



Sozialforschungsstelle Dortmund  
Zentrale wissenschaftliche Einrichtung



# **„Round the Globe – Future 2020”**

**3rd Meeting of the international Panel  
23rd–25<sup>th</sup> of September**

## **Field of action**

**“Innovative ability and change of work”**

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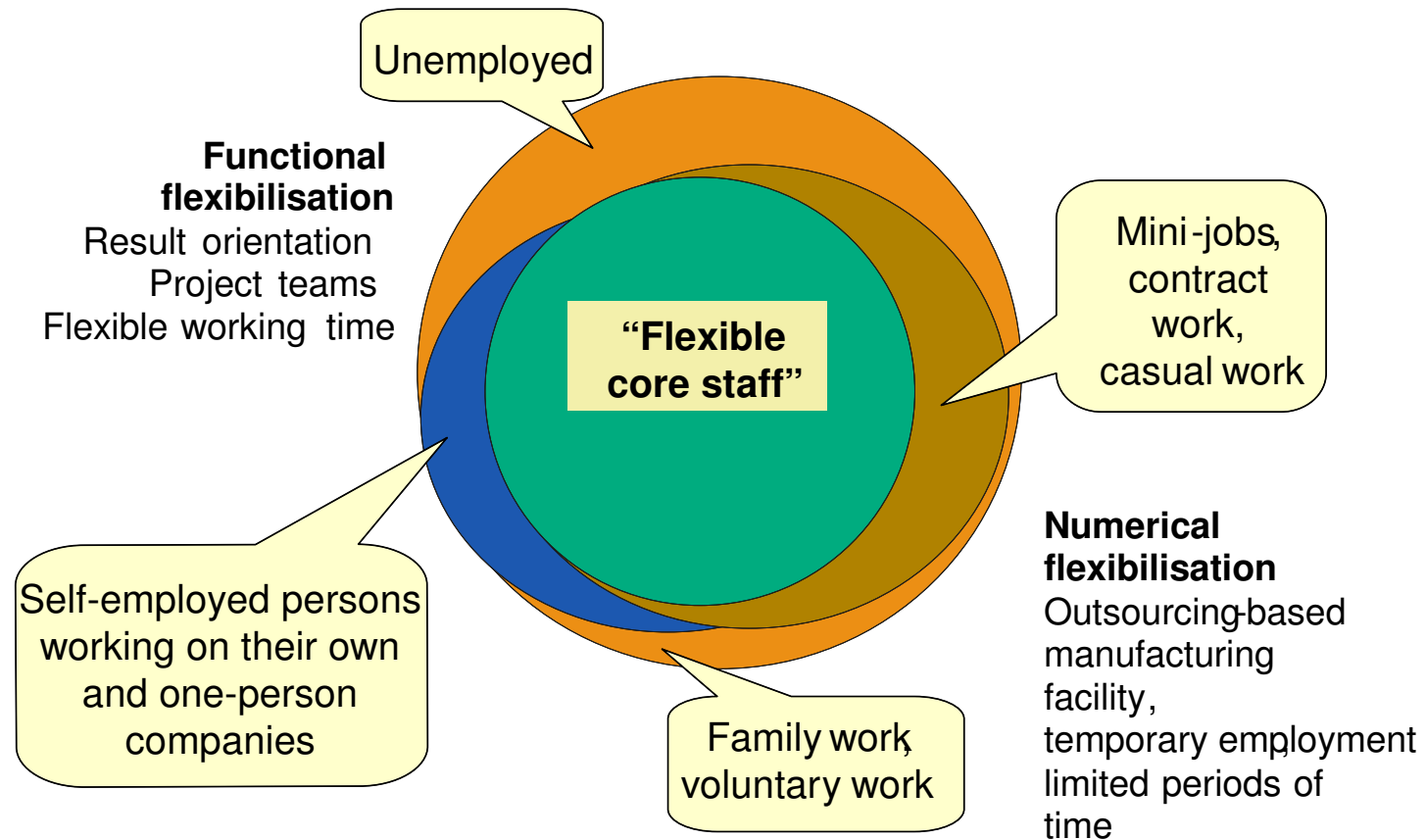


## Basic assumptions

We are currently experiencing *a fundamental transformation in industry and society.*

The transition from an industrial to a knowledge and services-based society has a far-reaching impact on the world of labour.

# Flexibilisation and segmentation of the labour market



## Main tendencies I

- Increasing segmentation of the labour market and continued erosion of ‘standard employment relationship’.
- At the same time traditional lines of segmentation are in a state of flux.
  - Processes of social exclusion and disintegration are particularly likely
    - to increase among unskilled and low-skilled workers
  - However, lines of segmentation, chances of inclusion and risks of exclusion must be viewed not only with regard to the available skills among the workforce (*gender, ethnicity, age*)
- Emergence of flexibly networked organisational and corporate structures, new management models and wider access to the available human resources

## Main tendencies II

- Growing importance of new sectors (IT, knowledge based services, health and care sector...)
- Expansion and restructuring of initial and further training (structures) in the sense of lifelong learning
- High-Competence strategy has to be developed to support High-Tech strategy

## Conclusions

- These tendencies which are likely to develop will not automatically lead to the emergence of a "brave new world of labour", but are associated with a range of inconsistent impacts on the workforce.
- The field of tension between a humane environment and rationalisation, between organisational requirements and the rights of the workforce to "good" or acceptable work will create new inconsistencies under the new conditions.
- However, the new forms of labour and employment will involve not only risks for the workforce, but also *new opportunities*.

## Challenges

- It is an open issue how "good labour" should be defined in the knowledge and service society. *A new model of "good labour" has to be developed.*
- Loss of significance of the traditional operational setting of labour oriented research (e.g. health & safety promotion), increasing significance of *new settings* with high potential such as: local/regional authorities, educational system, professional associations, industrial self-administration (chambers of commerce), informal networks.
- As we facing the transition from an industrial to a knowledge and services-based society we need a *paradigm shift of the innovation system*. This paradigm shift implies an increasing importance of social innovation as compared to technological innovation.

In recent years, social science research has contributed largely to developing the social preconditions for innovations and the social character of innovation processes.

But the question regarding their contribution to the development and organization of innovations remains open.

New forms of knowledge production that integrates stakeholders of enterprises, associations and communities from the very beginning as research partners have to be developed in order to ease the diffusion of findings into daily work practise and create strong learning networks.

Despite radical changes in the world of labour and despite the associated problems, labour will continue to be the most important resource to master innovation processes in our knowledge and service society.

*"Labour is the process that unites education, innovation and employment – a process which not only creates knowledge but in which the acquired knowledge also becomes practical. The quality of labour significantly decides to what extent knowledge and human capital will be used, sustained and developed, though also the extent to which it will be endangered and wasted."*

*(Memorandum: "Labour Research and Forms of Labour – an Indispensable Element in a Forward-Looking Educational and Innovation Policy", 2004)"*

## Open questions

- How important is labour to foster the capability for innovation of enterprises and societies?
- What are the future challenges for labour-oriented research in the knowledge and service-based society?