

Background note

At the centre of the proposed conceptual framework is the distinction between the concepts of ***work relationships in employment*** and ***employment modalities or arrangements***. Work relationships in employment refer to the types of relationships that exist between workers and businesses, starting notably from the broad distinction between employees and self-employed workers. Employment modalities or arrangements on the other hand, refer to the various ways in which employment is conducted and compensated; including working time, work location and forms of payment. New forms of employment can consist of either new types of work relationships, new modalities or arrangements or a combination of both.

New forms of employment

For the purposes of the questionnaire, new forms of employment are defined as:

- Relationships between employers and employees that are different from the established one-to-one employment relationship. Consequently, employment relationships involving either multiple employers for each employee, one employer for multiple employees for one specific job, or even multiple employer–multiple employee relationships are relevant. However, temporary agency work, which could also qualify under this definition, is not considered for the purpose of this project.
- Provision of work on a discontinuous or intermittent basis or for very limited periods of time rather than on a continuous or regular basis. Conventional part-time work and seasonal work are not considered unless there are other features that makes the employment relevant to this project.
- Networking and cooperation arrangements between the self-employed, especially freelancers, going beyond the usual types of relationships along the supply chain, the sharing of premises or the traditional conduct of project work.
- Forms of employment which challenge existing labour institutions (like legislation, social dialogue or collective bargaining) or social insurance programs.

In addition, the relevant forms of employment could be, but do not necessarily have to be, characterised by:

- a place of work other than the premises of the employer, where the employee is mobile and works from multiple locations, possibly including their own office.
- strong or prevalent support of technology, including mobile phones, personal computers (PCs), tablets or similar, where this technology changes the nature of work relationships or the way work is performed. Also included are algorithms which are used to coordinate tasks or supervise workers.

It does not matter whether the new employment form is subject to general labour law or specific regulation, regulated on the basis of collective agreements, or not regulated at all. New forms of employment are not limited to employees (that is, labour law contracts), but can also refer to self-employed (that is, civil law or service provision contracts). Accordingly, employment forms based on all kinds of contracts can be included.

Similarly, the concept includes employment forms that are or could be used in all sectors and occupations as well as those that are limited to individual industries and occupations.

New forms of employment identified by Eurofound:

- **Employee sharing:** A group of employers forms a network that hires one or several workers to be sent on individual work assignments with the participating employer companies. The structure is similar to temporary agency work, with the difference that the workers regularly rotate among the participating employers and work exclusively for these employers, and the network itself does not aim to make a profit. This employment form refers to employees only. More information on the employment form is available [here](#).
- **Job sharing:** A form of employment in which one employer hires several workers, but normally just two, to jointly fill a single full-time position. It is a form of part-time work, whose purpose is to ensure that the shared job is permanently staffed. This employment form refers to employees only.
- **Voucher-based work:** Form of employment where the work relationship and related payment are based on a voucher (generally acquired from a third party like a governmental authority) rather than an employment contract. In most cases, the workers then have a status somewhere between employees and self-employed.
- **Interim management:** Form of employment in which a company 'leases out' workers to other companies temporarily and for a specific purpose. Such leasing of workers is the main objective of the employer company, but unlike a temporary employment agency, its staff is limited to highly specialised experts who are sent to the receiving companies to solve a specific management or technical challenge or assist in economically difficult times. In contrast to traditional fixed-term work arrangements, interim management has some elements of consultancy, but the expert has employee status rather than that of external advisor.
- **Casual work:** Form of employment where the employment is not stable and continuous, and the employer is not obliged to regularly provide the worker with work, but has the flexibility of calling them in on demand. This employment form refers to employees only. More information is available [here](#). There are two types of casual work: a) **Intermittent work** involves an employer approaching workers on a regular or irregular basis to conduct a specific task, often related to an individual project. The employment is characterised by a fixed-term period, which either involves fulfilling a task or completing a specific number of days' work. b) **On-call work** involves a continuous employment relationship maintained between an employer and an employee, but the employer does not continuously provide work for the employee. Rather, the employer has the option of calling the employee in as and when needed. There are employment contracts that indicate the minimum and maximum number of working hours, as well as so-called 'zero-hours contracts' that specify no minimum number of working hours, and the employer is not obliged to ever call in the worker.
- **ICT-based mobile work:** Work arrangement or modality characterised by the worker (whether employee or self-employed) operating from various possible locations outside the premises of their employer (for example, at home, at a client's premises or 'on the road'), supported by modern technologies such as laptop and tablet computers. This is different from traditional teleworking in the sense of being even less 'place-bound'. More information on the employment form is available [here](#).
- **Digital platform employment:** Matching of supply and demand for paid labour through an online platform or an app. Algorithms are often involved in the matching process. Employment status is not clarified, but in most cases the worker is considered as self-employed or freelancer. More information on the employment form is available [here](#).

- **Portfolio work:** Small-scale contracting by freelancers, the self-employed or micro enterprises who work for a large number of clients.
- **Collaborative employment:** Specific forms of cooperation that go beyond traditional supply chain or business partner relationships. There are three types of collaborative employment: a) **Umbrella organisations** offer specific administrative services to self-employed people, such as invoicing clients or dealing with tax issues. b) **Coworking** involves the sharing of workspace and back-office and support tasks for self-employed, freelancers or micro businesses. c) **Cooperatives** are jointly owned and democratically controlled organisations characterised by intensive cooperation among the members in the fields of production, marketing and strategic management. More information on cooperatives is available [here](#).

More information can be found in Eurofound's [2015 report](#), and the [2020 update](#).

Other new forms of employment

- **Telework from home** is an employment arrangement where an employee or self-employed worker fully or partly works remotely from home using modern technologies, such as a personal laptop, smartphone, or landline telephone. Among self-employed workers, only those who work remotely in relation to a separate business premise, office, or work site, are included. The concept of telework also covers dependent contractors who are working in a location separate from the premises of a main client or supplier on which they are economically dependent. More information on telework and work from home is available [here](#).
- **Hybrid workplaces** are physical workplaces that have been set up to allow for a mix of in-person and remote work. Some workers complete their work hours at the workplace while others work remotely from home or from another alternate location. This type of workplace is maintained by employers for their own employees or contractors and excludes co-working spaces shared by self-employed workers operating independent businesses.