

Maximising opportunities in a changing world of work

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Opinion Plus

The employment industry is a labour market enabler at the forefront of the changing world of work, writes Denis Pennel.



The employment industry is a labour market enabler at the forefront of the changing world of work | *Photo credit: Fotolia*

Eurociett, representing the employment industry in Europe, has changed its name to World Employment Confederation-Europe.

To mark the occasion, the Brussels-based organisation, part of the wider World Employment Confederation, has published a white paper entitled [The Future of Work](#) [1] that addresses key issues surrounding the emergence of a new world of work and calls on policymakers to adapt legislation and labour market policies in line with the new reality.

Structural shifts such as rapid technological change, globalisation, new production models and the

rise of the on-demand economy are reshaping the world of work.

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While the 20th century was largely characterised by the white male breadwinner, today's workforce is driven by diversity and comprises many kinds of labour markets and working arrangements including wage earners, self-employment, art-work, family work and teleworking.

Alongside all this, we face a new industrial revolution where technology and globalised, interconnected service-oriented labour markets are changing the very nature of work.

The future of work will be characterised by a growth in independent working. Employers will try to keep their core workforces lean while seeking to resource in response to peaks in demand while balancing scarce talent in a more flexible way. As for individuals, they will continue to demand more control over their work to find a better work/life balance.

The convergence of these factors has created a new reality for both companies and workers and the employment industry, as a labour market enabler, plays a key role in delivering work, adaptation, security and prosperity.

The industry enables work by having a deep knowledge of local labour market dynamics and offering a full range of employment services. Each year the sector creates 2.5 million jobs in Europe, supporting eight million Europeans in their work lives and facilitating access to the labour market for three million Europeans under 25 years of age.

It also supports companies and workers to adapt to changing demand and circumstances and training them with the skills they need in the new world of work. The industry upskills more than 1.5 million Europeans each year - either directly or through bipartite funds set up by agencies and trade unions.

The sector delivers security for companies and workers. Each year it serves more than 1.5 million companies across Europe with the talent and skills they need to be competitive. Companies are secure in the knowledge that they can rely on the industry for HR solutions and support. Workers are secure as the industry places them in work and provides them with an income and stability.

Finally, the sector enables prosperity as companies using the employment industry to meet their staffing needs enjoy turnover growth on average five per cent higher than those that do not. And because the industry keeps people in work it creates prosperity for governments who otherwise would have to pay greater social and unemployment benefits.

Being at the forefront of the shifts taking place in the world of work means that the employment industry is uniquely placed to offer solutions that simplify the increasing complexity of labour markets.

Faced with new challenges, our industry has evolved from providing candidates and filling job vacancies to creating innovative workforce solutions and shaping careers. With IT now a key component of employment services, the industry is moving towards more tailored-made, output-based and talent-oriented solutions.

A one-size-fits-all approach does not work anymore and instead we provide a wide range of services to meet the individual expectations of candidates. We also offer the business community sustainable solutions to contract and distribute labour.

Our Future of Work white paper urges policymakers to create an environment that promotes a variety of contractual arrangements as a way to increase labour market participation and inclusion. It stresses that policies must ensure that the dynamic potential of the sharing and collaborative economy is not hindered by strict and outdated rules.

Increasingly global and intertwined labour markets must adopt relevant supra-national regulation while also trying to make national labour laws more convergent. In the future, policymakers at EU and International level will need to play a greater role in crafting guiding principles and employment-friendly labour laws.

We are an official social partner on the EU Sectoral Dialogue and we have been proud to work closely with the EU institutions on key initiatives including the EU's PARES - Partnership between Employment Services.

Our members provide a broad range of HR services including direct recruitment, career management, recruitment process outsourcing and managed services. It will be vital that we continue to work alongside policymakers to ensure the right social and economic conditions and enable us to maximise the many opportunities to lead in a changing world of work.

About the author

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