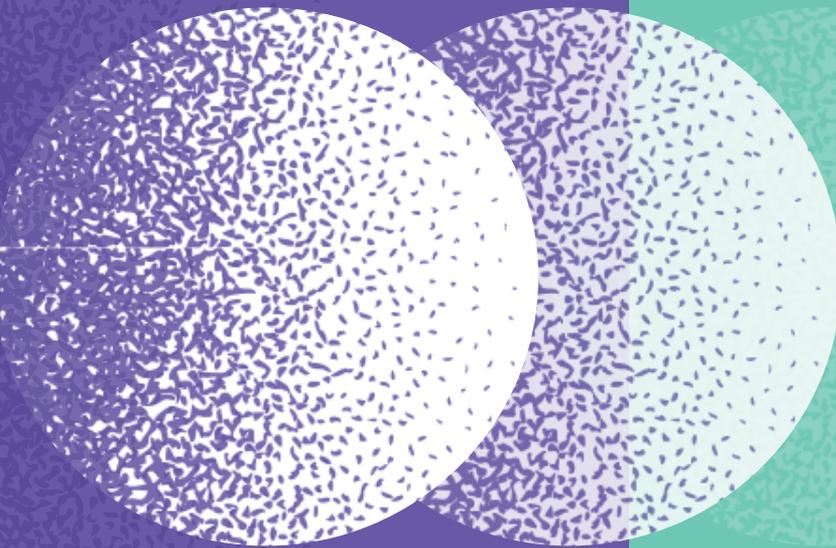


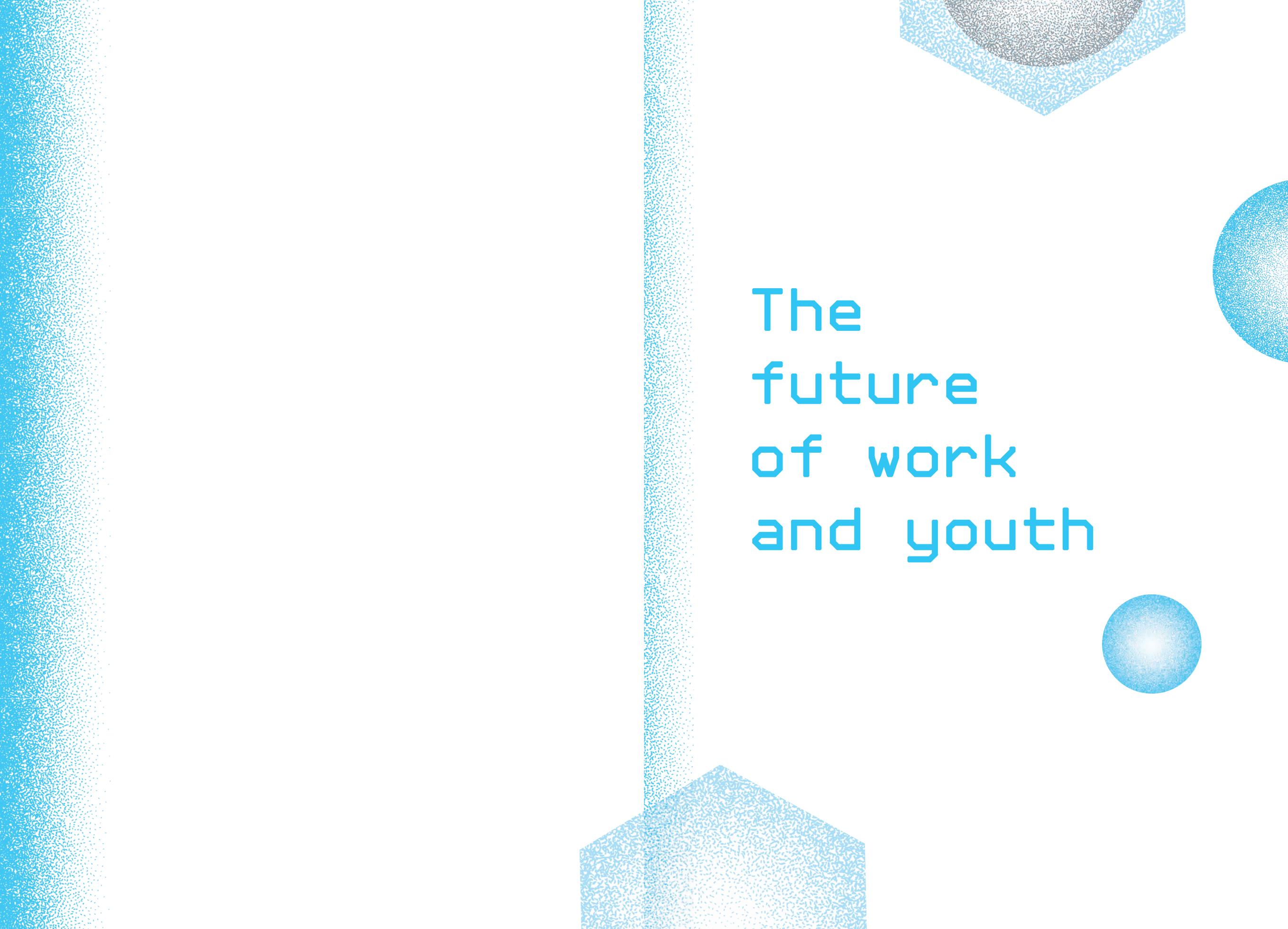
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which bring together tens of millions of young  
people from all over Europe.

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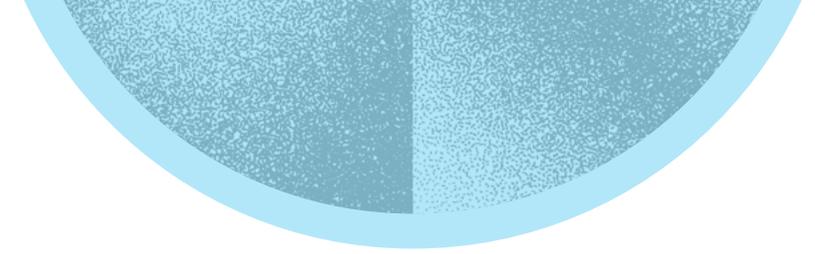
## List of abbreviations

- CEPS** - Centre for European Policy Studies  
**CICOPA** - International Organisation of Industrial and Service Cooperatives  
**EESC** - European Economic and Social Committee  
**EPRS** - European Parliamentary Research Service  
**EPSC** - European Political Strategy Centre  
**ETUC** - European Trade Union Confederation  
**ETUI** - European Trade Union Institute  
**FAO** - Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations  
**FEPS** - Foundation for European Progressive Studies  
**GDP** - Gross Domestic Product  
**GDPR** - General Data Protection Regulation  
**ICT** - Information and Communications Technology  
**ILO** - International Labour Organisation  
**IMF** - International Monetary Fund  
**NEET** - Not in Education, Employment, or Training  
**NFE** - Non-Formal Education  
**OECD** - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development  
**PES** - Public Employment Services  
**PwC** - PricewaterhouseCoopers  
**STEM** - Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics  
**UBI** - Universal Basic Income  
**UN DESA** - United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
**YEPP** - Youth of the European People's Party

## Executive summary

The world of work is changing, shaped by four global megatrends: globalisation, climate change, demographic changes, and technological advancements. Each megatrend brings its own unique challenges for young people and the future of work, as well as some opportunities. With the potential of these megatrends to shape the type of work that is required, the type of work that is available, and who undertakes it and how, there is a need to reflect on the role and value of work in society and in people's lives. Changes to the nature of work itself must inevitably lead to discussion on the value and recognition of other contributions to society.

Young people are already at a disadvantage in the labour market. They often experience age-based discrimination in terms of their access to quality work, fair wages, or welfare systems. Transitions from education to employment have become increasingly difficult and many of the young people who do find work are caught up in a cycle of precariousness, without access to workers' rights or social protection. The barriers that young people face in accessing their social and economic rights risk being exacerbated in the future of work as new challenges emerge. In this context, this report identifies and discusses five key themes that present challenges and opportunities for young people in Europe in the context of the future of work: skills, access to social protection, workers' rights and wellbeing, just transition and environmental concerns, and equality.



To respond to these challenges and create a youth-inclusive future of work, policy-makers must focus on the following solutions:

- **Investing in young people's skills throughout the lifecycle.** This includes digital skills, skills that give humans a comparative advantage over new technology, the skills of creativity and adaptability, and those related to sustainability and preparedness for the impacts of climate change. Investment in non-formal education and recognition of its place in the development of skills and competences for the future of work are required to ensure that all young people are reached.
- **Reforming welfare systems and labour legislation** to adapt to new realities and forms of work, and to ensure that further changes to the nature of work can be adjusted to and regulated more rapidly in future. The premise and practice of contributory welfare and pensions systems must be better adapted to employment trajectories and future changes in the type and availability of work to ensure that they remain adequate, fair, up-to-date and fit-for-purpose. Adjustments and reforms must allow all young people to have access to a safety net, including those in new forms of work and those who are not in employment.

- **Safeguarding workers' rights and wellbeing** by ensuring a good work-life balance, protecting the right to privacy, and preserving the space for collective bargaining. More affordable care services, increased flexibility in work hours and the use of technology to allow distance working should be encouraged. This must be coupled with efforts to ensure that the right to work-life balance and the right to privacy are upheld in the context of increased use of technology, generation of data, monitoring and surveillance. The pace of change in relation to these issues makes it imperative that collective bargaining and the right of all workers to join and form trade unions is also protected.

- **Creating a youth-friendly labour market** by increasing the capacity of Public Employment Services to provide better and more individualised support for young people; better regulating the types of work that young people do, including non-standard forms of work, internships and apprenticeships; providing young people with free, youth-friendly and accessible information on different employment statuses and their implications for access to social protection and pension schemes; and ensuring that young people and youth organisations are included in the shaping of policies and programmes designed to respond to their needs in the changing world of work.
- **Investing in a new economy** by moving away from the current economic model which has fuelled the economic, social, and environmental challenges that young people face today. This can be achieved through supportive policies and provision of funding for young people to establish alternative business models that prioritise sustainability and the needs of people and communities above profit. Greater efforts are needed to educate young people about these business models as viable alternatives that can contribute to both human and planetary wellbeing.

While control over the megatrends may be limited, it is possible to minimise their negative consequences and capitalise on the opportunities they may bring. Ultimately, what the future of work will look like and how it impacts young people will depend on governments and institutions. Policy-makers must leverage their power to shape labour markets into arenas where all young people can fully realise their social and economic rights. To address the challenges of tomorrow, the development of a youth-inclusive labour market cannot wait. Action must begin today to create the future of work that young people in Europe want.

## Introduction

Young people in Europe are worried about what the future holds. Compared to their peers in other regions of the world, they are much more pessimistic about what lies ahead. Only 12% of young people in Belgium, 16% of those in Spain, and 30% in Poland, for example, feel that their generation is likely to have a better life than their parents.<sup>1</sup> This pessimism is not unjustified. In the European context, young people are the age group at highest risk of poverty and social exclusion. Moreover, they increasingly face barriers in accessing their social and economic rights, including a difficult transition from education to employment, a lack of quality jobs, and poor access to social protection.

Our economic and social model is one where employment plays a central role in our lives, with work as the means through which individuals generate income. Today, work is considered an activity that is highly desirable: it provides access to certain benefits, like social protection, and it can offer the potential for self-expression and self-realisation.<sup>2</sup> Yet, today's labour market has failed to provide young people with the kind of job opportunities and income security that make them feel confident in their future. Moreover, our consumption and production patterns have caused significant harm to our planet, fuelling young people's feelings of insecurity about the future. As a result, they are increasingly losing trust in the political institutions that are meant to protect their interests.

While young people already struggle to deal with challenges in their working lives today, the situation of the labour market is becoming ever more difficult. A set of four global 'megatrends' are set to dramatically transform the future of work. These changes bring two possibilities: either young people can become further isolated from the labour market as a result of new barriers, or governments and institutions can intervene to ensure that the inequalities and discrimination that prevent young people from fully accessing their rights today are not reproduced in the future. The future of work is a challenge that cannot be ignored. Policy-makers need to respond now to the barriers that young people will face, to ensure a fair future of work that does not leave young people behind.

1 Ipsos MORI, (2014). People in western countries pessimistic about future for young people. <<https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/people-western-countries-pessimistic-about-future-young-people>>  
2 Méda, Dominique, (2016). The Future of work: The meaning and value of work in Europe. ILO Research Paper No. 18.

## About this report

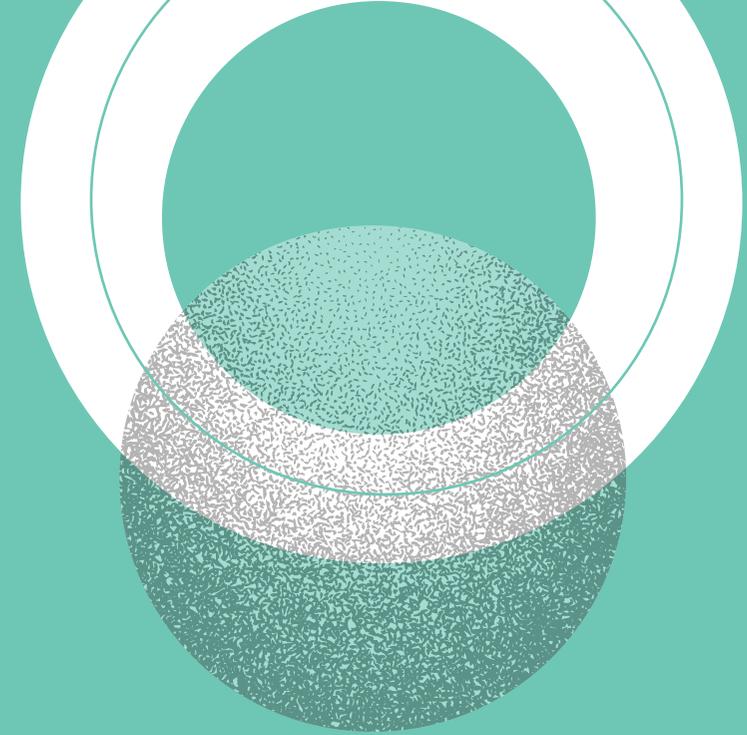
What the future world of work holds has become an increasingly common concern, preoccupying business owners, workers, politicians and the media. Yet, this discourse is often too narrow. It focuses primarily on three things: the availability of jobs, skills for the future workplace, and the so-called gig economy. This means that many young people are not given a complete picture of how the future of work will affect them. This report seeks to bring greater understanding of the impacts of the future of work on young people and provide a broader perspective on how their social and economic rights will be affected. It looks not only at the impacts of technological advancements on jobs, but considers how other megatrends will affect current and future generations of youth and change the role and value of work in our lives. The future of work cannot be considered through only one lens. It is difficult to predict the future, but this is precisely why policy-makers need a more forward-looking, holistic approach to fully understand and tackle the challenges that lie ahead.

Based on these megatrends, the report identifies the key challenges and opportunities that will impact the economic and social situation of young people, assessing how likely these are to affect youth in the future. Finally, it suggests solutions to address some of these issues immediately, in order to maximise the opportunities, manage the risks, and minimise the challenges of the future of work.

This report demonstrates that European governments and institutions must prioritise social protection systems that are inclusive of youth, invest in their education, and support and protect young people's rights, within and outside the workplace. Moving towards a future of work that is not inclusive of all young people can no longer be an option for Europe. The region must strive for a future of work that allows young people, whether in work or not, to feel that their contribution to society is valued; a future of work that respects young people's social and economic rights; and a future of work that helps set the world on a more sustainable path.

1

# The changing world of work



The world of work is changing, shaped by a set of ongoing megatrends that have global implications. These trends will have an impact on the kind of work that is available and the quality of that work, who that work is done by, and where and how it is undertaken.<sup>3</sup> The transformative nature of the megatrends means that the value and role of work in young people's lives may change, and result in the need to rethink the current social and economic model. Young people who have recently entered the labour market or are currently preparing to enter it, as well as future generations of young people, will feel the effects, whether positive or negative, of the megatrends and their consequences. Some of the effects of the changing nature of work are already being felt by young people today as they struggle to access the labour market or to find quality jobs.

3 OECD, (2017). Future of Work and Skills.



## Megatrends affecting the future of work

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have identified a set of key drivers of change that will shape the future of work: globalisation, climate change, demographic changes, and technological advancements. The impact of new technologies often dominates the discourse around the future of work, but all of these megatrends will contribute to changing the nature of work across Europe, often in interconnected ways.

## Globalisation

One of the strongest forces shaping economies over the last few decades has been globalisation. Globalisation is a product of both liberalisation policies and technological advancement, which have facilitated the integration of local markets into the global economy, allowing for the international flow of goods, services, labour, and capital.<sup>4</sup> While globalisation has contributed to greater prosperity in some countries and for some sectors of society, it has come under increasing scrutiny from those who believe it contributes to inequality and exploitation. Elements of globalisation like global value chains<sup>5</sup>, offshoring<sup>6</sup>, and outsourcing<sup>7</sup> have allowed economies around the world to become increasingly integrated, interconnected and interdependent.<sup>8</sup> Yet globalisation has also caused job insecurity, poorer working conditions and the lowering of wages, especially for the low-skilled, as workers around the world now compete with one another for employment.<sup>9</sup> This is a reality that has affected young people today as many struggle to find quality jobs.

The shift of certain jobs to countries offering cheaper labour and less government supervision has left some European workers feeling betrayed by globalisation. More recently, however, some European companies have begun to return their production to Europe. This is referred to as 'reshoring'. There are a variety of reasons for reshoring, including wage increases in other parts of the world and increased robotisation in manufacturing.<sup>10</sup> Some companies are also reshoring for ethical or environmental reasons, choosing to prioritise local production as a step towards more sustainable business practices. The trend towards reshoring is unlikely to result in the end of offshoring however<sup>11</sup>, thus the impacts of a globalised economy are likely to be here to stay.



- 4 Ashby, Alison, (2016). From global to local: reshoring for sustainability. *Operations Management Research*, Vol. 9, Issue 3–4, pp 75–88.; Oshri, Ilan, Kotlarsky, Julia and Leslie P. Willcocks, (2015). *The Handbook of Global Outsourcing and Offshoring*.
- 5 Global value chains are the process by which a single product is manufactured and assembled through multiple countries, with each step adding value to the product.
- 6 Offshoring refers to the process of obtaining services and products from another country, by relocating certain or all aspects of a business abroad.
- 7 Outsourcing refers to the process of obtaining services or products from a third party company.
- 8 IMF, (2008). *Globalization: A Brief Overview*. Issues Brief, Issue 02/08.
- 9 OECD, (2017). *Future of Work and Skills*.
- 10 OECD, (2017). *Future of Work and Skills*.
- 11 De Backer, Koen, et al (2016). *Reshoring: Myth or Reality?* OECD Science, Technology and Industry Policy Papers No. 27.

## Climate change

Significant environmental, social and economic consequences of climate change are already being felt around the world. Much of this is due to unsustainable consumption and production practices and the impact of the current consumer culture on the planet.<sup>12</sup> In fact, much of the growth brought about by globalisation has come at the expense of the environment. The ILO notes that reductions in working poverty rates seen in the age of globalisation have been accompanied by the intensive use of natural resources, or an increase in the ecological footprint.<sup>13</sup>

Over the last three decades, climate change has resulted in a rise in the severity and frequency of natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods and droughts. This has significant consequences on work in a globalised world, where disruptions in the supply chain from one country experiencing a climate disaster could have consequences on workers both locally and elsewhere.<sup>14</sup> In the ten years from 2003 to 2013, natural disasters have cost US\$1.5tn

in economic damages globally. It is now estimated that the average annual economic losses from natural disasters has reached between US\$250bn and US\$300bn a year as a result of lost investments, and reductions in consumption and employment.<sup>15</sup> The impacts of job and livelihood losses due to natural disasters are most often experienced by those who are already the poorest and most vulnerable, making climate change an issue of social justice. Action or inaction today has implications for the current generation of young people, as well as future generations, who risk carrying the burden resulting from both the impacts of climate change and the inadequate responses to it.<sup>16</sup>

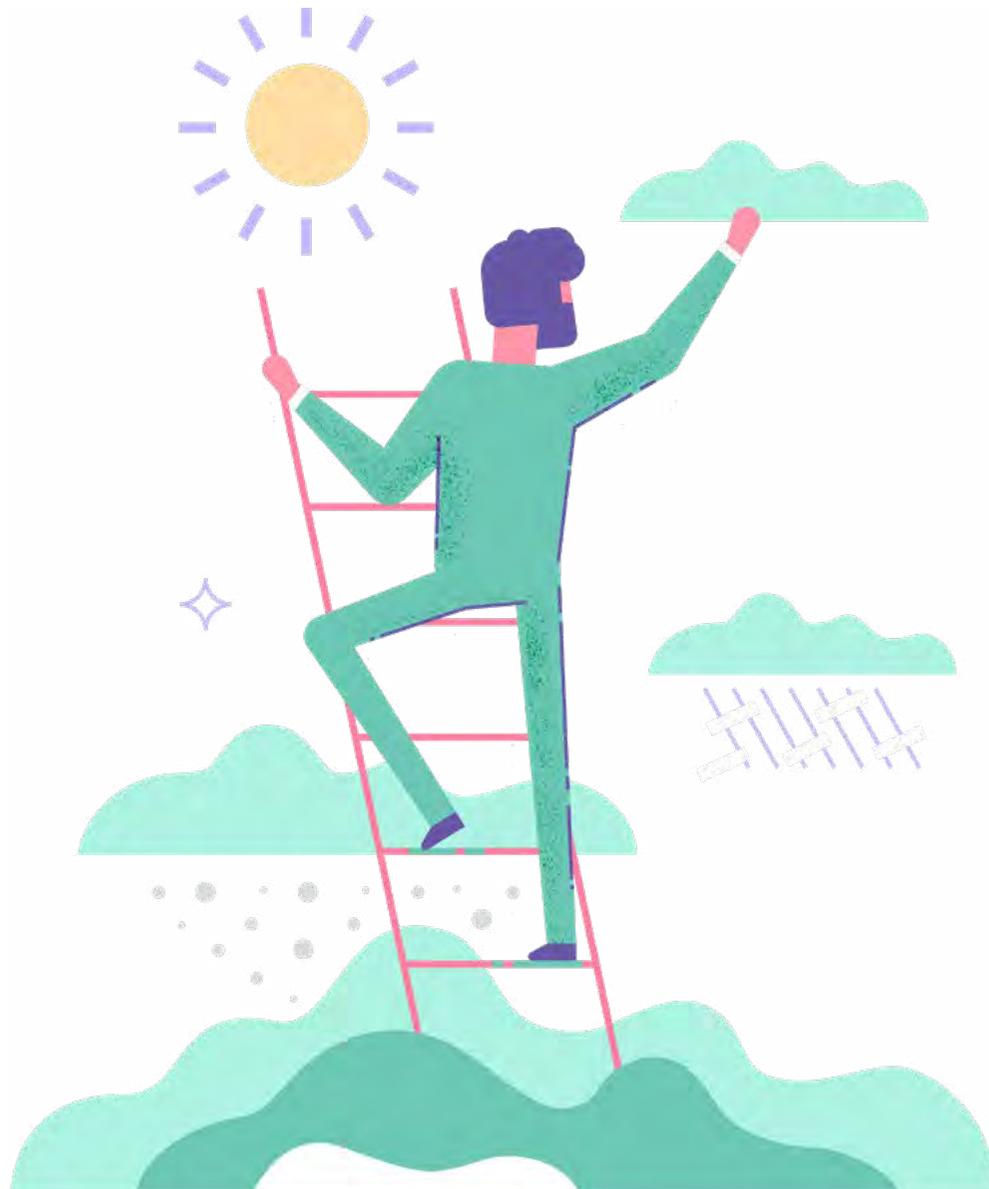
<sup>12</sup> For more, see: European Youth Forum, (2018). Policy Paper on Sustainable Development.

<sup>13</sup> ILO, (2017). Future of Work: Inception Report for the Global Commission on the Future of Work.

<sup>14</sup> For example, the impacts of the 2011 earthquake in Japan caused Toyota to temporarily shut down car production in the UK affecting 3000 workers and Honda was forced to temporarily cut down work to just two days a week for 3000 of its British employees.

<sup>15</sup> FAO, (2015). The impact of disasters on agriculture and food security.

<sup>16</sup> For more, see: European Youth Forum, (2015). Resolution on Climate Matters: The Vision of European Youth for COP21.



## Demographic changes

Changing population dynamics are also likely to have a significant impact on the future of work. These dynamics vary from region to region. In large parts of the world, young people currently make up the majority of the population, with this trend predicted to continue over the coming decades. In Europe, however, demographic trends indicate the growth of an ageing population, where the proportion of the population over the age of 65 is expanding rapidly as life expectancy increases and fertility rates decrease. In the coming decades, the number of older people in the EU is expected to grow sharply, increasing from around 98 million in 2016 to 151 million in 2080. Meanwhile the working age population<sup>17</sup> is expected to decline by nearly 45 million, from 333 million in 2016 to 288 million in 2080.<sup>18</sup>

This change in demographics brings multiple societal challenges. First, it has an impact on public finances, as demand for pensions and healthcare rises. This raises concerns for the sustainability of pension models, particularly given the expected decrease in the working age population. The fact that many young workers today are not able to find stable or decent employment that allows them to contribute to pension schemes is an additional risk factor. Second, due to the fact that pension payments are decreasing while the cost of healthcare is growing, older workers may be forced to remain in the labour market for longer.<sup>19</sup>

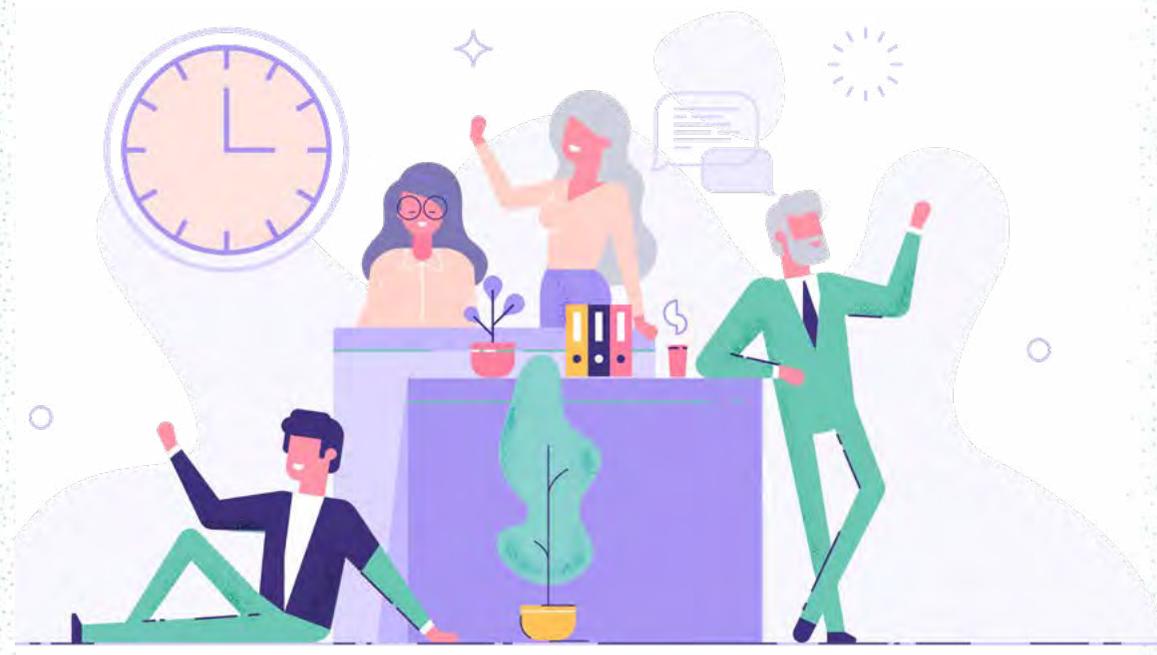
In many countries, the statutory retirement age is also increasing, further extending people's working lives. As more experienced workers stay in their jobs for longer, this may cause a decrease in employment opportunities for young people in the future and risks pitting generations against each other as they compete for income security. This would exacerbate an existing pattern of intergenerational inequity caused by the economic crisis and subsequent austerity measures.<sup>20</sup> Finally, an ageing population has implications for young workers as they increasingly bear caring responsibilities for older family members. This may affect their ability to work, or to achieve work-life balance.

<sup>17</sup> The working age population is defined here as those between the ages of 15 to 64.

<sup>18</sup> Eurostat, (2017). People in the EU - population projections. <[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/People\\_in\\_the\\_EU\\_-\\_population\\_projections#Population\\_projections](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/People_in_the_EU_-_population_projections#Population_projections)>

<sup>19</sup> CEPS, (2018). The Internet and Jobs: opportunities and ambiguous trends.

<sup>20</sup> Bruegel, (2015). The Growing Intergenerational Divide in Europe. Bruegel Policy Contribution Issue 2015/17.



## Technological advancements and the Fourth Industrial Revolution

By far the most widely discussed disruptive forces for the labour market are technological innovation and the impact of the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution. Throughout history, there have been three major industrial revolutions fuelled by innovation:<sup>21</sup>

- **First Industrial Revolution (1760-1840),** where steam and water were used to mechanise production.
- **Second Industrial Revolution (1870-1914),** where mass production was made possible using electric power.
- **Third Industrial Revolution (1970-present),** where production was automated using electronics and Information Technology.

There is currently an ongoing shift towards a fourth industrial revolution. This wave of industrialisation will be characterised by further advancements in digitalisation and robotisation, using tools like Big Data<sup>22</sup>, Artificial Intelligence<sup>23</sup>, and the Internet of Things<sup>24</sup>, that will transform the world of work and affect

social and economic rights. In the past, automation resulted in the elimination of some jobs, but created many more and better quality jobs in the long term.<sup>25</sup> With the Fourth Industrial Revolution, however, new developments are taking place at a rate that is much faster than governments' and institutions' capacity to react.<sup>26</sup> Developments are also more widespread. One estimate suggests that approximately 14% of jobs in OECD countries are highly automatable and an additional 32% of jobs could face substantial change in how they are carried out.<sup>27</sup> Another indicates that 50% to 70% of jobs could face partial automation or automation of a certain number of tasks.<sup>28</sup> European citizens view this phenomenon with pessimism: 74% worry that more jobs will disappear than new jobs will be created.<sup>29</sup>

Jobs at greatest risk of automation through digitalisation and robotisation are those with a high level of routine tasks or simple cognitive tasks. On the other hand, automation will complement workers in carrying out non-routine tasks such as problem-solving and complex communications activities.<sup>30</sup> Automation is likely to deeply affect sectors

21 Schwab, Klaus, (2016). The Fourth Industrial Revolution: what it means, how to respond. World Economic Forum.

22 Big Data refers to a volume of unstructured or structured data that is so large, moves so quickly or exceeds processing capacity, making it difficult to process through traditional database and software techniques.

23 Artificial Intelligence is the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines

24 The Internet of Things is the process of connecting devices to the internet or to each other.

25 ILO, (2017). Future of Work: Inception Report for the Global Commission on the Future of Work.

26 CEPS, (2018). The Internet and Jobs: opportunities and ambiguous trends.

27 OECD, (2018). Putting faces to the jobs at risk of automation. Policy Brief on the Future of Work.

28 OECD, (2016). Automation and Independent Work in a Digital Economy.

29 European Commission, (2017). Attitudes Towards The Impact Of Digitisation And Automation On Daily Life.

30 CEPS, (2018). The Internet and Jobs: opportunities and ambiguous trends.

such as manufacturing and agriculture, as well as some jobs in the service sector. Many of the jobs at risk of automation are those carried out by the low to middle-skilled. Jobs at the lowest risk are those that require professional training or tertiary education, such as teaching, management, or jobs in healthcare. The exception is for low-skilled jobs that cannot yet be automated, such as caring and assisting others. Thus, as a rule, high-skilled workers are the most secure and the risk of automation is highest where educational attainment and skills levels are lowest.<sup>31</sup> Humans have comparative advantage over new technologies when flexibility, problem-solving skills and creativity are required as part of a job.<sup>32</sup> If automation follows this pattern, this would create labour market polarisation as some low-skilled jobs remain, many middle-skilled jobs disappear and most high-skilled jobs remain.<sup>33</sup> Societies could witness the great 'hollowing out' of the middle class, driving income inequality higher.<sup>34</sup> Yet even high-skilled workers could be affected by greater competition and poorer working conditions as jobs in other areas decrease.

Automation carries a greater risk for young people than for older workers. In some OECD countries, 20-40% of jobs carried out by young workers are considered at risk of automation.<sup>35</sup> Young workers, including those combining studies with low-skilled work, tend to be employed in the retail, accommodation, and food services industries, or enter the labour market in junior or routine roles that are more prone to automation.<sup>36</sup> The wholesale and retail trade has an average risk of automation of 32%, while the accommodation and food services sector has an average risk of 26% by the early 2030s.<sup>37</sup> Young people who are not combining this type of work with education tend to have lower educational attainment and qualifications, which may limit their ability to move between industries and into new jobs. Workers in the most automatable jobs are already more vulnerable in today's labour market as they work fewer hours per week and have lower hourly earnings.<sup>38</sup> Without intervention, existing inequalities in today's labour market are therefore unlikely to disappear in the labour market of the future.

31 OECD, (2018). Putting faces to the jobs at risk of automation. Policy Brief on the Future of Work.

32 CEPS, (2018). The Internet and Jobs: opportunities and ambiguous trends.

33 OECD, (2018). Putting faces to the jobs at risk of automation. Policy Brief on the Future of Work.

34 CEPS, (2018). The Internet and Jobs: opportunities and ambiguous trends.

35 PwC, (2017). The \$1.2 trillion prize from empowering young workers to succeed in an age of automation. Young Workers Index, October 2017.

36 OECD, (2018). Putting faces to the jobs at risk of automation. Policy Brief on the Future of Work.

37 PwC, (2017). The \$1.2 trillion prize from empowering young workers to succeed in an age of automation. Young Workers Index, October 2017.

38 OECD, (2018). Putting faces to the jobs at risk of automation. Policy Brief on the Future of Work.



## The future role and value of work in society

The transformational nature of the megatrends set to influence society and the labour market make it likely that the role and value of work in society will change. Within the current economic system, work serves as an activity to generate income. It has become a necessary path to meeting material needs and plays a fundamental role in social and economic inclusion in society. But for some, work does not only serve to meet basic needs but also provides self-realisation.<sup>39</sup> The idea that work should go beyond material needs is recognised in the ILO Constitution which specifically mentions the right of individuals to pursue their “spiritual development” through employment, as well as the need to support workers to be able to “make their greatest contribution to the common well-being”.<sup>40</sup> The high value currently placed on paid work means that many people perceive their job as defining them and their aspirations. Work can allow people to feel productive or offer purpose and identity. In fact, over 60% of people say that they would enjoy having a job even if they did not need the income.<sup>41</sup>

Work enables people to participate in society and can provide a sense of belonging to a community.<sup>42</sup> Unemployment, on the other hand, is viewed as a societal challenge, a problem that must be fixed to ensure the inclusion of all members of a society and to maximise people’s potential. Yet **for many, their work does not allow maximisation of potential or self-realisation.** This can be due to many factors, such

as a lack of quality jobs or excessive pressure at work. The OECD asserts that this is also occurring because people’s values are changing.<sup>43</sup> People want greater flexibility and work-life balance in order to pursue other interests outside of work, and the current labour market does not often offer this possibility.

In a future where work may be scarcer or where its nature may change, the value and role that has been given to work may also need to shift. As a result, there is an opportunity to create a new model for the role of work in society that offers a greater sense of self-realisation through work, or a less central role for work in the achievement of potential and contribution to society.

39 Méda, Dominique, (2016). The Future of work: The meaning and value of work in Europe. ILO Research Paper No. 18.

40 ILO Declaration of Philadelphia, Articles II (a) and III (b).

41 ILO, (2017). Future of Work: Inception Report for the Global Commission on the Future of Work.

42 Freud, Sigmund, (1930). Civilisation and its discontents. General Press: New Delhi.

43 OECD, (2017). Future of Work and Skills.

The majority of people across the globe value work that is useful to society and through which they are able to help others.<sup>44</sup> **Attitudes to work and unemployment can only change with the recognition that there are multiple ways to contribute to society beyond paid work.** Greater recognition for the value of invisible, unpaid work, such as caring and housework, is required. This type of work is overwhelmingly carried out by women. It is estimated that women undertake 4.5 hours of unpaid work a day, while for men the figure is 2 hours a day.<sup>45</sup> More data on the social and economic value of this unpaid care work is needed to support the recognition of its importance as a productive activity.

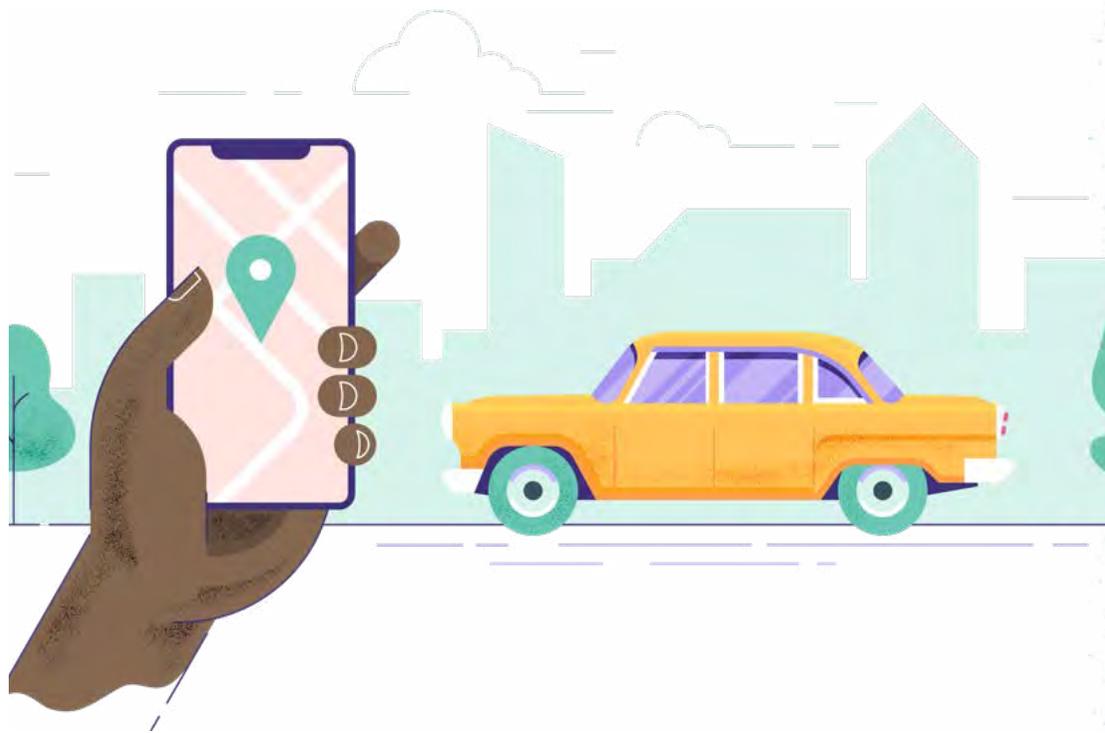
Furthermore, **active citizenship, through volunteering, contributing to democratic decision-making within society, or being active in the community, for example, provides significant added value to society.** These are activities that are valued by young people. A recent Eurobarometer report on youth found that more than one in four respondents indicated that they had been involved in organised voluntary activities.<sup>46</sup> Yet this contribution often does not receive the same recognition as, or hold an equivalent place in society to, work and employment. Youth organisations

already play a role in coordinating this type of activity among young people and provide an important space to foster these kinds of community-based activities. Research into the value of contributions to society beyond those provided through traditional work is needed to support and recognise the benefits that they can bring. In a context where the nature of work, as well as its role and value in society, is changing, it will be necessary to discuss and reflect on which contributions to society are valued, and how alternative forms of contribution can be better reflected

44 ILO, (2017). Future of Work: Inception Report for the Global Commission on the Future of Work.

45 OECD, (2018). Gender Data Portal. <<http://www.oecd.org/gender/data/>>

46 European Commission, (2018). Flash Eurobarometer 455 Report: European Youth.



## Current labour market challenges

While megatrends will shape the future of work, some have already begun to have an impact on the lives of young people. Globalisation and technological advancements in digitalisation in particular have been very influential in shaping young people's current labour market situation, with particular effects on the types and quality of jobs available. While these changes are already taking place today, too often these are the only challenges linked to youth in discussions about the future of work, an approach which is not sufficiently forward-looking. Understanding today's challenges, however, is vital as they demonstrate that young people are already in a more vulnerable position in the labour market and the impacts of further changes could exacerbate this vulnerability.

## Access to the labour market

In the aftermath of the 2008 economic crisis, employers became more reluctant to offer long-term employment contracts, partly due to economic uncertainty and accelerated global competition.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, policy-makers adopted policies that eased labour legislation to stimulate the economy, reducing the quality of many jobs and the rights of many workers. It is young people trying to enter the labour market who have suffered the greatest consequences of this approach.

**Although decreasing, the youth unemployment rate remains above pre-crisis levels, averaging at 16.8% in the EU in 2017.** This is more than double the unemployment rate for all ages, demonstrating that youth unemployment remains a particular challenge.<sup>48</sup>

## Transitions from education to employment

Internships, apprenticeships, and unpaid work have often become necessary pathways to long-term employment, replacing entry-level jobs. While these should be important learning opportunities, offering young people an initial experience of the world of work, today many young people find themselves caught in a cycle of continuous low-quality training opportunities and an extended transition to employment. Part of the issue is **the lack of clear regulation for quality internships and apprenticeships at national level, which often results in the violation of young people's rights.**

Internship and apprenticeship opportunities often lack educational objectives and are sometimes used by employers to replace jobs, thereby avoiding the provision of basic workers' rights like social protection, remuneration or job security.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, transition opportunities are often unavailable to the most vulnerable and marginalised young people, putting them at continued risk of poverty and social exclusion. Many training opportunities are not adapted to the needs of young people with disabilities for example, despite the fact that the unemployment rate among persons with disabilities is significantly higher than the average.<sup>50</sup>

47 EPSC, (2016). The Future of Work: Skills and Resilience for a World of Change. Issue 13.

48 Eurostat, (2018). Unemployment in the EU regions in 2017: Unemployment rates in the EU regions ranged from 1.7% to 29.1%. Newsrelease, No. 73/2018. <<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/8830865/1-26042018-AP-EN.pdf/bb8ac3b7-3606-47ef-b7ed-aadc4d1e2aae>>

49 For more, see: European Youth Forum, (2013). Quality Jobs for Young People.

50 For more, see: European Youth Forum, (2016). Excluding Youth: A Threat to Our Future.

## Discrimination in the labour market

Age-based discrimination is the most prevalent form of discrimination at work, with young workers among those reporting the highest levels of discrimination.<sup>51</sup> Young people often face multiple discrimination in accessing the labour market, on the basis of their age coupled with, for example, their gender, race, disability, or sexual orientation.<sup>52</sup> For those young people who are able to find employment, **discrimination is further exacerbated by policies like youth minimum wages, which violate the right to equal remuneration for work of equal value.**<sup>53</sup>

## Lack of quality of jobs

Job quality is a consistent issue, adding to young people's vulnerability in the labour market. In 2016, **some 43.8% of young people were in temporary forms of work in the EU, compared with 12% of the rest of the working age population.**<sup>54</sup> Additionally, as many as 13% of employed young people have no contract at all, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation.<sup>55</sup> According to Eurofound, at least 25% of young people are in a poor quality job.

This is likely to result in an unsatisfactory experience of working life, and can add to the vulnerability of young people in the labour market, as well as harm their future career progression.<sup>56</sup>

51 Eurofound, (2017). Sixth European Working Conditions Survey.

52 For more, see: European Youth Forum, (2015). Multiple discrimination and young people in Europe.

53 European Youth Forum, (2016). Excluding Youth: A Threat to Our Future.

54 Eurostat, (2017). "Temporary employment in the EU". <<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/DDN-20170502-1?inheritRedirect=true>>

55 Eurofound, (2017). Sixth European Working Conditions Survey.

56 Eurofound, (2017). Sixth European Working Conditions Survey

## Non-standard forms of employment

As young people struggle to find quality jobs, they are increasingly turning to new or non-standard forms of work, such as involuntary part-time jobs, zero-hour contracts, on-demand work and seasonal work, in order to make a living. Platform work<sup>57</sup>, which is also referred to as the 'gig economy', 'crowd work', or 'on-demand economy', is among the new forms of work increasingly being taken up by young people. In fact, the average platform worker is a young male, between the ages of 18 and 34. Young people make up as much as 39.6% of the platform workforce in Italy, 42.0% in the Netherlands, 51.8% in Germany, and one of the highest rates in Europe is Sweden, with 57.8%.<sup>58</sup>

Platforms have become a popular alternative to traditional employment for young people, as they can remove some of the barriers to entering the labour market that young people face. Many platform jobs, such as those for driving or delivery services, do not require any qualifications or previous work experience and may not require interviews. They are particularly appealing for those who may suffer discrimination in more traditional forms of work. This type of work can be easier to access for those who have limited formal education or those from marginalised groups, such as racial and ethnic minorities, who make up 55% of platform workers.<sup>59</sup> Many platform workers also cite flexibility in choosing working hours as a key positive element of their work. This has allowed more parents to access employment, as the average platform worker also has children.<sup>60</sup>

While all of these benefits combine to make platform work attractive to workers, online platforms have quickly come under fire for the poor quality of the work they provide, demonstrated by a lack of minimum work hours or a minimum salary, meaning income is neither guaranteed nor consistent. Workers often have to work long hours as a result, including extensive and unpredictable waiting periods for which they are not paid.<sup>61</sup> This creates a situation of underpayment. Non-standard work tends to pay less than its full-time equivalent and is associated with less access to training, something that is vital to young people's professional development.<sup>62</sup> This can fuel a race to the bottom in relation to working conditions, affecting all sectors. **While technological advancements are blamed for these emerging issues, digitalisation is not the driving force behind the growth of the platform economy**, and this still represents just a small fraction of all temporary work. However, **it is part of a wider trend of precarious work and poor quality jobs.**

Because of these issues, many platform workers find themselves having to work multiple jobs under highly stressful conditions. Platform workers are most often paid on the basis of the number of orders or deliveries and this incentivises them to take greater risks to maximise their hourly earnings. As a result, the risks to workers' safety and health is often quite high.<sup>63</sup>

This is particularly problematic given that most are not covered by a company insurance policy. As these workers often use their private means of transportation for their job, they can also lose their source of income if these are damaged as a result of accidents.

These problems are compounded by the fact that workers are often forced to register as self-employed in order to carry out work for platforms. This 'bogus self-employment' reduces the liability of the companies towards workers, while limiting their rights and entitlements.<sup>64</sup> Most platforms do not provide basic workers' rights like paid sick leave or paid holiday. They also do not provide paid maternity leave, de facto discriminating against female workers. Such work also frequently does not offer any social protection coverage, and can be terminated at will by the platform operator, with high levels of competition keeping wages low.<sup>65</sup>

57 While there are many types of platform work, in this report the term usually refers to 'on-location platform-determined routine work': low-skilled work allocated to the worker by the platform and delivered in person. Examples include rideshare and food delivery applications. This category is the focus as it is one of the forms of platform work most often carried out by youth and currently represents the largest share of platform workers. For further information on the different types of platform work, see: Eurofound (2018), Employment and working conditions of selected types of platform work.

58 FEPS, et al, (2017). Work in the European Gig Economy.

59 EESC, (2017). Impact of digitalisation and the on-demand economy on labour markets and the consequences for employment and industrial relations.

60 EESC, (2017). Impact of digitalisation and the on-demand economy on labour markets and the consequences for employment and industrial relations.

61 FEPS, et al, (2017). Work in the European Gig Economy.

62 EPSC, (2016). The Future of Work: Skills and Resilience for a World of Change. Issue 13.

63 Tran, M. and R. Sokas, (2017). The gig economy and contingent work: An occupational health assessment. Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Vol. 59, No.4, pp 63-66.

64 Decoster, Alexandre, (2017). Étudiants-indépendants, entre gains et doutes. Alter Echos No. 446. <<https://www.alterechos.be/etudiants-independants-entre-gains-et-doutes/>>; Solidaire, (2018). Liberoo, Deliveroo... <<https://solidaire.org/articles/liberoo-deliveroo>>

65 OECD, (2017). Future of Work and Skills.

## Access to social protection

Social protection coverage is a challenge for young people beyond those in platform work, with young people in many countries facing discrimination in accessing certain social protection benefits specifically on the basis of their age or due to a lack of prior contributions. According to a 2015 study by the OECD, **in certain European countries young people cannot receive income support before the age of 24 or 25.**<sup>66</sup> Additionally, **due to their contributory nature, unemployment benefits tend to be inaccessible for young people looking for their first job or who have only completed internships or short-term contracts.**<sup>67</sup> Given that young people face difficulties in accessing quality, stable and long-term employment, this leaves them unable to access their right to social security. In addition, difficulties in accessing this type of employment means that young people are unable or less able to participate in contributory statutory pension systems or be enrolled in pension schemes, leaving the current generation of young people at risk of poverty later in life.<sup>68</sup>

As young people are increasingly and disproportionately caught up in precarious and non-standard forms of employment, the challenges they face in accessing social protection are only increasing. Non-standard forms of employment and self-employment do not always meet the necessary eligibility requirements or provide the necessary accumulation or recognition of work hours, income or contributions to allow adequate access to insurance-based benefits or even any access to social security at all.<sup>69</sup> Welfare systems do not offer young people the protection and security to which they are entitled, and no longer fit the realities of the types of work that young people are likely to do. A European Commission report noted that in 2016, **nearly 40% of those employed in the EU were in non-standard employment or self-employment. Half of those are at risk of not having sufficient access to social protection and related employment services.**<sup>70</sup> It is clear that in the current labour market, policy-makers are not doing enough to ensure that young workers, as well as those who are unable to work, are protected and have their rights safeguarded.

66 Carillo, Stephane, et al. (2015). NEET Youth in the Aftermath of the Crisis: Challenges and Policies. OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 164.

67 European Youth Forum, (2016). Excluding Youth: A Threat to Our Future.

68 UNDESA, (2018). Promoting Inclusion through Social Protection: Report on the World Social Situation 2018.

69 European Parliament, (2017). The Social Protection of Workers in the Platform Economy.; European Commission, (2017). Access to social protection for people working on non-standard contracts and as self-employed in Europe: a study of national policies.

70 European Commission, (2017). Commission Staff Working Document: 'Analytical document' accompanying the Consultation document: 'Second phase Consultation of Social Partners under Article 154 TFEU on a possible action addressing the challenges of access to social protection for people in all forms of employment in the framework of the European Pillar of Social Rights'.

## Labour legislation

Gaps in protection and access to labour rights for platform workers have highlighted an important issue for the future of work: **labour legislation, like welfare systems, has been far too slow to adjust to and regulate non-standard forms of work.** Furthermore, labour legislation fails to adequately extend to the type of work that young people do. Apprentices and interns, for example, have little legal protection and often cannot enjoy the same rights as other workers.

Part of the problem with platform work is that regulators have found it difficult to assess how much it fits into existing labour legislation.<sup>71</sup> This indicates that existing rules are simply not fit-for-purpose. **Lawmakers need an approach to the changing nature of work that is pre-emptive and 'future-proof'**, for as new forms of work emerge so too do the new challenges they bring. A pre-emptive approach is vital to ensuring that policy-makers begin to prepare institutions and services for the future of work now. The issues causing increased vulnerability for workers are numerous, yet governments have been reluctant to impose regulations for fear of potentially stymieing growth and innovation in a new branch of the economy, with Belgium one of the first and only countries in Europe to introduce legislation specifically on platforms.<sup>72</sup>

Opinions differ as to whether freelancing is the future of work and whether the majority of workers will eventually be self-employed as different types of platform work continue to grow.<sup>73</sup> Yet, it is certain that **non-standard work arrangements are increasing.**<sup>74</sup> Platform work is often the main issue considered in relation to the changing nature of work and young people, and yet, this is already the reality of work for many young people today. Reflections around young people and the future of work must go beyond this. The kind of platform work young people undertake today is likely to disappear in the future.<sup>75</sup> However, the gaps and challenges that young platform workers face have served to highlight the precariousness of young people's current position in the labour market. Without political intervention, these issues are unlikely to change as we look to the future of work.

71 European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, (2017). Protecting Workers in the Online Platform Economy: An overview of regulatory and policy developments in the EU.

72 CEPS, (2017). What is happening with platform workers' rights? Lessons from Belgium.

73 In particular, see: Youth EPP, (2018). The Future of Work in the Digital Era. YEPP Policy Perspective.; ETUC, (2018). Trade unions protecting self-employed workers.

74 EPSC, (2016). The Future of Work: Skills and Resilience for a World of Change. Issue 13.

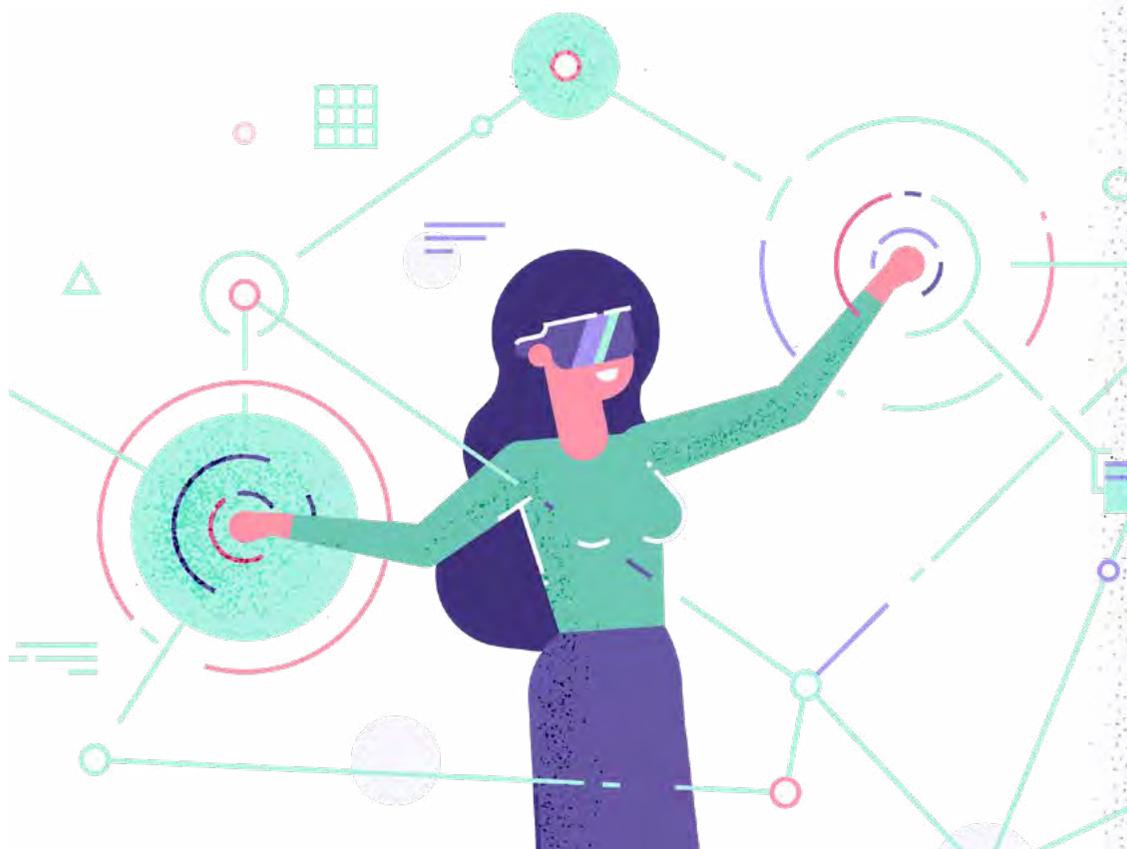
75 For example, drones and self-driving cars are likely to replace delivery or car riding services respectively.

2



# Challenges and opportunities for the future of work

Current labour market challenges for youth are widespread. As the megatrends transform our world, the changes that they bring will impact young people's social and economic rights and could further exacerbate the precarious situation of youth. The future of work could bring both challenges and opportunities, depending on how policy-makers and businesses respond to the megatrends that will influence it. For young people, these challenges and opportunities are likely to centre around five key themes: skills, access to social protection, workers' rights and wellbeing, just transition and environmental concerns, and equality.



## Skills for the future of work

As a result of digitalisation, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills are likely to be required in most professions in the future, from farming to banking. The European Commission estimates that 90% of jobs will require some level of digital skills.<sup>76</sup> However, the skills necessary for the working world of tomorrow have not been sufficiently taught in school. Approximately 44% of European citizens do not have basic digital skills, and there is a substantial shortage of ICT and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) workers despite high demand from employers.<sup>77</sup> If this trend continues, the EU could see around 756,000 unfilled jobs in the ICT sector alone by 2020.<sup>78</sup>

Part of the challenge for young people is that they are often assumed to be ‘digital natives’<sup>79</sup>, and thus very familiar with technology from an early age. Yet this assumption can be harmful as it fails to reflect the fact that not all young people have equal access to ICTs. Moreover, while some young people are well versed in the use of new technologies such as smartphones<sup>80</sup> and tablets, this does not mean that they are equipped with the skills that will be useful when engaging with technology in the

future workplace. This is a fact that young people recognise themselves. In a survey of 15 countries conducted by YouGov, **only 18% of young people said that they felt they had the necessary skills to prepare them for the digital economy.**<sup>81</sup> This percentage was lower among women. Only 14% of young women felt prepared, compared to 22% of young men. This highlights the need for specific investment in digital literacy programmes targeting girls, particularly given the low levels of women in STEM fields.

The impact of technological advancement on skills goes beyond the digital skills that may be required for the future of work. Neurologists are already witnessing a difference in the physical development of young people’s brains as a result of constant connectivity.<sup>82</sup> On the one hand, these changes have improved skills such as multi-tasking, complex reasoning and decision-making. However, **social and communications skills, including important emotional aptitudes like empathy, are diminishing.**<sup>83</sup> This is exemplified by a 2010 study from the University of Michigan which showed that university students in the USA displayed a 40% drop in

76 EPSR, (2017). Digital Skills in the EU labour market.

77 European Commission, (2018). The Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition. <<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/digital-skills-jobs-coalition>>

78 EPSR, (2017). Digital Skills in the EU labour market.

79 Term used to describe people brought up during the widespread adoption of digital technology.

80 Smartphones are the most widely used ICT among youth.

81 The 15 countries included in the survey were: UK, Turkey, Spain, Italy, Germany, India, Ireland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Greece, South Africa, New Zealand, Portugal, Romania and Egypt. YouGov, (2018). Vodafone Study: The State of iGen. <<https://yougov.co.uk/find-solutions/omnibus/international/vodafone-study-igen/>>

82 Zachos, Elaina, (2015). “Technology is changing the Millennial brain.” PublicSource. <<https://www.publicsource.org/technology-is-changing-the-millennial-brain/>>

83 Lin, Judy, (2008). Research shows that internet is rewiring our brains. UCLA Newsroom. <[http://newsroom.ucla.edu/stories/081015\\_gary-small-ibrain](http://newsroom.ucla.edu/stories/081015_gary-small-ibrain)>

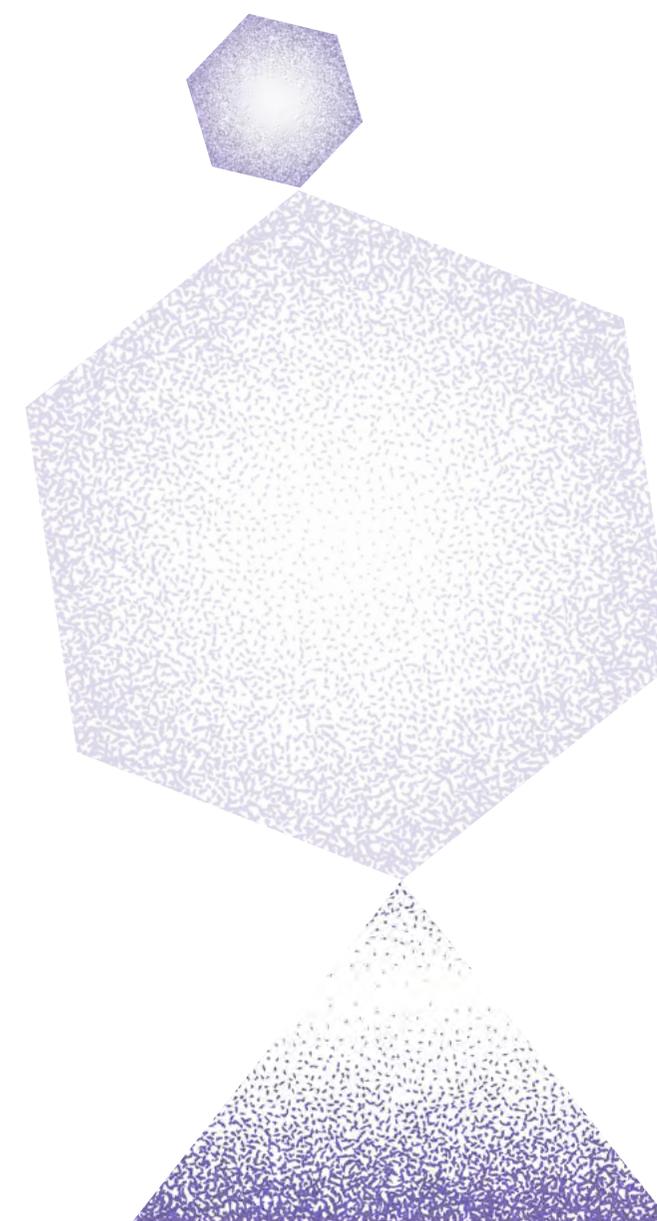
empathy compared to their peers in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>84</sup> The difference is presumed to be a result of technology, particularly the role of social media in our lives. These trends towards a lack of social skills and emotional intelligence are concerning, and present a challenge for the future of work and the place of technology in society.

Furthermore, **there is currently a shortage of professionals with skills related to climate adaptation, which are increasingly required, considering the impacts of climate change.** Most young people studying subjects such as civil engineering, urban planning and architecture are not being taught how to incorporate climate patterns into their work, despite the growing need that will persist in the future, both for the sustainability of their projects and to reduce harm to our planet.<sup>85</sup> Without a focus on these skills and their incorporation in building and production methods, jobs will continue to be at risk as a result of climate change, and production models will continue to be environmentally unsustainable.

Another challenge for the development of young people's skills is the previously stated disappearance of routine and entry-level jobs. These jobs are important as they are young people's first experience of working life, allowing them to become accustomed to the world of work. Learning how to work and applying skills in practice is very different from studying content or learning how to learn. **As routine and entry-level jobs face a higher risk of automation, young people may be stripped of the opportunity to learn and practice their skills in a work environment.**

84 Konrath, Sarah H., et al, (2010). Changes in Dispositional Empathy in American College Students Over time: A Meta-Analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp 180-198.

85 Ruggieri, Amanda, (2017). How climate change will transform business and the workforce. BBC. <<http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20170705-how-climate-change-could-transform-the-work-force>>





## Access to social protection

The European social model is in danger. As already explored, new forms of work have highlighted the deep gaps in access to social protection in Europe, but have also served to create new gaps. **The employment status of platform workers, for example, as well as the limited or unreliable hours of work, act as a barrier to accessing social protection.** Those engaged in forced self-employment, or carrying out subcontracted, on-demand or casual work are often defined as 'workers', not 'employees', reducing the types of benefits that they are able to access. According to the European Commission, there are only six EU Member States in which the self-employed are required to be insured in the same way as standard employees.<sup>86</sup> As the trend of bogus self-employment increases, this risks leaving many young people behind. These challenges are exacerbated by the fact that **young people are often not made aware of the implications of different work statuses and contracts.**

The ILO has estimated that 84% of people in Europe and Central Asia are covered by at least one social protection benefit, but this decreases to 43% for the unemployed.<sup>87</sup> In a future where work may become scarce or people may find their livelihoods affected by the impacts of climate change, more people who are unemployed or unable to work may need to access the benefits system.<sup>88</sup>

Moreover, **there are deep concerns about the sustainability of social security models as a result of Europe's ageing population.** Young people are likely to have to pay higher contributions to fund the increasing expenditure on pensioners. All the while, they may find that their own pension entitlements will be much lower due to a smaller working age population contributing to the system.<sup>89</sup> As noted by the ILO, these issues need to be addressed in order to ensure intergenerational fairness and maintain social cohesion in Europe.<sup>90</sup>

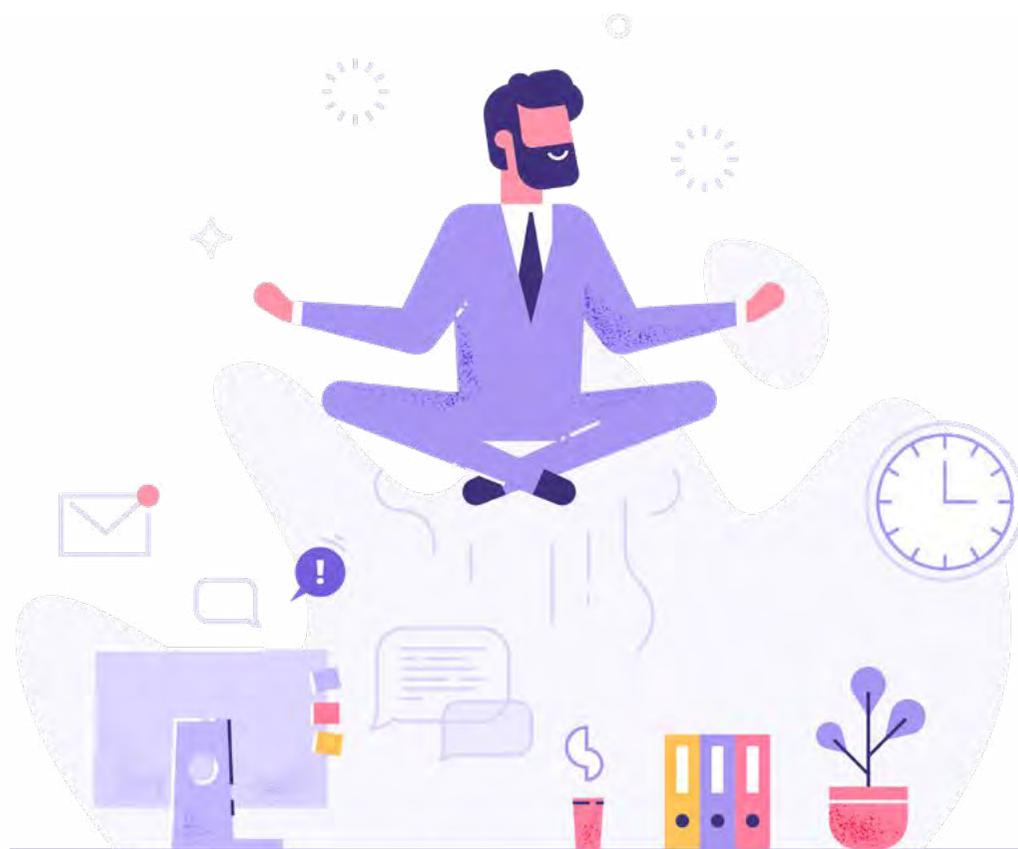
86 European Commission, (2017). Access to social protection for people working on non-standard contracts and as self-employed in Europe: a study of national policies.

87 ILO, (2017). World Social Protection Report 2017-19: Universal social protection to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

88 ILO, (2018). Greening with Jobs: World Employment and Social Outlook 2018.

89 European Commission (2017). Employment and Social Developments in Europe: Annual Review 2017.

90 ILO, (2017). World Social Protection Report 2017-19: Universal social protection to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.



# Workers' rights and wellbeing

## Work-life balance and wellbeing

Attitudes to work are changing. In the past years, there has been increasing interest from employers, workers, and governments alike to reduce the number of working hours a full-time worker should undertake each week. Work-life balance is a top priority for young people, who are increasingly seeking jobs that offer a good balance between their personal and professional lives.<sup>91</sup> Parents, for example, want to be able to fit their work around their family lives. Others want more leisure time to pursue other interests, hobbies or activities related to active citizenship outside of work.

Work-life balance is an issue that will gain increasing importance as a result of demographic changes. Young people will need to balance their working lives with caring for older family members as Europe's ageing population continues to grow. This will be a challenge considering that, according to the European Commission, **very few countries currently make the necessary arrangements to enable carers to remain in employment and preserve their work-life balance simultaneously.**<sup>92</sup> Inaction would be particularly problematic for gender equality in the future workplace as caring responsibilities are still most often borne by women, who risk being forced to give up work if arrangements are not flexible to care responsibilities.

Technology is one method being used to improve work-life balance and allow work to become more customisable. Because of improvements in ICTs, more people are able to work from home or define their own work hours. While this flexibility is allowing for more inclusivity in the world of work, it comes with challenges. **Increased use of technology has meant that the line between private and working lives is becoming increasingly blurred.** Constant connectivity has become so normalised that many young people do not make a distinction between their 'digital lives' and their 'offline lives'. The widespread use of electronic devices and the wide availability of the internet means that workers can be contactable at all hours, via emails or messaging applications. This has resulted in many workers continuing to be connected to work, even outside of work hours. A study from researchers at Lehigh University, Virginia Tech and Colorado State University has found after-work emailing is harming the emotional wellbeing of employees. The study found that working outside of scheduled work hours meant that employees could not sufficiently detach themselves from work. This left them tired, reduced their productivity and increased chronic stress.<sup>93</sup>

91 Comparibly, (2018). Millennials Rank Career Advancement Just as High as Work-Life Balance.

92 European Commission, (2016). Work-life balance measures for persons of working age with dependent relatives in Europe: A study of national policies.

93 Belkin, Liuba Y., et al, (2017). Exhausted, but Unable to Disconnect: The impact of Email-related Organizational Expectations on Work-family Balance and Identification. Academy of Management Proceedings, Vol. 2016, No. 1.

Barriers to balancing work and life have led to higher levels of absenteeism and burnout, highlighting the importance of addressing this issue.<sup>94</sup>

This links to the question of young people's mental health in the context of the future of work. Young people are already more susceptible to the impacts of this type of constant connectivity. The more time a young person spends on their phone, the more likely they are to report symptoms of depression.<sup>95</sup> Smartphone overuse has been associated with negative effects on mental health, sleep quality, life-satisfaction, and even academic performance for young people globally.<sup>96</sup> These negative impacts can appear in a significant way after just two or more hours a day on electronic devices.<sup>97</sup> This is a challenge for a future of work that is likely to have the use of technology and electronic devices at its core. The technology itself is not necessarily to blame, however. **It is factors like pressure from employers or competitiveness that make many workers feel obliged to be connected and available outside of their work hours.**

Employers try to use the new opportunities that digitalisation brings unilaterally for better flexibility, but workers often do not have the

digital sovereignty to choose working places, to choose between full- and part-time and to manage working time arrangements.

However, it is not just the digital tools of the work environment that can impact young people's wellbeing. Employment status and quality of work is also an important factor.

**The unpredictability of precarious work is a factor leading to stress and illness among young workers.** This mental harm is compounded by the fact that precarious workers often cannot afford to take time off, as sick days are unpaid. Losing a job or not being able to access the labour market has also been associated with development of mental health problems and increases in family violence.<sup>98</sup> Unemployment and underemployment can lead to further stress due to housing insecurity as landlords often seek employment references before renting their properties.<sup>99</sup>

94 Mental Health Europe, (2017). Position Paper on the Proposal for a Directive on Work-Life Balance for Parents and Carers.

95 Twenge, Jean M., (2017). Have smartphones destroyed a generation? The Atlantic.

96 The same results were found in numerous studies including: Thomee, Sara, et al, (2011). Mobile phone use and stress, sleep disturbances, and symptoms of depression among young adults - a prospective cohort study. BMC Public Health, Vol. 11.; Boumosleh, Jocelyne M. and Doris Jaalouk, (2017). Depression, anxiety, and smartphone addiction in university students - A cross sectional study. PLOS ONE, Vol. 12, No. 8.; Hardwood, Janet, et al, (2014). Constantly connected - the effects of smart-devices on mental health. Computers in Human Behaviour, Vol. 34, pp 267-272.

97 Twenge, Jean M., (2017). Have smartphones destroyed a generation? The Atlantic.

98 Moscone, F., et al, (2016). The impact of precarious employment on mental health: the case of Italy. Social Science & Medicine, Vol. 158, pp 86-95.

99 FEPS and TASC, (2017). Living with Uncertainty: Social Implications of Precarious Work.

## Right to privacy

The increased use of digital tools in the workplace will also mean that workers create more data. A question already arising is how that data is used by employers and whether they should have the right to own it.

Many aspects of business are already data-driven, and employers are beginning to apply that to how their employees work. Companies are introducing tools like phone applications or wearable devices that track the productivity of employees throughout the day, with some using the data to improve the way they work as a team. This data can also be used by individual employees to better understand how they spend their time on different activities throughout the day, which can help contribute to their own development, something particularly useful for young people.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, it can contribute to the health and safety of a workplace by collecting data on incidents or preventing access to hazardous areas if a worker is not wearing the appropriate protective equipment.

Yet these opportunities for business have the potential to come at the expense of workers' rights, as **there is a risk that the data collected could be used against employees.** For example, productivity data could be used to pressure employees to work faster, leading to greater stress and risk-taking, and creating an unhealthy work environment. Technologies that already exist and are being used in some workplaces allow employers to record employee

conversations throughout the work day, or use artificial intelligence to scan through their emails or to track their mood.<sup>101</sup> Employee surveillance of this type raises numerous questions.

**The key challenge here will not simply be how to regulate the collection of data in the workplace, but also the usage of that data, in a way that is respectful of every worker's right to privacy.**

100 The Economist, (2018). Smile, you're on camera: There will be little privacy in the workplace of the future.

101 See for example: Partnoy, Frank, (2018). What Your Boss Could Learn by Reading the Whole Company's Emails. The Atlantic. <<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/09/the-secrets-in-your-inbox/565745/>>

## Collective Bargaining

Over the last decade, the climate for trade unions and therefore collective bargaining has become very challenging. According to the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), **the number of young people under the age of 25 joining trade unions has dropped dramatically since 2004.**<sup>102</sup> This has severe consequences considering that **collective agency is one of the key determinants of ensuring quality employment for young people.**<sup>103</sup> Over the last decade, sweeping industrial change, anti-union legislation and hostility from employers, shifts in social attitudes and the rise of globalisation have all contributed to creating barriers for the work that trade unionists do.<sup>104</sup> Without the work of trade unions, young people are at greater risk of violations of their rights related to employment. It will also be important, however, for trade unions to reflect on changes that may be needed in their practices, outreach to youth and ability to adapt to the new context provided by the changing world of work, in order to remain key stakeholders on workers' rights.

Furthermore, new models of work are posing a new challenge for collective bargaining. **Newer forms of work often involve non-traditional, triangular relationships, that make it difficult to identify the employer, and consequently, the bargaining counterpart.**<sup>105</sup> There are further barriers to bargaining for workers' rights, linked to non-standard workers often being considered as freelancers, explicit exclusions from protection and the right to bargain collectively, and legislation that does not reflect new employment relationships. This is also complicated by the fact that individuals working for the same company may have different statuses, such as freelancer, student or employee.<sup>106</sup> The isolated, highly mobile and geographically boundless nature of the work carried out by platform and freelance workers means that those who do want to organise, struggle to do so.<sup>107</sup> Finally, high levels of turnover in digital platforms mean that it can be difficult to develop a structured approach to mobilisation.<sup>108</sup>

102 ETUC, (2014). Organising and Trade Union Recruitment: The Future of Trade Unions in Danger.

103 ETUC, (2018). Youth Friendliness Indicator: A critical assessment of the situation of young workers in European labour markets.

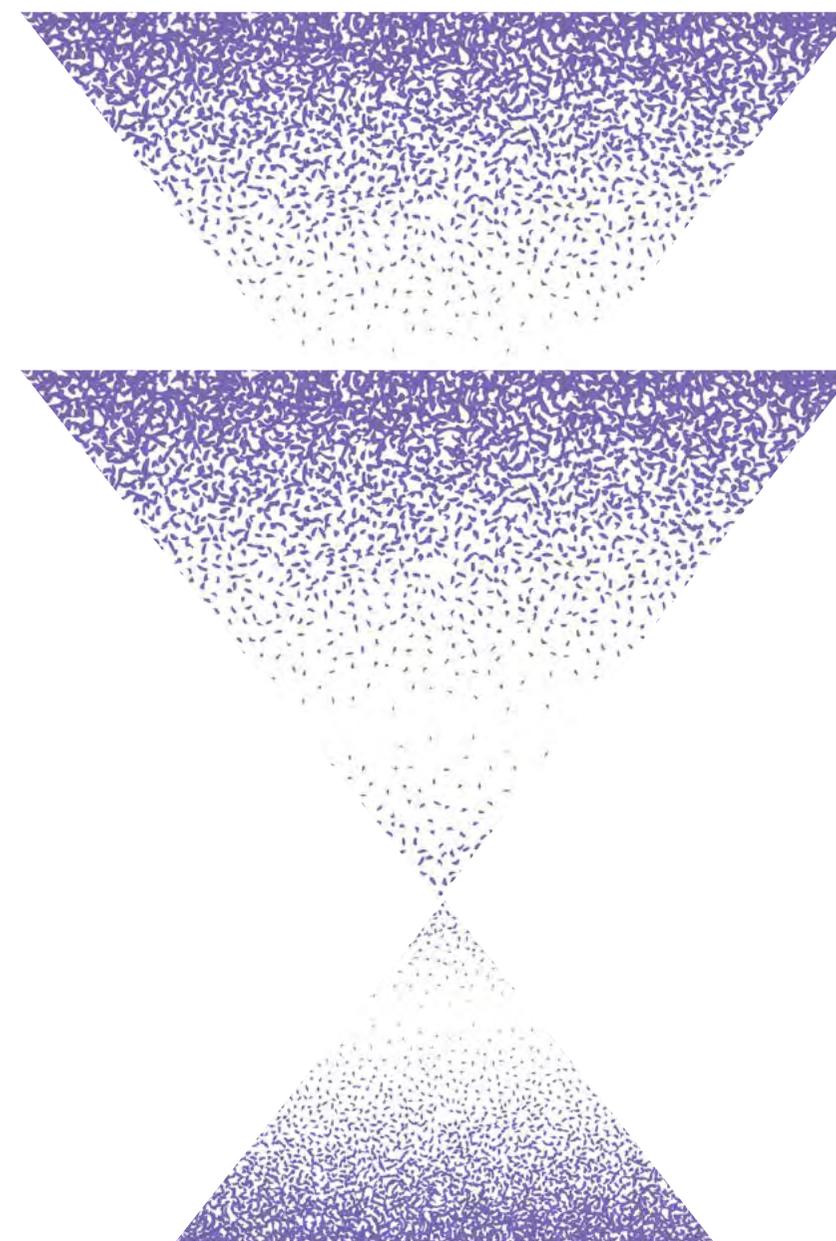
104 Kelly, Gavin, (2017). Trade unions - adapt to the modern world or die. Financial Times.

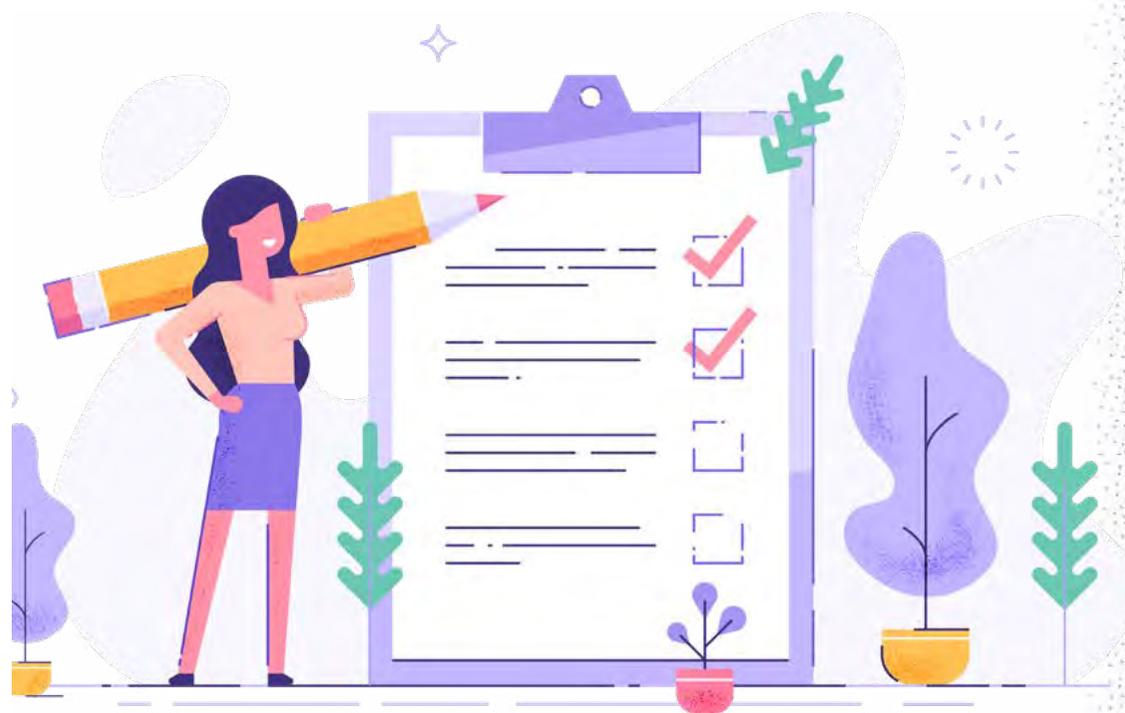
105 ILO, (2018). Organizing on-demand: Representation, voice, and collective bargaining in the gig economy.

106 Up and Pour La Solidarité, (2018). Plateformes Numériques: Mobilisation collective, innovation et responsabilité sociales.

107 ILO, (2018). Organizing on-demand: Representation, voice, and collective bargaining in the gig economy.

108 Up and Pour La Solidarité, (2018). Plateformes Numériques: Mobilisation collective, innovation et responsabilité sociales.





## Just transition and environmental concerns

Concerns about the environment and the impacts of climate change are likely to both shape and be a challenge for the future of work. **Current production and consumption practices within a linear economic model are leading to the over-exploitation of natural resources, the loss of biodiversity, and climate change.**

Globalisation has a role to play in environmental issues. Global value chains have a significant environmental impact. They require a large amount of environmental inputs such as natural resources, and produce large amounts of waste, spread across the chain into importing and exporting countries. The longer a product's value chain, and the bigger its trade volume, the greater the environmental impacts.<sup>109</sup>

Technology could play a positive role in reducing the ecological footprint of business. It is already replacing the need for some travel, for example, as a result of advancements in communications technology.<sup>110</sup> It could also be used to produce in a more ecologically efficient way. There are some challenges, however. The digital revolution, for example, could have negative effects on the environment as a result of large consumptions of power, particularly for the purpose of Big Data.<sup>111</sup>

**Approximately 1.2 billion jobs specifically depend on a stable and healthy environment.**

This includes work in industries such as agriculture, fisheries and forestry, but also tourism, pharmaceuticals and other industries that depend on natural environmental processes.<sup>112</sup>

As countries attempt to reach internationally agreed climate targets and reduce the impacts of climate change on their economies, there is likely to be a transition towards a greener economy. Over half of the global workforce will be affected by this transition, which on the one hand will result in the destruction of jobs in fields considered to be barriers to combating climate change<sup>113</sup>, and on the other could create many new jobs as the green economy emerges and a circular economy model is adopted.<sup>114</sup> The renewable energy industry is one that is already growing far more rapidly than expected. Many job opportunities are arising for youth in this area, as well as in energy efficiency or recycling.<sup>115</sup> According to the job posting website Indeed, in 2017, over half of all energy sector job postings in the UK were related to renewable energy.<sup>116</sup> These opportunities connect positively with young people's views on the need to tackle climate change. A Eurobarometer report on youth found that young people rated the protection of the environment and the fight against climate change as the second highest priority for the EU, after education and skills.<sup>117</sup> **More possibilities for employment in the green economy would allow young people to gain employment while contributing to society in ways they perceive as valuable.** The growth of the green economy could also be an opportunity to promote a 'just transition', where the approach to climate change would be to create quality jobs that help drive decarbonisation. This approach would include education, relocation, and retirement options for those most affected by the transformation to a low-carbon economy.<sup>118</sup>

109 The Conference Board of Canada, (2017). Environmental Aspects in Global Value Chain.

110 PwC, (2018). Workforce of the future: The competing forces shaping 2030.

111 ETUI, (2017). Two Futures and How to Reconcile Them.

112 ILO, (2018). Greening with Jobs: World Employment and Social Outlook 2018.

113 An estimated 6 million jobs would be lost by achieving the Paris Agreement's 2°C goal. ILO, (2018). Greening with Jobs: World Employment and Social Outlook 2018.

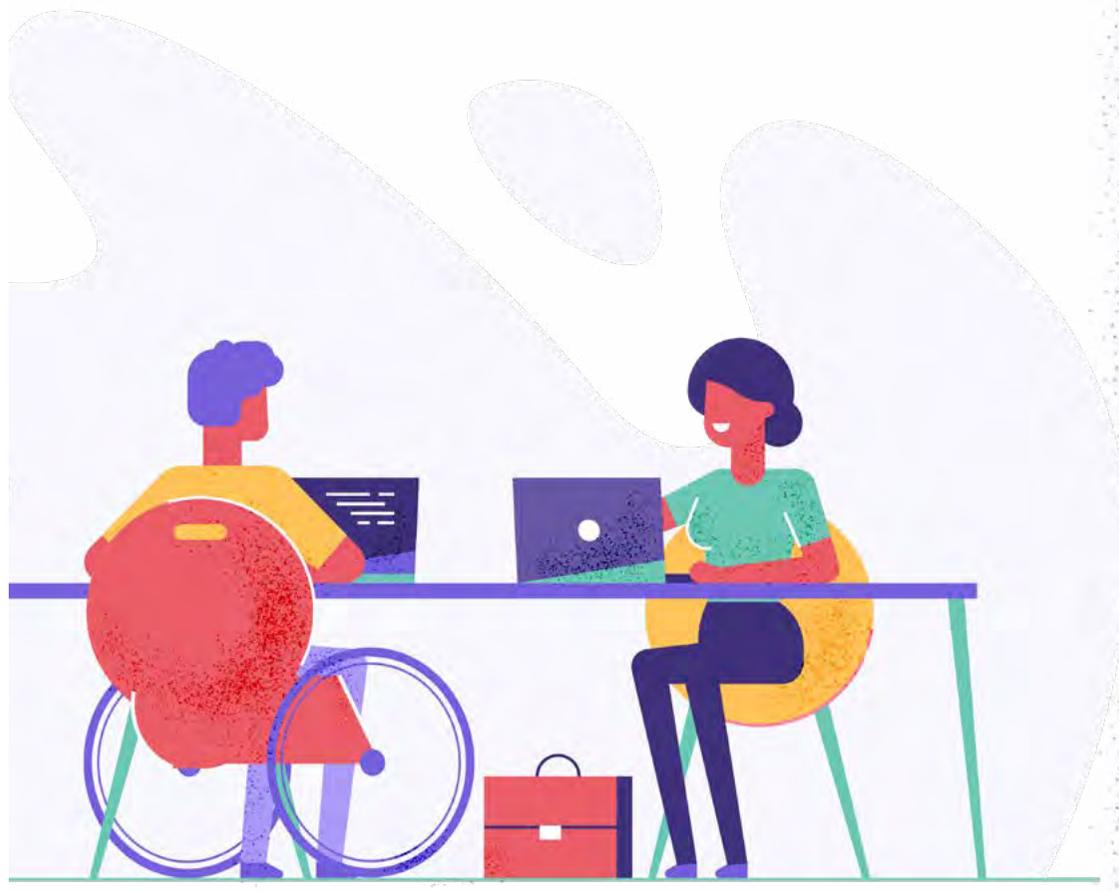
114 An estimated 24 million jobs would be created. ILO, (2018). Greening with Jobs: World Employment and Social Outlook 2018.

115 ILO, (2018). Greening with Jobs: World Employment and Social Outlook 2018.

116 Ruggeri, Amanda, (2017). How climate change will transform business and the workforce. BBC. <<http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20170705-how-climate-change-could-transform-the-work-force>>

117 European Commission, (2018). Flash Eurobarometer 455 Report: European Youth.

118 European Youth Forum, (2018). Policy Paper on Sustainable Development.



# Equality

The future of work and how governments and institutions choose to respond to it will have a dramatic impact on equality in Europe and globally. Although predictions vary, if the future of work is one where millions of jobs are lost to automation, then the unemployment rate could increase. **Without income through work or the right safety nets in place, more people, including youth, could fall into poverty.**

Different countries have varying capacities to adapt to the changes that the future will bring. Many of the world's richest countries are paving the way for investment in technology and innovation. They are therefore better equipped to benefit from the opportunities and respond to the risks that technology, innovation, and the impacts of globalisation, may bring.<sup>119</sup> In Europe, a large economic divide already exists between the poorer countries of the Southeast, and the richer countries of the Northwest. The significant 'digital divide'<sup>120</sup> between these regions in Europe<sup>121</sup> means that young people from Southern and Eastern Europe may not be learning the skills necessary to thrive in the globalised labour market, which could exacerbate the inequality between different European regions in future.

The potential impacts of the megatrends on inequality between countries is not just a concern within Europe. Countries in the Global South are at risk of being left behind, as low-skilled work that is offshored as part of global value chains could be lost to automation.<sup>122</sup> On the other hand, globalisation has the potential to foster the transferring of skills and new technology as developing countries participate in the global market.<sup>123</sup> One of the greatest challenges of the future will be ensuring that the world's poorest are included in the digital economy and can enjoy the benefits and opportunities that the megatrends can bring.

Within countries, access to ICT is unequal among different population groups, with implications for a future of work influenced by a trend of technological advancement. Unequal representation of different genders in high-growth sectors such as ICT risks further widening the inequality gap between men and women. According to the European Commission, only 2.9% of female graduates have a computing or related degree compared to 9.5% of men, and only 13.8% of those actually go on to work in ICT-related employment.<sup>124</sup> In the EU, young people with disabilities

119 The Digital Economy and Society Index 2018 shows the differences in the digital performance of EU Member States: <<https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/desi>>.

120 Defined as the inequality between those who have and who can access the skills needed to use the internet and electronic devices and those who do not for economic or social reasons.

121 In Denmark and Norway only 2% of the population have never used the internet. In Turkey and Bulgaria that amount is over 30%. Eurostat, (2016), "Internet use and frequency of use". <[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Archive:Internet\\_access\\_and\\_use\\_statistics\\_-\\_households\\_and\\_individual](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Archive:Internet_access_and_use_statistics_-_households_and_individual)>

122 De Backer, Koen and D. Flaig, (2017). The Future of global value chains: Business as usual or "a new normal"? OECD Science, Technology and Industry Policy Papers No. 41.

123 ILO, (2018). Issue Brief No. 10: Global value chains for an inclusive and sustainable future. Global Commission on the Future of Work.

124 European Commission, (2013). Digital Agenda: Bringing more women into EU digital sector would bring €9 billion annual GDP boost, EU study shows. <[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-13-905\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-905_en.htm)>

represent over half of those who have never used the internet. Additionally, those who lack access to ICT are disproportionately likely to be poor, rural, and/or female.<sup>125</sup> **Lack of access to use and benefit from technological advances risks compounding inequalities between young people across social and economic groups**, as certain groups are unable to access the digital economy or digital services.

**With the right policies in place, however, digitalisation provides an opportunity for increased equality and inclusivity**, especially by allowing people to work from home as a result of improvements in ICT. One such example is that of more young mothers being able to work as a result of flexible work arrangements that allow them to telecommute. Flexible work arrangements would benefit anyone with care responsibilities and allow them to be more equally shared by both young men and women. Flexible work arrangements could increase the ability of other young people to work too. A young person with a disability who has limited mobility, for example, has more employment options by being able to work from home. As technology further develops, this could further

be used to maximise the benefits of working at distance and create a much more inclusive labour force, where current barriers to employment are no longer applicable.

The impact of demographic changes on the future of work is also likely to have consequences for equality and young people. By 2050, older people will outnumber young people,<sup>126</sup> with potential labour market impacts for younger workers. From the European perspective, **the ageing population is likely to result in increased pressure on young people in the workforce to sustain social welfare systems**, on which a higher percentage of the population will rely, with potential impacts on social security contributions and income, and consequences for intergenerational equity.<sup>127</sup>

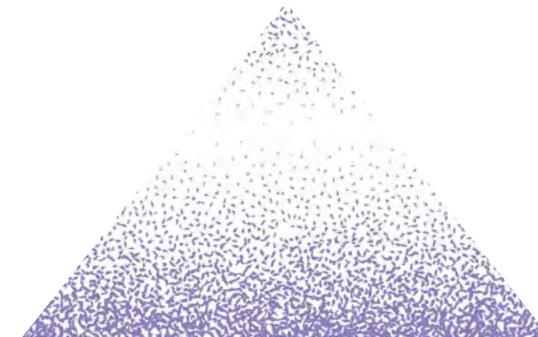
125 United Nations, General Assembly, (2017). A/HRC/35/9. Promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet: ways to bridge the gender digital divide from a human rights perspective: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

126 UN DESA, (2017). World Population Prospects: The 2017 revision, key findings and advance tables, in ILO, (2018). Issue Brief No. 2: Addressing the situation and aspirations of youth. Global Commission on the Future of Work.

127 ILO, (2018). Issue Brief No. 2: Addressing the situation and aspirations of youth. Global Commission on the Future of Work.

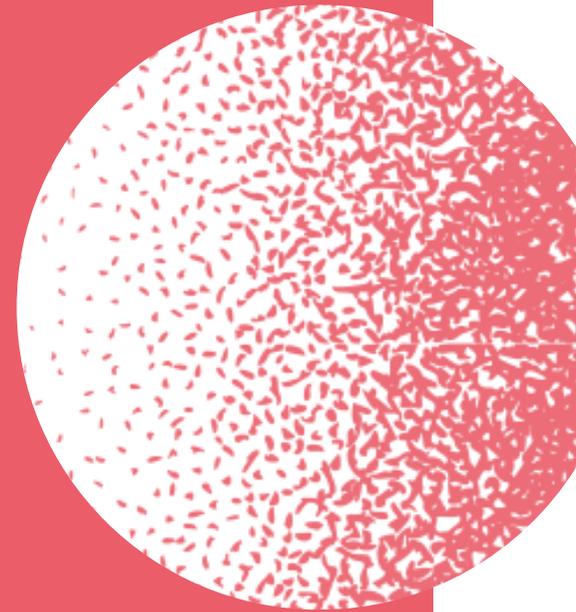
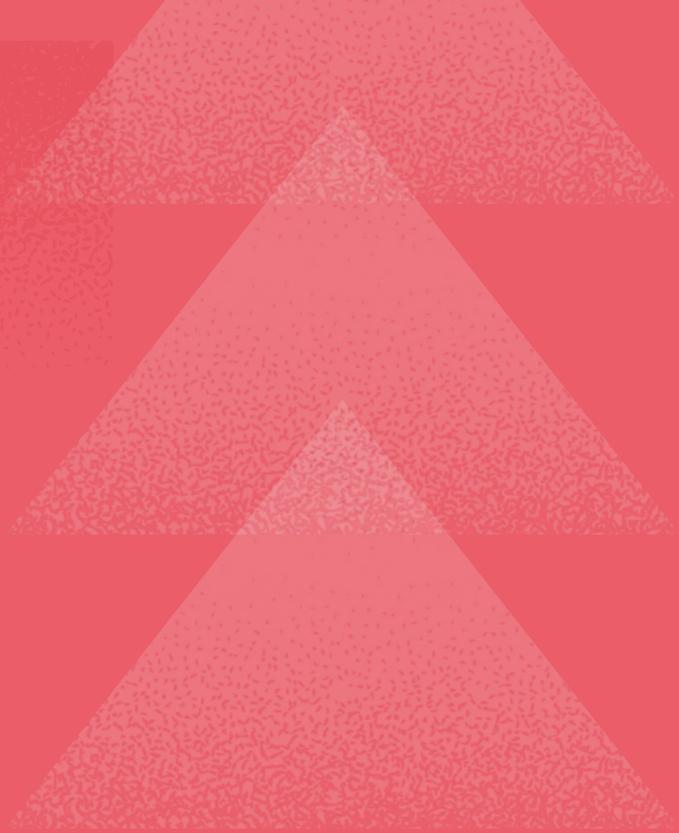
Climate change and environmental degradation, including as a result of continued globalisation and the impacts of energy usage from new technologies, also have the potential to increase inequality. **Climate change tends to have a stronger impact on the world's most vulnerable**, including groups such as climate change refugees, indigenous and tribal groups, people with disabilities and the poor, often negatively affecting their livelihoods and working conditions. In some cases, environmental degradation may also aggravate gender inequality.<sup>128</sup> Additionally, without a just transition to tackle the impacts of the loss of certain jobs due to climate change or the transition towards a low-carbon, circular economy, inequalities between certain groups will be further exacerbated.

Each of the four megatrends is set to have consequences for the future of work that will have an impact on equality and inclusion in societies. **Whether this impact can lead to greater equality, instead of exacerbating existing inequalities, will depend on policy interventions to drive the future of work in the right direction.**



128 ILO, (2018). Greening with Jobs: World Employment and Social Outlook 2018; ILO, (2017). Few countries combine an environmentally sustainable footprint with decent work. <[https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/future-of-work/trends/WCMS\\_549356/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/future-of-work/trends/WCMS_549356/lang--en/index.htm)>

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# Solutions for a youth-inclusive future of work

The challenges related to the future of work are plentiful, but they are not unavoidable. If action is taken now, governments and institutions can mitigate them and manage their impact on young people. Through interventions focused on skills, welfare systems, workers' rights, a youth-friendly labour market and investment in a new economy, policy-makers have the possibility to implement solutions for a youth-inclusive, rights-based future of work.





## Invest in young people's skills

The myth that young people are digital natives and thus have a comparative advantage in the future labour market must be challenged. **Investing in young people's skills is a vital step towards ensuring that young people can thrive in the future of work.** This means providing enough funds for the necessary resources, capacity and trained educators to teach young people the skills they need in areas such as STEM. Programmes should particularly seek to target those most likely to be affected by the digital divide, such as young women and girls, and young people with disabilities. ICT facilities should be an integral part of every young person's learning, to reduce the digital divide.

Funding should not only focus on programmes that support young people in learning appropriate skills, but also more generally on investment in education systems, to provide all young people with quality and inclusive education. This would serve to reduce gaps in educational attainment and promote social mobility to reduce inequality among youth<sup>129</sup>, as well as social cohesion. Education is a human right as recognised at both the European and international level<sup>130</sup> and all young people are

entitled to a quality education. Fulfilling this right should be a lifelong and lifewide learning process that focuses not just on employability, but pursues the objectives of personal and professional fulfilment, social inclusion and active citizenship.<sup>131</sup> While increased investment in STEM is positive, this should not come at the expense of cuts to other subjects deemed less relevant to the labour market. Education should continue to allow young people to develop social skills.

While most young people will require a certain level of digital skills in order to access the labour market of the future, these are not the only skills that will be in demand. According to one study, more than one fifth of GDP will be lost by the end of the century as a result of climate change.<sup>132</sup> For industries to weather the impacts that climate change will bring, they will need to prepare through climate mitigation and adaptation now. Sustainable, environmentally friendly consumption and production practices will be necessary components of reducing our ecological footprints and making our labour markets more sustainable. Curricula will need to incorporate lessons on green technical

129 PwC, (2017). The \$1.2 trillion prize from empowering young workers to succeed in an age of automation. Young Workers Index, October 2017.

130 Article 14 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights; Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; Article 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

131 For more see: European Youth Forum, (2013). Policy Paper on Quality Education.

132 Burke, Marshall, et al, (2015). Global Non-linear Effect of Temperature on Economic Production. Vol. 527, pp 235–239.

solutions and environmental awareness. This would not only equip young people to manage some of the challenges of the future but would also allow youth to benefit from the opportunities emerging from the green economy and circular economy.

Another opportunity for young people is in the care industry, where demand for workers is likely to grow as a result of the ageing population. Governments should invest in the training of care workers, doctors and other health workers specialising in elderly care, with the dual benefit of investing in young people's skills in a sector where jobs are likely to increase and helping to curtail shortages that could negatively impact on older people's access to care.

Additional **investment is also needed in skills that cannot be easily learned by machines** and would therefore continue to be used by humans in jobs or tasks at low risk of automation. These skills include creativity, critical thinking, interpersonal skills, management, and complex problem solving.<sup>133</sup> Given that these are the skills that will bring humans added value over robots and machines, it is vital that they are developed in young people, allowing them to be both empowered workers and empowered citizens. For this, a lifelong approach to skills is needed to ensure that young people are able to access training for the skills of tomorrow, which may vary from those of today, as well as for skills such as adaptability, which will provide young people

with the capacity to more easily navigate future changes in the labour market.

Formal education is not the only way to invest in young people's futures. Using non-formal learning methods, youth organisations provide education that caters to individual needs. In this way, they are able both to reach out to those young people that formal education providers do not reach, and complement formal education by providing a different set of skills and competences. Non-formal education (NFE) providers are key to furthering inclusive education systems and youth organisations have an important role to play to that end. NFE has been shown to be a successful tool to engage more diverse and larger groups of young people, including marginalised groups and those in NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) situations.<sup>134</sup> A study from the European Youth Forum showed that there is a positive match between the skills demanded by employers and those developed through youth organisations.<sup>135</sup> This is particularly the case for the types of soft skills where humans have a comparative advantage over new technologies. NFE is a core avenue for lifelong and lifewide learning of skills. As such, **NFE providers need to be part of the solution when it comes to the development of skills and competences, including reskilling.**

Apprenticeships and vocational training can also be great opportunities to help young workers acquire new skills for the changing world of work and to develop their competences, while also increasing their employability. Despite the huge potential and educational value of apprenticeships, however, quality is often lacking and the learning value is not prioritised. In some cases, young people's rights are not respected as they should be. To change social perceptions of apprenticeships and vocational education and to increase their value, there is a need to invest in improving the quality of apprenticeships. Employers should also offer quality vocational schemes to provide the space for upskilling and reskilling.

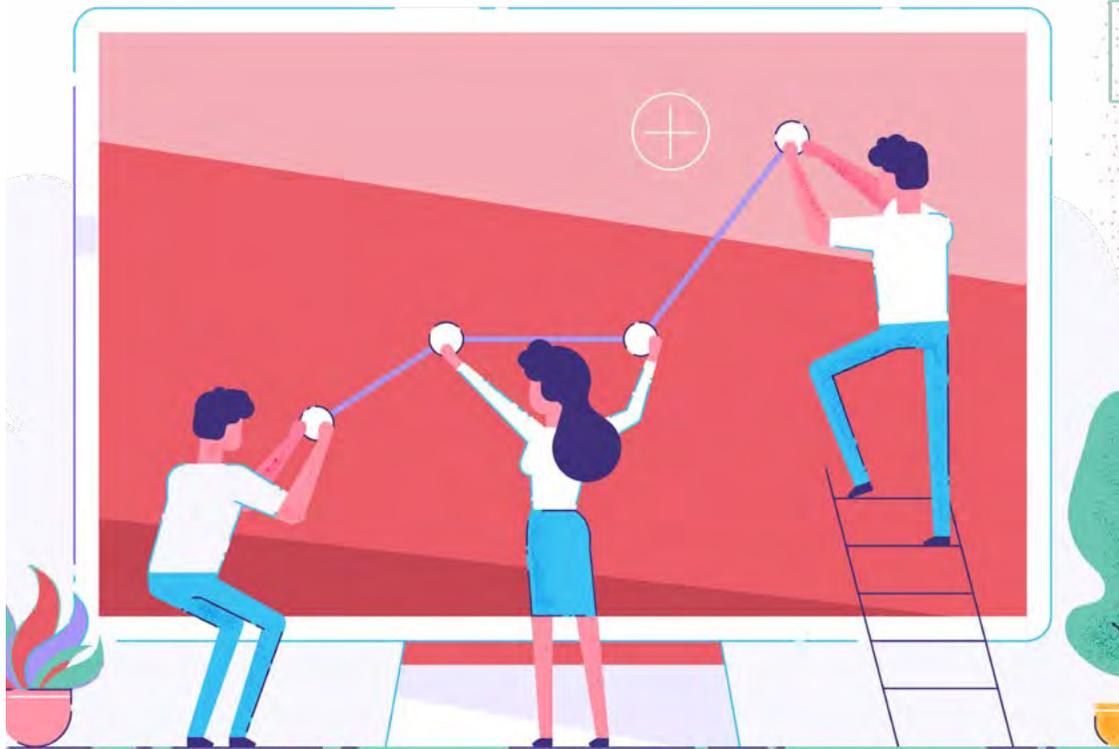
Finally, there must be investment in research to understand what skills will be needed in the longer term. Defining **education curricula should not be short-termist**, looking solely at the skills shortages or challenges of today. Instead, **policy-makers must explore what skills will be needed in the coming decades** to ensure that students are not developing skills that become obsolete by the time their compulsory education comes to an end. As such, skills development will require a lifecycle approach that recognises the importance of lifelong learning. Training programmes will need to become available and accessible so that workers who wish to develop their skills can do so as technology itself progresses. Investing in lifelong learning programmes can help to ensure that people of all ages and from all backgrounds, including young people, continue to develop relevant skills. To that end, in countries where such schemes are not already in place, governments should seek to establish paid educational leave during which workers can attend training programmes during working hours and at no personal cost, as set out in the ILO Paid Educational Leave Convention.<sup>136</sup>

133 World Economic Forum, (2016). The Future of Jobs: Employment, Skills and Workforce Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Global Challenge Insight Report.

134 European Youth Forum, (2018). Position on Inclusive Education.

135 European Youth Forum, (2012). Study on the Impact of Non-Formal Education in Youth Organisations on Young People's Employability.

136 ILO, (1974). Paid Educational Leave Convention, 1974. No. 140. <[https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_ILO\\_CODE:C140](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C140)>



## Reform welfare systems and labour legislation

The need for income security is growing as we face an uncertain future of work. To provide that security, reforms to social protection and welfare systems, as well as labour legislation, are necessary.

As explored earlier in this report, the rise in non-standard forms of work has highlighted the need for labour legislation to be adapted to **adequately regulate new forms of work and the realities of the work that young people do, as well as to be made more adaptable, to regulate further new forms of work more quickly as these develop.** Clearer legal definitions of terms like ‘worker’, ‘employee’, and ‘employer’, which accurately reflect employment relationships in new forms of work, must be developed so that employers’ obligations to non-standard workers are both fair and legally binding. These definitions may need to continue to be developed as work continues to change over time.

As recognised by the ILO, **access to social protection benefits could be improved by allowing greater flexibility when it comes to pauses in work.** These are a reality for the many young people who find themselves caught in temporary work, interrupting contributions for a period of time. Reforms to welfare systems must take this into account. This could be done by lowering the legal thresholds for the minimum duration of employment required before a person is eligible to receive social protection benefits, and by extending the period in which contributions to social insurance are considered.<sup>137</sup>

Considering demographic changes, policy-makers should act to ensure intergenerational equity by developing more sustainable pension systems. These should provide an adequate amount for older people to live with dignity, without overburdening young people.<sup>138</sup> **Contributory systems should be better adapted to the reality of people’s employment trajectories.** Young people currently find themselves unable to contribute to pension schemes until later in life as a result of new work pathways and the changing nature of work.<sup>139</sup> To help reduce their risk of poverty in old age, policy-makers should ensure that temporary work, internships and apprenticeships are counted as working time giving rise to pension entitlements.

To ensure that inequality does not increase in the future, improving coverage for young people who work is only the beginning. Social policies and welfare systems must be more forward-looking. If the future is one in which the number of jobs available has decreased, the types of jobs available have shifted away from those more typically held by young people today, or many people’s skills become obsolete, **there will be a need to provide better coverage for those who are not in employment. Similarly, those who cannot work, due to disability for example, must be provided with adequate means to live in dignity.** The welfare model that exists in many European countries today, based on individual contributions, may no longer be viable in the future. A better system would need to recognise

<sup>137</sup> ILO, (2017). Strengthening social protection for the future of work.

<sup>138</sup> Bruegel, (2015). The Growing Intergenerational Divide in Europe. Bruegel Policy Contribution Issue 2015/17.

<sup>139</sup> European Youth Forum, (2016). Excluding Youth: A Threat to Our Future.

unpaid work as a form of contribution. The ILO notes that policies to adjust the recognition of worker contributions could be complemented by measures to recognise care work as contribution periods counting towards social security entitlements.<sup>140</sup> This would facilitate women's access to social security benefits and reduce gender inequalities in welfare systems, recognising care work as a legitimate form of work and ensuring that all individuals are fairly compensated for all types of work.

For a fair future of work, welfare reform cannot be delayed. Social protection has been recognised as crucial to combating inequality,<sup>141</sup> making adequate and up-to-date systems all the more vital. In this context, basic income schemes are a possible solution that could be explored. Universal basic income (UBI), a form of periodic unconditional income, is one example that has garnered much attention, with trials taking place across the world, including in European countries like Finland and the Netherlands.<sup>142</sup> The defining feature of UBI is that it is granted universally to all members of a community, regardless of their existing circumstances. In a future of work where full-time paid work may no longer be the norm,

**UBI could serve to disconnect income from work, recognising it as a right for all.**

With the right policy responses and reflections in society, **this could be harnessed to allow for greater value to be placed on contributions to society beyond work.** It would be important, however, for such systems to be considered in the light of existing social protection provisions and not to jeopardise existing access to social rights. This is particularly important given that UBI has received some opposition both for its potential to replace existing benefits and its potential to be too expensive.

In this context, policy-makers could consider whether there is potential to fund UBI or other existing and future forms of welfare payments partly through the digital revolution that is causing the nature and role of work in society to change so dramatically. Adequate taxation of robots, other forms of technology and capital could serve to fund reformed welfare systems and contribute to a fairer society. Improving taxation on unsustainable consumption and production practices, such as through carbon taxes, and phasing out government subsidies on fossil fuels could equally contribute to funding welfare reforms<sup>143</sup>. This highlights the importance of tax justice to the future of social security systems.

140 ILO, (2017). Strengthening social protection for the future of work.

141 ILO, (2017). World Social Protection Report 2017-2019: Universal social protection to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

142 Information on the trials can be found at: <<https://www.kela.fi/web/en/experimental-study-on-a-universal-basic-income>> (Finland); <<https://www.utrecht.nl/werk-en-inkomen/weten-wat-werkt/>> (Netherlands, in Dutch).

143 European Youth Forum, (2018). Position on the Comprehensive Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Europe.; European Youth Forum, (2015). Resolution on Climate Matters: The Vision of European Youth for COP21.



## Safeguard workers' rights and wellbeing

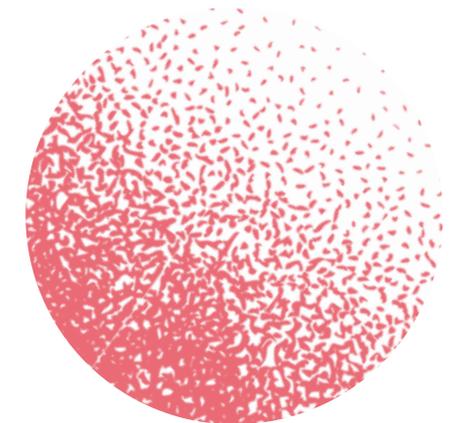
### Work-life balance and wellbeing

To secure work-life balance for future workers, better and more affordable care services are essential. The future should be one where young women have the same opportunity to participate in the labour market as young men. Governments and employers should take active steps to allow more flexibility in terms of work hours, leave days, and the ability to work from home to accommodate parents, carers and others with responsibilities outside the workplace. **Measures should also be taken to invest in universal, free childcare services and long-term care systems for older people.** Parental leave must be an individual right of each parent and should be distributed in such a way as to provide incentive for each parent to make use of it. Additionally, more measures should be introduced to extend carer's leave.<sup>144</sup>

The use of technology to provide certain groups, such as people with disabilities, that are traditionally marginalised from the labour market with increased opportunities to work should be further encouraged and explored. However, endeavours involving workers' increased use of ICT in spaces outside traditional workplaces should be carefully monitored to support a healthy work-life balance. **France, for example, has introduced legislation that protects the 'right to disconnect'.** This law requires firms with more than 50 employees to enforce a policy of no emailing after 18:00.<sup>145</sup>

**Other countries may need to look at similar legislative initiatives to extend the right to work-life balance in their context.**

Employers have a role to play too, especially where legislation is missing, to promote a work culture that allows employees adequate time to 'switch off' from work and that does not pressure them to be contactable outside of work hours. Work-life balance is not just for parents and carers; all workers must be entitled to it. This would not only serve to ease the harm to mental and physical health that technology can cause, but would also ensure that young people have the time and the opportunity to pursue interests outside of work, such as volunteering and personal projects, in line with the changing role and value of work in society.



<sup>144</sup> European Youth Forum, (2016). Resolution on Youth Autonomy and Inclusion.

<sup>145</sup> Loi n° 2016-1088 du 8 août 2016 relative au travail, à la modernisation du dialogue social et à la sécurisation des parcours professionnels (1) - Article 55: <[https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/loi/2016/8/8/ETSX1604461L/loi/article\\_55](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/loi/2016/8/8/ETSX1604461L/loi/article_55)>

## Right to privacy

To respect workers' right to privacy, policy-makers have a role to play in ensuring that employers' practices remain ethical. The EU has a framework for regulating data, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which came into effect in 2018. The purpose of the GDPR is to restrict the availability of data depending on how it is being used. It is a step in the right direction when it comes to shifting the way we handle data ownership, but there is still more to be done as the economy, labour market and workplace become more digital. Terms and conditions clauses for all websites, digital tools, and programmes used in the workplace should always be clear for all young workers. This would serve to make workers conscious of the kinds of data they are creating at work and how they can or will be used.

**Governments will need to take a more proactive approach in developing legislation that covers new forms of monitoring and surveillance,** from how information is collected to how it is used, as this may not fit into existing labour legislation. When it comes to productivity tracking and privacy, one solution could be for companies to only be able to access team data, while individual data would only be accessible to the employees themselves. What is clear is that **any attempts to track worker productivity must always respect the worker's right to privacy.**

Additionally, data usage policies at company level should always be negotiated with workers' representatives.

## Collective bargaining

Social partners should remain a key stakeholder for attempts to legislate in relation to emerging issues brought about by changing forms of work now and in future. **All workers must be able to access and exercise their right to have their interests represented: to organise and mobilise themselves or to join trade unions.** For this to happen, competition rules which limit the ability of the solo self-employed to engage in collective bargaining need to change.<sup>146</sup> New forms of work also require new approaches. Employers hiring those in bogus self-employment could sign collective agreements with trade unions, allowing workers to enjoy the same working conditions as standard workers. One such example is that of the agreement between Danish online platform, Hilfr, which provides cleaning services, and 3F, Denmark's largest trade union. The first of its kind, this agreement has allowed workers to access pensions, holiday pay, collective agreement wages and more, as the trade union continues to negotiate on the workers' behalf.<sup>147</sup>

Independent of their employment status, all workers should have the opportunity and support to organise and mobilise, both with or without the support of existing trade unions, including through works councils.<sup>148</sup> Companies should allow and foster democratic structures among workers, allowing them to be represented by people of their choosing in the negotiation of agreements and anticipation of changes. Ultimately however, **formalising new forms of employment relationships would also be a vital step towards ensuring the right to collective bargaining and would serve to protect the space for collective action** as the 'employer' with whom workers and their union representatives must negotiate would be clearly defined by law.

<sup>146</sup> European Parliament, (2017). The Social Protection of Workers in the Platform Economy.

<sup>147</sup> LO, (2018). "Danish Labour News April 2018." <<https://lo.dk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/dln-april2018.pdf>>

<sup>148</sup> One such example is that of Foodora riders in Cologne working with the NGG trade union. More information at: Up and Pour La Solidarité, (2018). Plateformes Numériques: Mobilisation collective, innovation et responsabilité sociales.



## Create a youth-friendly labour market

Today's high levels of youth unemployment illustrate that current labour market policies have failed to be inclusive of youth. In the aftermath of the economic crisis, the opportunities, working conditions and quality of work that young people can access have been allowed to decrease to unacceptable standards. Preparations for the future of work provide the opportunity to ensure that the future labour market is one that is more inclusive of youth. This will require conscious steps from policy-makers. Public employment services (PES) must play a role. Countries where public administration systems are strongest have the lowest youth unemployment rates<sup>149</sup>.

**Investing in building the capacity of PES is fundamental to provide better support to young people entering or navigating the labour market.**

As recognised by PwC, there is a need to invest in career advice services for young people, especially the disadvantaged, to enable them to make informed decisions about their future career paths. This view is supported by young people. A 2018 YouGov study found that a staggering 67% of the 18-24 year-olds interviewed had received insufficient or no career advice throughout their education or since completing their studies. Of those who did receive advice during their studies, nearly one in four said the advice was outdated and irrelevant to their labour market realities.<sup>150</sup>

PES should provide up-to-date, quality retraining and individualised career advice for young people to help them prepare for the world of work. This support should shift away from the 'any job is better than no job' attitude that currently prevails when it comes to youth unemployment. Instead, PES should be focused on providing youth with the kind of support that guarantees sustainable, quality employment and social inclusion. Automation can support in allowing PES to be able to do this work. Automating routine administrative tasks in public services, for example, could help make staff time available to provide individual attention to young people and other job seekers. This approach would lead to more people being able to find employment or to return to work. Services provided to young people should be tailored to different subgroups and accessible through different channels, both digitally and in person.

One of the key issues highlighted by the experience of non-standard workers in the current labour market is young people's lack of awareness about different types of employment contracts and the subsequent implications for accessing benefits. When young people are not equipped with the right knowledge about what they are signing up for, they can easily be exploited or inadvertently end up without a good safety net.

149 European Commission, (2017). European Semester Thematic Factsheet: Youth Employment.

150 YouGov, (2018). Vodafone Study: The State of iGen. <<https://yougov.co.uk/find-solutions/omnibus/international/vodafone-study-igen/>>

**The creation and dissemination of free, youth-friendly, accessible information for all young Europeans on the different employment statuses and the implications of these in different countries is a critical step towards empowering young people** to make informed choices about their status and its impact on social security contributions. This information should clearly outline what each status will mean for a young person's ability to access unemployment benefits and contributory statutory pension schemes in future.

**Quality employment, education and training opportunities must form the basis of governments' strategies towards young people.** Adopting minimum quality standards for internships and apprenticeships<sup>151</sup>, such as ensuring fair remuneration, would ensure that young people can access quality in-work training experiences to develop their skills. Moreover, legal measures are needed to transition away from precariousness and to make new forms of work more formalised. Such measures would include ensuring the equal treatment of non-standard workers, better regulation on working time, and restricting employers' ability to engage workers in non-standard forms of work.<sup>152</sup> Additionally, zero-hour contracts should be banned. This would secure a future of work for young people that is no longer defined by precarity but rather by quality employment, providing a fair salary, economic security, and a satisfactory working

environment.<sup>153</sup> This would have further added value for young people's wellbeing, considering the impacts of precariousness on mental and physical health.

Investing in job creation is also necessary. There is much focus on investment in entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills as the solution to address the high levels of youth unemployment across Europe today. Investing in those who want to be entrepreneurs is essential, but self-employment should primarily allow the expression of an entrepreneurial spirit and not be the consequence of a rise in insecure work and a lack of alternative employment choices. The solution to youth unemployment should not be that young people create jobs for themselves because they have no alternatives. Thus, **investment in entry-level job creation and in sectors which are sustainable in terms of quality for the individual, society, and the environment, is vital.** Governments and employers must be encouraged to invest in inexperienced young workers.

In a future where jobs may be scarce and where attitudes towards work-life balance are changing, the reorganisation of work will also need to be explored. One idea increasingly gaining momentum is that of reducing the working week to four days, but with wages and working conditions remaining constant. Another possibility is moving from full-time work to job shares where, for example, instead of one

individual working 40 hours a week, two people would work 20 hours each. In such examples, foregone wages could be compensated via a UBI scheme. Research shows that job sharing is an effective means of employee retention, particularly as workers crave more flexibility.<sup>154</sup> The concept could be particularly important for the creation of a more equal and diverse work environment. Job sharing could promote the retention of women and those unable to work full-time, such as young people with disabilities, by allowing them to continue to advance their careers while enjoying better balance between work and private time.

Finally, governments must involve young people in policy-making and legislative processes. Future prospects for youth cannot be improved without involving young people in decision-making in an effort to ensure that policies and legislation effectively represent their interests, guarantee their rights and target their needs. Youth organisations can play a key role in reaching out to young people, particularly those most vulnerable, and representing the views of a cross-section of young people through their democratic structures. They can therefore help to make the implementation of future economic and social policies, welfare and labour legislation reform, more successful and beneficial for young people. **Youth organisations and young people must be involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of**

**programmes and policies for the future of work.**<sup>155</sup> They are best placed to evaluate what measures are needed and which initiatives work best. To that end, continued investment in youth organisations must be prioritised, and governments and institutions should ensure meaningful space for dialogue and exchange with youth.

151 For more, see: European Youth Forum, (2011). European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships.

152 ILO, (2016). Non-Standard Employment Around the World: Understanding Challenges, Shaping Prospects.

153 This criteria for quality employment is defined by the OECD: <<http://www.oecd.org/employment/job-quality.htm>>

154 The Job Share Project, (2011). Job Sharing at Senior Level: Making it Work.

155 For more information on how youth organisations and young people can engage in assessing youth policy, see: European Youth Forum, (2017). A Toolkit on Quality Standards for Youth Policy.



## Invest in a new economy

The future of work will bring about many changes, but ultimately the inequalities that exist today are likely to be replicated if there is not a conscious effort to change the current economic system and business models. Many of the economic, social, and environmental challenges we face today are a direct result of this system, rooted in the maximisation of short-term profit. **An unequal world is not sustainable if we want to create a fair future of work and a better future for all.**

Other business models are possible, based on new models for cooperation focusing on the common good. Alternative forms of organisation that support the values of human and planetary wellbeing, such as the solidarity economy, are on the rise.<sup>156</sup> The cooperative movement is one example.<sup>157</sup> As a general rule, cooperatives aim to serve the needs of a wider community as well as those of their members, rather than maximise profit. Cooperatives are well placed to help tackle many of the issues that the future of work brings. First, they are resilient to shocks, an important trait when faced with an uncertain future.<sup>158</sup> Second, they are invaluable places of learning for young people. Their democratic structure means

that young people are able to gain a variety of skills in a hands-on way. **Models of business and organisation based on democracy, participation and empowerment can help equip young people with the leadership skills that are crucial for both their career development and their active citizenship.** They can also support the transition to an economy that works for everyone.

Cooperatives can allow young people to integrate into the labour market, offering decent employment that many cannot access elsewhere. **The formation of cooperatives among freelancers and the self-employed allows young people in these forms of work to access social protection.**<sup>159</sup> Such cooperatives have already begun to address some of the challenges of new forms of work. They have assisted in formalising informal work for many platform workers by providing greater safety nets, as well as a space to organise with other workers, thereby increasing negotiation power.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>156</sup> European Youth Forum, (2018). Policy Paper on Sustainable Development

<sup>157</sup> According to the definition of the International Co-operative Alliance, a cooperative is an autonomous group of people voluntarily coming together to meet their common economic, social, and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratic enterprise.

<sup>158</sup> ILO (2013). Resilience in a downturn: The power of financial cooperatives.

<sup>159</sup> CICOPA, (2018). Global Study on Youth Cooperative Entrepreneurship.

<sup>160</sup> ILO, (2016). Cooperation in a changing world of work: Exploring the role of cooperatives in the future of work. Cooperatives and the World of Work, No. 6.

Greater efforts are needed to educate young people about alternative business models and alternative forms of organisation, such as cooperatives and the solidarity economy. Young people should be encouraged to explore these as legitimate alternatives to the traditional business model. Governments and institutions should ensure supportive legal frameworks as well as access to adequate financing to allow young people to start such enterprises.

**New and innovative ways of organising the economy, which transform the relationship between producers and consumers, should be fostered and supported.**

Investing in a new economy and alternative business models that are more aligned with human and planetary wellbeing would support both a youth-inclusive future of work and a more sustainable future for everyone.

## CONCLUSION

The prevailing view of the future of work is as a force beyond our control. This approach must not continue. We must stop wondering what the future of the labour market might look like. Instead the focus should be on what we **want** the future of work to look like and how to make this a reality, building on the opportunities that the megatrends can provide. It is time to design a new labour market, as well as a new place for work in our society, that works for everyone.

The emergence of platform work is viewed as an economic success and the result of innovation. Yet, with the many challenges it brings for young people, it is also a symptom of growing precarity and inequality.<sup>161</sup> Policy-makers have focused on economic growth and adopted an 'any job is better than no job' approach as the solution to youth unemployment and rising inequality. In the future of work, economic growth should not come at the expense of workers, young people and their rights.

Across Europe, young people continue to be at high risk of poverty and social exclusion. Without the right policy responses, the future of work is likely to exacerbate young people's precarious situation in the labour market and in society. Young people need a future of work that offers better opportunities, not further inequality.

Other models that can fulfill our economic and social needs more sustainably are possible.

European governments and institutions have the power to shape our labour markets and our welfare systems into arenas where workers are protected and rights are met for all, whether in work or not, regardless of the megatrends that will impact the future of work. Policy-makers must leverage this power, harnessing the potential opportunities of the megatrends and working to overcome the challenges they bring, to ensure that no one is left behind. They must carefully balance the impacts of these trends, by managing the pace of change to allow workers and employers the time to adapt in a way that most benefits society, as well as legislating for the future, thereby facilitating the social and economic inclusion of all members of society. Our economy must place the needs of people and planet above profit. That is the future of work that young people want.

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