



**WORLD
EMPLOYMENT
CONFEDERATION**

EUROPE



MAKING EUROPE THE BEST PLACE TO WORK!

Our 2024 vision for people,
companies and societies

OUR VISION: MAKING EUROPE THE BEST PLACE TO WORK!

Social innovation is needed to tackle today's labour market challenges: persistent high level of youth unemployment, ageing working population, polarisation of the workforce, development of multi-jobs handling, increasing transitions between different work statuses. New safety nets are needed: social protection schemes have changed remarkably little since the 1970s while societies have evolved dramatically. Jobs are much less likely to last for life, to start at nine or to end at five; far more women take paid work; far more households are headed by a single parent, etc. Within the EU, permanent, full-time contracts only account for 58% of the total workforce. A new form of welfare is necessary! **Economic recovery is picking up, but further structural reforms are urgently needed!**



Since 2014, the overall economic situation in Europe has improved and 12 million jobs have been created. Rising employment levels put Europe on track to its 2020 targets. However, progress varies between countries and regions, age groups and gender. These challenges will be exacerbated by demographic changes, skill shortages and technological evolution. In addition, several governments have recently adopted more restrictive regulations regarding agency work and private employment industry, hampering their role in supporting first-time entrants to the labour market: EU unemployment rate for young people still remains too high at 14.8 %. At the same time, EU citizens and companies are looking for a wider range of labour contractual arrangements. People aspire to a better work-life balance and companies must adapt to an increasingly volatile and complex environment, while staying competitive.

To fit those new realities, some labour market reforms have been implemented in many countries. Yet, further structural reforms are urgently needed. By 2024, Europe needs to set a framework for labour markets that allows:

- Companies to contract their workforce under diverse and legally secured arrangements and to easily source and hire the right talents with the right skills.
- EU citizens to transit between different jobs and forms of work, without worrying about their pension rights or entitlement to unemployment benefits. Individuals need to be better equipped and empowered to stay relevant to the labour market as they embrace life-long learning.

Europe needs a new focus and strategy to adapt to the changing world of work

As labour laws, welfare systems and tax regimes have lagged behind the changing world of work, a new focus and strategy is required for Europe to adapt to the increasing diversity in forms of work. Social innovation is the approach needed to enable better lives by building sustainable and inclusive labour markets, strengthening employers' performance and improving access to work, working conditions and employability of EU citizens.

A well-designed EU social innovation strategy would support Member States in reforming their labour markets to address mega trends such as globalisation, technological evolution and demographic changes; while at the same time capitalising on the European Social Model and the benefits of the European integration process, such as the free movement of workers and services. The agreement on a European Pillar of Social Rights and the conclusions of the Gothenburg Social Summit in 2017 have also been important milestones of the recent past.

EU actions will have to be coordinated and consistent with employment policy debates at international level, such as the new OECD Jobs Strategy or the conclusions of the 2018 G20 Employment Ministerial Meeting which stated that "certain forms of employment, such as part-time work, temporary employment and agency work, among others, present opportunities for job creation, including self-employment, labour mobility, access to the labour market, and the inclusion of vulnerable and underrepresented groups."

Social innovation is already in the employment industry's DNA

With the 2019 European elections and the taking office of a new European Commission, the EU policy makers have the opportunity to embark on an agenda of social innovation. The employment industry is ready to play its part in developing innovative solutions. And it has already started to do so. Policy makers should capitalise on best practices that have been developed over the past years by the private employment industry in terms of portability and transferability of social rights.

With this Vision Paper, the World Employment Confederation-Europe, the voice of the private employment industry in Europe, is calling policy makers to adopt measures to help people and companies adapt to changes in the world of work. Focus should be laid on facilitating access to the labour market via diverse forms of work, enhancing business competitiveness through a strong Single Market, empowering EU citizens to navigate a changing world of work, ensuring the sustainability of national social models in Europe and strengthening collaboration between labour market intermediaries.

OUR POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

To enable a modern labour market, commitment and policy action is required at European and national levels. The World Employment Confederation-Europe recommends the following policy actions to be implemented between 2019 and 2024.

Encourage diverse forms of work to bring more people into the labour market

- Adapt labour contracts to the diversity of the European workforce's needs
- Support labour migrants and refugees in getting a job
- Stimulate job creation to generate more work opportunities

Strengthen the Single Market to unlock the growth and jobs potential of business services

- Strengthen the European single market for business services to unlock its contribution to economic growth and job creation, while ensuring a level-playing field between different forms of work
- Reform labour markets, lift unjustified restrictions and adopt smart regulation on the employment industry

Empower EU citizens to build their career path in a changing world of work

- Design effective skills strategies at national and European level, fostering EU citizens' employability and learnability
- Implement skills policies that better support work-based learning and prior learning recognition. Foster dual learning and apprenticeships by promoting the exchange of best practices at EU level
- Encourage the free movement of workers in the European Single Market, offering them opportunities and hope and providing organisations with the best match of talent and business needs

Rethink protection schemes to ensure the sustainability of national social models

- Encourage social innovation, building on the employment industry's best practices in promoting new solutions for social protection
- Adapt social safety nets to the new realities of work, fostering adaptability and portability of rights
- Build the funding of social safety nets on non-wage labour costs

Strengthen the collaboration between labour market intermediaries to maximise their potential

- Create a European Memorandum of Understanding between public and private employment services and support the involvement of the private employment industry in the European Network of Public Employment Services
- Promote socially responsible online platforms, treating similar services of online and offline intermediation in an equivalent way



Best place to find work opportunities



Best place to grow business services



Best place to learn and progress



Best place to work in security



Best place to maximise potential of labour market intermediation

About the World Employment Confederation-Europe

The World Employment Confederation-Europe is the voice of the private employment industry at European level, representing labour market enablers.

The World Employment Confederation-Europe strives for a recognition of the economic and social role played by the industry in enabling work, adaptation, security and prosperity in our societies. Its members provide access to the labour market and meaningful work to more than 11 millions of people in Europe and serve around 1,5 million organisations on a yearly basis.

With 30 countries and 7 of the largest international workforce solutions companies as members, the World Employment Confederation-Europe is fully representative of the industry, both in size and diversity. It brings a unique access to and engagement with European policymakers (EU Commission, European Parliament, and Council) and stakeholders (trade unions, academic world, think tanks).

The World Employment Confederation-Europe is the recognised, EU sectoral social partner for temporary agency work.

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