organization like: work groups, the rotation of staff and the evaluation of employees' performance by colleagues (Gittleman et al., 1998). Furthermore, if considering the employees' perspective, flexibility reveals their capacity of making choices regarding essential aspects of their professional life, namely those linked to the location, moment and duration of their activity (Hill et al., 2008).

The increasing proportion of the workforce capable of carrying out a “mobile work” also positively affected this tendency towards new forms of employment. This expanding interest for “mobile work” is due to certain evidence reporting that an increasing proportion of the workforce has more than one job (Felstead et al., 2005, Hislop and Axtell, 2007). Additionally, there are various opinions in regard to the developing interest for mobile work and precisely: the transformative potential of technology (Sherry and Salvador, 2001); the declining significance of the location in a globalized world with constant flows (Urry, 2000); the reform and the upsurge of space „abstraction” (Brown and O'Hara, 2003) and the greediness or the limitless activity (Baines and Gelder, 2003).

Simultaneously, it should be mentioned that for many segments of the labor market, employment contracts have also undergone substantial changes. In this context, as examined by McDowell and Christopherson, for young middle-class men, the combination of multiple jobs or the freelance work became the new “portfolio” or the carrier of “free agent”, as they are called in the USA.

Defining characteristics of the new forms of employment

The expression “new forms of employment” is not synonymous with the atypical work contracts, well known by all European legislative systems, such as: temporary employment, part-time work, or distance contracts. Because of a pronounced precarity regarding work conditions and hiring terms, they involve much more different profiles. On the one side, this diversity of new employment forms, a factor allowing a quicker integration of the available workforce on the labor market, expresses the employers' specific needs in order to adapt to the current business environment. But, on the other side, they are also a reflection of the general opinions promoted by the latest European policy, which consider these unprecedented work arrangements as valuable instruments in their fight against unemployment, and, implicitly, in stimulating hirings (Dimitriu, 2016).

According to Eurofund (2015), “the new forms of employment” are characterized by the following components:

- relations between employees and employers are distinct from those between individuals. In this case, it may exist labor relations implying several employers for a single employee, one employer for more employees or multiple employers for multiple employees.
- work is performed intermittently or for brief periods of time
- a place of work, other than the employer's headquarter, in which the employee is mobile and performs his activity from diverse locations, including his own office, without considering the traditional teleworking.
- a significant or prominent ICT support, such as: mobile phones, personal computers or other similar devices, in the case in which the use of these tools redefines the nature of human relations at work or its standards.

Redardless of the nature of labor relations, Eurofund (2018) determined 9 new forms of employment: employee and job sharing, voucher work, interim management, casional work, ICT-based mobile work, portfolio work and crowd employment.

Employee sharing

Employee sharing, this recent work arrangement, seeks to boost employment rate. Initially, the implementation of this practice had as purpose the reduction in absenteesim, both by demand and supply. (Florkowski 1987; Long 1980).

Companies have two pathways of sharing employees: strategic and ad-hoc. In a strategic sharing of employees, several companies create a common structure, used for the hiring of workers and the coordination of tasks sharing, related to a certain job (Lyutov). This common structure also covers the companies' legal responsibility for financial rewards, benefits and personal development of employees. However, De la Mora Velasco et al. (2021) uphold that in strategic agreements of sharing workers, the latter may alternate the tasks related to their work with two or more employers, on the basis of previous programs and agreements. Regarding the ad-hoc employee sharing, it consists in a temporary division of workers in order to balance the needs in human resources of two companies (for instance, the first one with a low workload and the second one with a shortage of workers). If considering this form of employee sharing, it presents more advantages. Firstly, it enhances job security for staff members and conjointly, maintains the employer's experience and professional competencies, even in a period of economic crisis. Secondly, at a regional level, it contributes to avoiding or reducing unemployment. Additionally, it may serve as a restructuring instrument for the original company. And finally, it may present a desirable, positive impact for the qualification level of the labor force, whereas the placement in a different company stimulates apprenticeship.

Job sharing

Job sharing is considered as an innovative approach of employment, since it enables employees to find a balance between private and professional life. This method allows 2 or 3 persons to share a work week of 40 hours (full-time). Hence, a person may work for 4 hours, in the first half of the day, and the second one, continue the same activity for the next 4 hours. Another option is to alternate working days, but for a full-time activity (Robbins, 2007). While at first, this mechanism was applied by the medical and educational systems, currently, this possibility is proposed by both public and private employers (Eick, 2001).

According to Wheatley (2013), job sharing may help address modern, prevailing challenges of the labor market, related to youth unemployment and the ageing of the active population. Indeed, if considering job sharing as a mentoring strategy, it can be applied as “a slow exit” from the labor market for the elderly workers, and in the same time, as a form of apprenticeship for young employees. In this context, the Slovenian planned model of subsidizing unemployed agents in their effort of sharing a position with other staff members, reaching pre-retirement or retirement age, may constitute an example. This approach would ensure elderly employees with a gradual exit from the labor market, and propose a transfer of knowledge and experience to their younger successors. [28].

Interim management

Interim management, an expanding form of employment, was associated with the corporate changes that occurred at the end of the 20th century and considered as a flexible work practice, specific to managerial positions (Blyton, 1992). The purpose of this new form of employment is the reduction of fixed costs related to hiring, by limiting staff administration and marginal benefits, and maximizing the control of the workforce use (Goss). Likewise, the presence of an interim manager in a company could enhance knowledge and the employee's professional skills, but also favor the substitution of some work practices, traditional for the company, with others, further innovative and presenting a more significant economic efficiency.

Casual work

A major impetus in expanding casual work was determined by reforms related to the content of work, inclusively the impact of casual hiring. Casual work is the only form of untraditional activity, regulated in the Republic of Moldova. The legislation of the country defines a casual activity as an occupation that does not require particular skills or knowledge, being carried out sporadically. Individuals performing such activities are considered to be daily laborers and the main area of activity is consisted of agriculture. According to Eurofound (2000), there are 2 forms of employment for casual laborers: intermittent work and on-call work.

Intermittent work implies an employer attracting the workforce on a regular or non-regular basis, in order to perform certain tasks, often linked to individual projects or seasonal jobs. On-call work obliges a continuous working relationship between an employer and an employee. In this case, the employer is not required to constantly offer working duties to the employee. Instead, when necessary, the former has the option to request the services of the latter.

Casual work already shows certain effects on the labor market. Among them, this form may help some categories of the available workforce (young people and unemployed) to enter the labor market and acquire a professional experience, thus, conferring them a higher value.

ICT-based work

Employees and/or freelancers from the digital field are characterized by two specific work practices. Firstly, they are using on a large-scale, personal computers, smartphones, cloud services, internet and emails, and this for a considerable part of their professional activity. Secondly, their work time is not exclusively spent at the employer's head office (not even in their own office, if considering independent contractors), mainly because the possibilities of work locations are much more diverse, like: personal residence, the client's office, hotels, public transportation or other public workplaces.

ICT-based work refers to work arrangements that can be deployed partially and regularly, outside the “main office”, either at the employer's office or in a personalized home office, using ICT for an online connection to the common computerized systems of the company (Andriessen and Vartiainen, 2006). According to the authors, the activity may be carried out anywhere and at any time, provided to be conformed to an occupation, work assignments and schedule, life style. Consequently, the activity is not necessarily carried out in a certain place, but also “on the road”.

ICT-based work, as a form of work organization, offers a valuable advantage to the company, since the employees can be permanently available, even outside office hours, conforming to the clauses of the contract concluded between the two parties. In such a case, the employee needs to have a

permanent access to the company’s network. Additionally, in the contract signed between the employer and the employee, the latter may have the freedom to personally manage his working time, provided to accumulate the necessary number of working hours.

Crowd employment

Crowd employment, as form of workforce occupation, appeared in the early 21st century, with the rapid advent and rise of the Internet. In recent years, crowd employment registered a major expansion, following the development of digital platforms, and the COVID-19 pandemic crisis only accentuated this progress.

Crowd employment targets a specific category of workforce. For Brabham (2012), workers participating in crowd employment need a high level of qualifications, creativity and well-developed digital skills. From a perspective of the workers, crowd employment provides several advantages: learning opportunities, social exchanges, recognition from other workers and clients, possibility of a personal marketing development, a better work-life balance and finally the prospect of generating additional income (Klebe and Neugebauer, 2014).

In Felstiner’s opinion (2011), crowd employment could be considered as a successful approach for economic development of rural areas, but also as a formidable instrument, that can be applied in regions affected by war or natural disasters. For the workforce, this form of employment may contribute to the labor market integration of people with special needs, offering them an opportunity to carry out a professional activity.

Work based on voucher

This is a form of employment in which an employer purchases a voucher from a third party (generally a governmental authority) in order to be utilized as a reward for the work of an individual. This option may be thought as a version of casual work and can be applied in areas such as: household services and agriculture. At the moment, work based on voucher is at an incipient stage, being practiced only in several EU states (household services- Austria, Bulgaria, France, Greece and Italy; agriculture- Greece, Italy, Lithuania). The reason for implementing this form of employment was the objective of curbing or even eliminating undeclared work. Indeed, this phenomenon is the most prevailing in these two fields: agriculture and household services. Accordingly, individuals carrying out an activity based on voucher may benefit from the status of employee, freelancer, unemployed, student or pensioner.

As for employers, they are determined to apply this form of employment for precautionary reasons and ethical considerations. As for employees, they opt for a job based on voucher, because they have access to new hiring opportunities in their local area, and flexibility in terms of working time. Furthermore, employees prefer a professional activity based on voucher, in the interest of having a declared job, rather than undeclared, this offering them a further degree of insurance, social protection and a guarantee of income. However, the workforce, in the absence of standard jobs, may accept a voucher-based job as an alternative to unemployment or other forms of casual work.

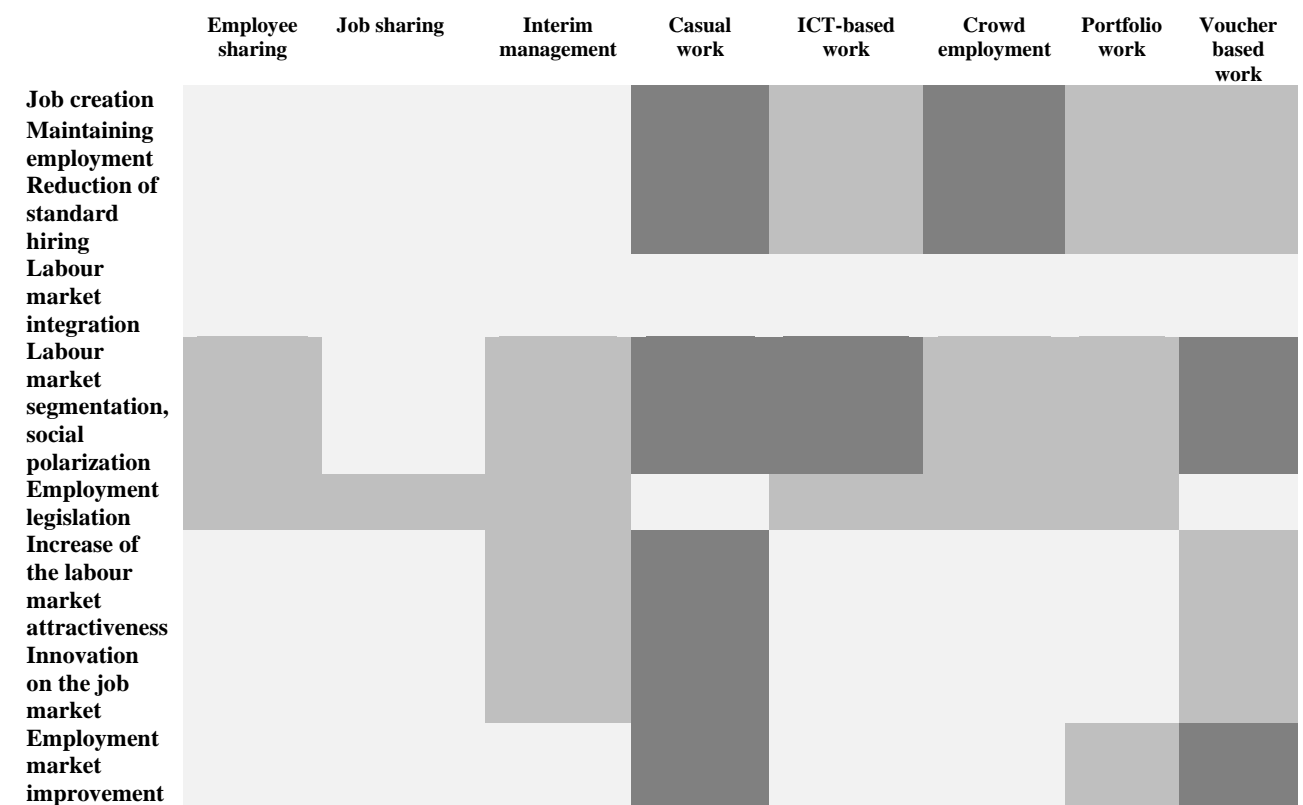
Portfolio work

Portfolio work is also considered as a new form of employment, currently applied in several EU states. If referring to Chipman (1992), portfolio workers are the individuals holding a large number of jobs or contracts, in various fields of activity and with many different companies. Addressing this

topic, Mallon (1998) argues that portfolio work represents a tool for employees in order to obtain a certain independence from their employer, and their knowledge and skills may be redeemed by a greater number of entities.

At this moment, portfolio work is frequently practiced among workers from the creative sectors: journalists, interpreters and the staff from the media industry. Portfolio work provides a flexible form of employment, prolonging working life among an ageing workforce, even after retirement. In such cases, it offers the possibility of earning an extra-income after retirement, with increased flexibility for both employers and employees, based on the recognition of professional experience acquired by the ageing workforce (Platman, 2004).

The forms of employment described in this research paper present certain effects on the labor market: some with a more beneficial impact and others with a poorer one (Figure 1).



Legend:

- Beneficial effects for the labour market
- Neutral effects for the labour market
- Unfavourable effects for the labour market

Figure 1. The effects of the recent forms of employment on the labour market

Source: Adapted from [28]

The presence of the new forms of employment in the EU Member States

The new forms of employment are more or less implemented at the level of each country. In order to efficiently implement these new forms of employment, the existence or the adjustment of the legal framework to the new social and economic realities is much needed. This could allow both employers and employees to develop favourable working relationships, based on trust and mutual respect. At the EU-level, these new forms of employment are more present in the states with a high level of economic development. (Table 1)

Table 9. The presence of new forms of employment in EU member states

Employee sharing	Job sharing	Interim Management	Casual work	ICT-based work	Crowd employment	Portfolio work	Voucher based work
Austria	Czechia	Czechia	Belgium	Belgium	Belgium	Cyprus	Austria
Belgium	Ireland	France	Croatia	Cyprus	Czechia	Denmark	Belgium
Bulgaria	Italy	Greece	France	Denmark	Denmark	Greece	France
Czechia	Poland	Latvia	Ireland	France	Germany	Italy	Greece
Finland	Slovakia	Hungary	Italy	Germany	Greece	Latvia	Italy
France	Slovenia		Netherlands	Greece	Italy	Lithuania	Lithuania
Germany	Hungary		Romania	Latvia	Latvia	Netherlands	
Greece			Slovakia	Lithuania	Lithuania	Portugal	
Luxembourg			Slovenia	Netherlands	Portugal	Hungary	
rg			Sweden	Portugal	Spain		
Hungary			Hungary	Slovenia			
				Spain			
				Sweden			
				Hungary			

Source: Adapted from [28]

As it results from the Table.1, the new forms of employment are more or less implemented at the level of each country. ICT-based work is applied in 14 EU Member States and presents the greatest prospects for expansion, due to the accelerated progress of ICT, thus creating new hiring opportunities for various categories of workforce. Casual work is the second most frequent form of employment in EU member states- 11 countries. It should be mentioned that the Republic of Moldova also adopted a legal framework in order to implement this approach of work. Nevertheless, the presence of the other forms of employment is much more limited at the European level.

Conclusions

Under the present circumstances, considering that the digitalization process includes the whole spectrum of economic activities, it is natural for modifications related to the labour market organization to appear. The transformation of social values among the workforce, namely for the young generations that orient themselves to particular jobs and professions, may disrupt more or less the behaviour of the labour market. In such conditions, employers need to adapt to new requirements, in order to have the guarantee of benefiting from a qualified and motivated workforce, with the aim of achieving their organizational objectives. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, that initially restricted people’s movement, finally determined employers to implement teleworking as a solution for the achievement of their pre-established goals. The forms of employment discussed in this research paper are considered as an alternative to a standard work framework, allowing the economic mechanisms to take place continuously within the organization. Besides, these new forms

of hiring provide a certain social comfort to employees, since they offer them a work-life balance and the possibility of earning additional incomes.

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