



Ensure social protection of the labour force, including of workers engaged in non-standard forms of employment

Is important to offer social protection to all currently active population, including for persons engaged in non-standard forms of employment, who might have been displaced from work due to adoption of automation technology or experienced a job transformation that led to decreased wage/salary. Helping these groups absorb financial shocks and cope with crises assures their well-being and that of their families, prevents poverty, supports reintegration on the labour market, ensures access to health care and other essential services. At times, it is argued that social protection measures disincentivise work. Thus, they should be carefully designed, implemented, monitored, and evaluated.

Facilitate the process of determining employment status

Traditionally, it is the responsibility of an individual person to prove their employment status¹. With the adoption of automation technologies that might lead to changes in employment relations between employers and employees and with the emergence of platform work, there is a need for more clarity and flexibility in determining this status². Specifically, definitions, rules, regulations on rights and responsibilities surrounding employment and employment status should be made more explicit, and individuals must be aware of which employment status they fall under. Facilitating this process will support accessibility to social protection, especially for workers engaged in non-standard forms of employment. To achieve this, policymakers should review current procedures for determining employment status, consult with individuals that struggle to determine their status and develop a more effective, efficient system.

Allow all currently active population to adhere to social protection system

Social protection systems vary widely within the EU Member States³. However, it is important to ensure that all currently active population, including workers engaged in non-standard

¹ European Parliament. (2017). The Social Protection of workers in the platform economy. Think Tank | European Parliament. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IPOL_STU\(2017\)614184](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IPOL_STU(2017)614184)

² European Council. (2022, December 8). EU rules on platform work. Consilium Europa. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/platform-work-eu/>

³ European Commission. (2022). Access to social protection. Access to social protection - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1312&langId=en>



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forms of employment, are allowed to be part of the country's social protection system⁴. This would eliminate formal social protection gaps that currently exist across the EU. To illustrate, some EU Member States do not offer pension funds for workers engaged in non-standard employment or for the self-employed. Other examples include a lack of access to workers' compensation insurance, health insurance and unemployment benefits⁵. The employment/labour-related and social protection regulations should be carefully reviewed to ensure inclusiveness, accessibility of the social protection system.

Ensure transparency of the social protection system

Transparency of the social protection system helps to ensure its accessibility and it makes employees and employers aware of the support to which they are entitled⁶. Otherwise, employees and employers are unlikely to claim these rights, fulfil their responsibilities and hold social partners accountable. To increase transparency of the social protection system the government can publish information in a user-friendly format on one of its websites, announce availability of such information/website through different communication channels, provide opportunities for clarifications and questions of individuals, engage with employers' and employee organisations that could share knowledge about the society protection system.

Ensure portability of entitlements between different social protection systems

Throughout a person's life, different types of jobs and employment statuses may be held across different geographies/countries⁷. Automation technologies support remote and flexible working arrangements, which may result in holding several jobs in different countries simultaneously. At times, this results in confusion while determining entitlements under several social protection systems (e.g., having multiple pension funds, health insurances). The EU relies on four main principles to ensure social security coordination: an individual is covered by one country legislation at a time; an individual has the same rights and obligations as the nationals where you are covered; when claiming a benefit all previous periods of insurance and work are taken into account even if they were in a different country; and lastly, if an individual is entitled to a monetary benefit of one country he/she does not need to reside in a country in order to receive it. Despite being a good guiding tool, these principles do not address the practicalities within and between all countries. Policymakers should ensure

⁴ European Parliament. (2017). The Social Protection of workers in the platform economy. Think Tank | European Parliament. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IPOL_STU\(2017\)614184](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IPOL_STU(2017)614184)

⁵ European Commission. (2022). Accidents at work and occupational diseases. Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission. Retrieved December 20, 2022, from <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=864>

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid



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portability of entitlements by reviewing current regulations/legislations, consulting with the stakeholders and encouraging an EU-wise alignment on this topic.

Enable access of the unemployed to adequate unemployment benefits/assistance while incentivising work

In most EU countries, non-standard workers have low unemployment coverage and are hence more exposed to the risk of poverty⁸. In some EU countries, self-employed persons do not qualify for unemployment benefits/assistance. Even more widespread throughout the EU are circumstances where due to varying requirements, people who have been recently employed do not qualify for unemployment benefits. To prevent poverty, income inequalities and social tensions, it is important to enable access of the unemployed to adequate unemployment benefits meanwhile also incentivising work. The latter requires a proactive approach of the public employment services to facilitate reintegration on the labour markets, setting effective limits on duration and amount of unemployment benefits, and criteria for qualifying for unemployment benefits/assistance.

Consider the following PILLARS and external resources to ensure social protection of the labour force, including of workers engaged in non-standard forms of employment:

<i>Title and weblink</i>	<i>Authors and year</i>	<i>Description</i>
<u>Reforming Employment Status and Strengthening Rights</u>	CIPD, 2020	The vulnerability of low-wage workers and the risk of losing rights due to misclassification demand immediate attention. The paper 'Reforming Employment Status' explores these issues through discussions with HR directors, policy experts, lawyers, and HR advisers, examining ways to simplify and reform employment status.
<u>Employment Status</u>	Eurofound, 2020	Eurofound website that lists the recent updates on the topic of “employment status”, as well as publications and data.
<u>Access To Social Protection For All Forms Of Employment</u>	European Commission, 2018	The report explains the need to extend social protection to all forms of employment. It then reviews recent policy initiatives aimed at this. Lastly, it estimates the fiscal and distributional impacts of extending different types of social protection.
<u>Social Protection System Review: A Toolkit</u>	OECD, 2018	The Social Protection System Review (SPSR) serves as an analytical tool to guide countries in enhancing, expanding, or reforming their social protection systems. It evaluates a country's system comprehensively within its wider policy context, assessing both present conditions and future

⁸ Jara Tamayo, H. X., & Tumino, A. (2020). Atypical work and unemployment protection in Europe*. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 59(3), 535–555. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcms.13099>



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		challenges, including demographics, poverty, labour markets, and funding sources impacting social protection. The SPSR emphasizes a collaborative review process involving policymakers, national researchers, and international partners, culminating in comprehensive diagnostics and policy recommendations to facilitate reforms.
<u>Workers' Right to Information, Consultation and Participation</u>	European Parliament, 2023	A list of all the legal efforts the EU has made to complement member states on how to best inform workers about their rights.
<u>Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion: How to Enforce Your Rights</u>	European Commission, 2023	The website explains what steps should be taken if a worker's rights are infringed upon and also provides a list of information and problem-solving tools.
<u>OECD Recommendation on Core Principles of Occupational Pension Regulation</u>	OECD, 2009	A document that gives recommendations on how to ensure people receive good and timely pensions.
<u>State Pensions Abroad</u>	European Commission, 2023	The website gives explanations on how different pension schemes work if people work in different countries throughout their lifetime and want to know what pensions they are entitled to.
<u>Unemployment Benefits in EU Member States</u>	European Commission	The report aims to examine the fundamental nature of unemployment benefits across EU Member States, emphasizing potential obstacles within institutions that could impede the establishment of a unified EU framework for such benefits. It particularly focuses on unemployment insurance programs and income support for short-term unemployment periods (less than one year) within Eurozone nations. Using these findings, the report explores the feasibility of implementing a European-level dimension to unemployment benefits specifically within the Eurozone.