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EMPLOYMENT THEMATIC NETWORK

# **Future of Work: Labour Market Transitions in the Spotlight**

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## Executive Summary

The paper “Future of Work: Labour Market Transitions in the Spotlight” summarises key trends regarding individual transitions that are especially due to digitalisation and automatisisation processes. It builds on desk research as well as inputs and discussions held during the meeting of the Employment Transnational Network that took place 12-13 December 2018 in Brussels, Belgium. The paper provides insights into current activities of Managing Authorities of the European Social Fund (ESF) and their partner organisations that aim at overcoming obstacles faced by individuals during their change process. Moreover, practices are presented and recommendations drawn for future activities within the ESF such as the need for adjustments of policies towards increased labour market transitions and the coverage of new forms of employment (e.g. platform work) within the existing labour market and social security schemes.

# 1. Introduction

Megatrends transform our societies and economies across the globe, with profound consequences for the organisation of work (see, for instance, ETUI, 2018a and 2018b). Transition phases of individuals, such as those between work and work or between training and work, will gain momentum due to increased digitalisation and automatisisation processes that accompany changes in the world of work. Current trends show that although the economy is growing, we are making scant progress on creating decent employment, increasing social protection coverage, closing gender gaps, transitioning to the formal economy and decreasing working poverty.<sup>1</sup> The ILO extensively works on this topic and has, for instance, established a Global Commission on the Future of Work in 2017. Globally, women, for instance, still account for less than two fifths of the workforce, occupy the lower echelons of the occupational ladder and earn, on average, about 20 per cent less than men. The future of work must be more equal. Enhanced equality between specific groups in society must be a prime goal, especially in view of the upcoming challenges regarding the 'Future of Work'.

Considering the changes in the world of work and the goal for “leaving no one behind”, as proclaimed by the United Nations (UN) in the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, we have to pay much more attention to those in need: people living in poverty or at risk of poverty, people at the margins of the labour market, people with low paid jobs, etc. Individuals’ needs must be placed at the centre of all policy concerns. Real life experiences inform us about the need for applying more holistic approaches in policy design and implementation of the European Social Fund (ESF) and beyond. And because various phases of paid work (jobs) and unpaid work (training, care, etc.) may become the norm in future, adjusted (ESF) policies are required that prepare all groups in society, but especially vulnerable groups, for the new jobs and skills needed to support the smooth transitions of individuals.

The Employment Thematic Network (ETN) dedicated a two-day meeting on 12-13 December 2018 in Brussels, Belgium on “The Future of Work: Labour Market Transitions in the Spotlight” at which the state of play of policy delivery and practical implementation (i.e. good practices of ESF-Managing Authorities/ESF-MAs and their partner organisations) were shared. The ETN meeting aimed at reflecting and discussing EU-Member States’ (MS) activities regarding labour market

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/statements-and-speeches/WCMS\\_646763/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/statements-and-speeches/WCMS_646763/lang--en/index.htm)

transitions, as well as drawing recommendations for future activities within the ESF in light of the new challenges faced to achieve more equal work.

Key questions discussed at the meeting included:

- *Which policies are applied in the EU-MS that support smooth labour market transitions?*
- *Does the ESF favour specific practices in view of the changes in the world of work? If yes, which specific challenges are addressed by the ESF programmes?*
- *What needs to be done to enable smooth labour market transitions between unpaid and paid work in particular?*

The paper is structured as follows: subsequent to the introduction (chapter 1), chapter 2 is setting the scene by discussing major trends regarding labour market transitions in the framework of the future of work. Chapter 3 informs on ESF policies and practices that aim at tackling the challenges by aiming at enhancing work equality. It builds on inputs from ETN members present at the ETN meeting. Chapter 4 summarises recommendations developed during the meeting, especially addressed at public administrations. Chapter 5, finally, concludes by highlighting key lessons learned.

## 2. Setting the scene

The last few decades have witnessed the rise of non-standard forms of employment in many parts of the industrialised world, in particular in Europe (Schmid, 2016). Trends furthermore suggest that the frequency of labour market transition of individuals will remain the same or increase due to enhanced digitisation and automation processes (European Commission, 2018a; ILO, 2018). The concept of transitional labour markets presented in Schmid (2017) may be of help. It considers the labour market as a social institution supporting and ensuring 'full employment' not only in terms of income security, particularly in times of unemployment (freedom from want), but also in terms of the capability to freely choose and to develop a career over the life course.

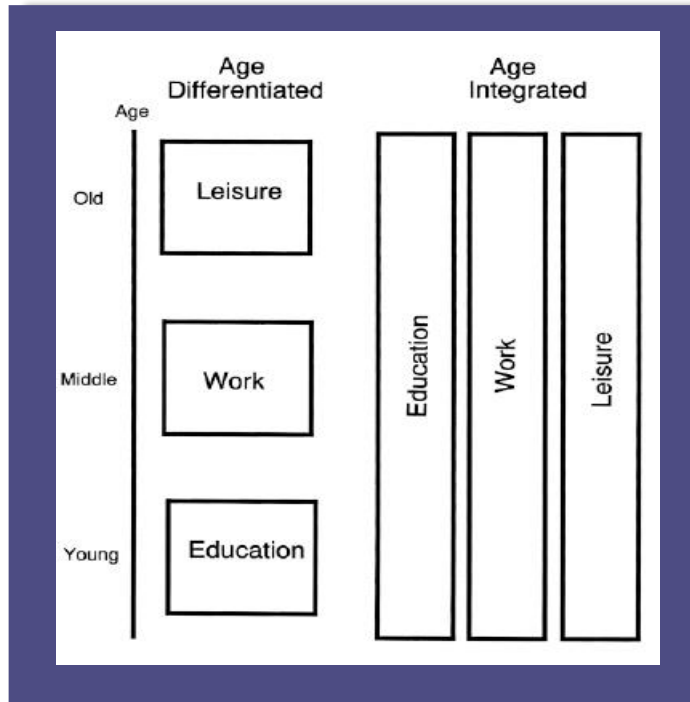
Today, the ESF intervenes in the following main labour market transition phases: from school to work, from long-term unemployment and unemployment to work,

and from work to work. ESF-policies thereby aim at overcoming obstacles individuals face during their change process. The upcoming changes in the world of work however call for policy adjustments, especially in the area of work, workers' rights and social protection.

Many labour market transitions, especially those that are due to enhanced digitalisation and automatisisation processes are frequently not tackled. These concern, amongst others, transitions from temporary work to fixed work, from part-time to full-time work, from low paid/low quality work to adequately paid/high-quality work, from care provision to work, from self-employed to employee, from sabbatical/learning breaks to work, and from temporary agency work to permanent employment. These labour market transitions are likely to be increasing because of apparent trends. *"The effectiveness of future labour market institutions will depend on how they facilitate the myriad transitions"*, informs the ILO (2018). Following the school of 'classical transitions' only is short-sighted and bears major pitfalls, as briefly described in the following.

Because transitions frequently take place during specific ages of individuals (e.g. maternity leave of women between the ages of 20 and 40) and as a result of age-based barriers in the labour market the current approach taken within the ESF (and beyond) builds on age differentiation rather than on age integration. Our labour markets and thus our current (policy) concepts are grounded on education while we are young, on (paid) work while we are middle aged and on leisure while we are in pension (see figure 1). Due to this age differentiation we face challenges, for instance, when implementing lifelong learning concepts. While lifelong learning by its nature should take place during the whole of life and thus constantly during various phases of life, current (public and private) investments prefer specific ages, skill groups as well as a certain sex. Unfortunately, young, highly-skilled men frequently are favoured rather than those really in need for training. The disruptive change we are undergoing (i.e. 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution) will impact all areas of our society and is likely to put additional stress on those most in need.

Figure 1: **Age differentiation and age integration concept**



Source: Riley & Riley (2000), p. 267.

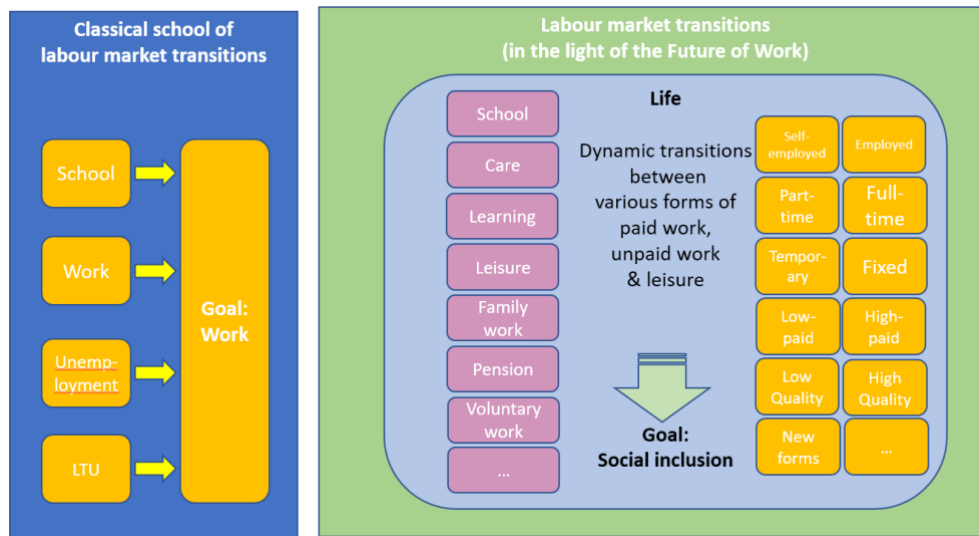
Age related factors (age differentiation, the source of age-based barriers, relevance of age) however are only one aspect that limits smooth labour market transitions. Others include the often-experienced misunderstanding that labour market transitions are not a one-way street. Frequently, transitions have a non-linear character which means that different directions must be taken into consideration (see figure 2). Existing policies often neglect intermediate forms of labour such as social protection for part-time informal care provision and work. In general, 'new' forms of employment such as platform work are not yet reflected in the social security schemes. Moreover, hugely increased investment in learning (formal learning, acknowledging the importance of informal learning, etc.) is needed and people, especially the vulnerable groups in our society should be prepared for the upcoming opportunities (e.g. new skills/new jobs, gig economy, enhanced labour market transitions).

Finally, the ultimate goal of labour policy today is bringing people towards being economically valuable; i.e. towards paid employment. Yet our economic system driven by neo-liberal *laissez-faire* economics does not value care and other family work equally to paid employment. Since women are still the main care providers, the current system systematically incorporates a gender bias. By following the classical concept of investments in (limited) transitions, we in fact reinforce the



gender bias. The ultimate goal of “gainful employment” consequently has to be questioned.

Figure 2: **Non-linear character of transitions**



Source: own elaboration.

To sum up, policies that build on the ‘classical school’ of labour market transitions frequently fail since the changes in the world of work are not yet echoed in the underlying labour and social protection systems.

Major trends of the automatisisation/digitalisation process affect the transition phases of individuals. These concern generally the change of jobs (e.g. professions) and that of job tasks. There are also modifications regarding working time (towards constant accessibility) and the location of work (‘globalisation’). The model of the “single job and employer” over the whole life-span is outdated. CVs are not as linear as they were some time ago. This has huge impacts on the transition phases individuals experience during their working life. An increase of transition phases during life is noticeable in all professions/sectors (EAPN, 2018; World Employment Confederation-Europe and UNI Europa, 2018).

Modern enterprises today, moreover, have flatter hierarchies in which peer-to-peer work dominates. Self-management has become a core competence due to micro-labour times and tasks. What can be observed is not only more ‘job-hopping’ but

also increased purchase of labour. As a result, labour contracts are less stable. Precarious working conditions are on the rise (e.g. platform work, gig economy).<sup>2</sup>

Also, social life changes: today's family structures are different from the ones experienced some 50 years ago. Caring responsibilities, for instance, today are increasingly shared between women and men, often assisted by friends and networks across Europe, especially in urban areas (though close relatives such as grandmothers are still the main additional childcare providers in many countries). In addition, an appreciation and upgrading of the work in the social field is reported (Telekom and University St. Gallen, 2015). A shift in the value and identification of work took place, too. Due to the digitalisation and globalisation processes the boundaries of private life and working life are blurring.

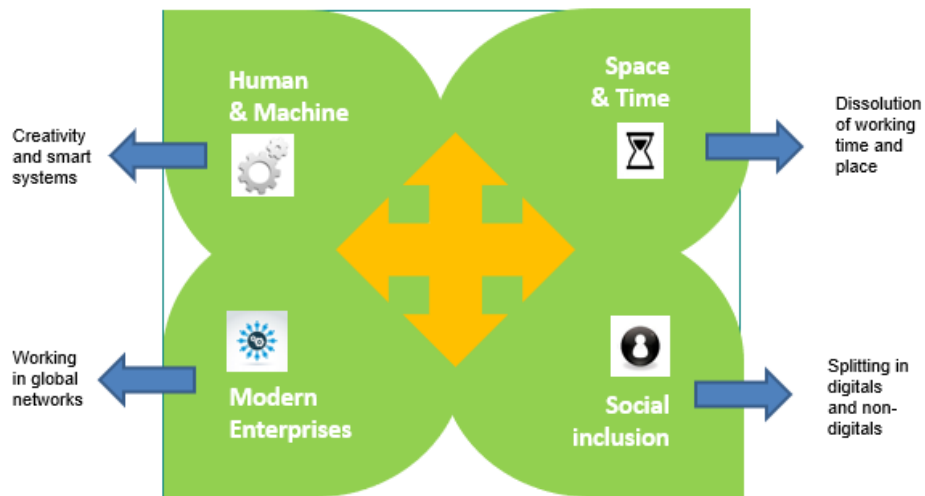
Apart from these shifts, lifelong learning remains key for enabling job changes (see, for instance, Brown and Bimrose, 2014). Transitions between work and learning (and vice versa) are likely to increase in numbers due to more frequent changes between jobs (and the new skills that are needed to do so). Transitions may also increase because of demographic change and care obligations of parents and friends. Consequently, constant upskilling is necessary for all groups in society. To achieve enhanced equality in the future of work, the ESF investments in vocational education and training (VET) need to target those most in need of training. Likewise, social inclusion policies for the most vulnerable, often the low skilled (i.e. the non-digitals), are also in high demand.

In the frame of the future of work, four main tension areas can be distinguished. These concern the areas of "Human & the Machine", "Space & Time", "Modern Enterprises" and "Social Inclusion" (see figure 3).

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<sup>2</sup> <https://laborrights.org/issues/precarious-work>

Figure 3: **Tension areas in Work 4.0**



Source: own elaboration.

To sum up, what do these tension areas and trends described above tell us about the transition phases in Work 4.0? Transition phases in the Future of Work are more likely:

- to take place more frequently (they may become the norm for some groups in our society);
- to take place during the whole life span (various transitions during all ages);
- to take place mainly between learning & care phases and work (constant upskilling is necessary) as well as between work and work (frequent change of jobs);
- to include new (partly even unknown) transitions (e.g. because of new markets, changes in paid/unpaid work; shifts in the status-symbol of work, etc.); and
- to have blurred boundaries (part-time learning, work, care, new jobs, new sectors, new skills).

Before continuing, let us take a closer look at the gender dimension of labour market transition phases in the new world of work. According to Nathalie Wuïame, gender expert of the ETN, the main threats are gender blindness in terms of looking at the situation of both men and women at risk, gendered tasks of jobs and the continuation of the segregation of the labour market, inequalities and discrimination based on prejudice and stereotypes whether conscious or not, for example, in terms of supposed qualities for tasks and jobs. The changes in the world of work, however, also bear the potential of closing the gender gap due to enhanced flexibility and the increase of the so-far “female dominated” sectors such as health, education and social services.

What we can observe today however shows that the trends drive us towards the opposite direction: atypical forms of employment increase and discrimination

prevails. The latter may even increase due to collaborative platforms (there are signs of unequal pay and very aggressive forms of working relations/competitions) and the use of algorithms (biases and gender stereotypes occur based on sorting; Scoppetta & Buckenleib, 2018). There is the need for endowing especially vulnerable groups in society (e.g. people living in poverty and at risk of poverty, low skilled, girls and women, older persons, persons with disabilities, etc.) with the requisite skills (the jobs created by automation and those that will survive will likely be more demanding in terms of technical skills and cognitive abilities than the jobs they replace).

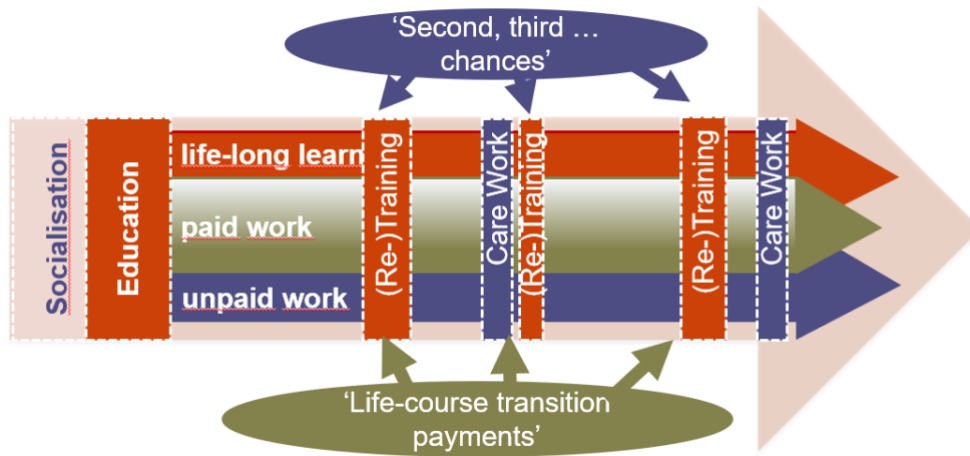
The ESF has to adapt to persistent and upcoming digitalisation and automatisisation processes and contribute to a more equal work. This can be achieved by:

- Enabling for flexible arrangements (flexible working time and forms of work) that are underpinned by adequate social protection;
- Investing in sustainable work (minimising precarious work, work with insufficient social security; Scoppetta & Aparicio Jodar, forthcoming 2019);
- Focussing on the most disadvantaged individuals in our society (e.g. low-skilled and non-digitals) and implementing preventive investments in risk groups; and
- Supporting second and third chances and careers.

Considering the challenges faced in the 'Future of Work', we should invest in the quality of work and support training that builds on human strengths (creativity, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, controlling, decision making, complex situation management, social skills, etc.).

There is a need to adapt our labour market and social security schemes to safeguard against social exclusion (e.g. rearrange the unemployment benefit towards employment insurance; see, for instance, Schmid, 2015 and 2017) by, for instance, enabling for 'transition payments' and qualifying for second and third chances (see figure 4). The life-course perspective should be applied, transitions eased and the gender divide in technical and human skills reduced in our policies.

Figure 4: **Transitions: Integrated life-course perspectives in a solidary society (Ageing 4.0)**



Source: adapted from Leichsenring & Schmidt (2016).

To sum up, labour market transitions will remain the same or even be more frequently experienced in the future. Changes in the world of work that are due to automatisisation and digitalisation processes are apparent already and primarily concern the change of jobs (e.g. professions), of job tasks, of working time and of the location of work. The boundaries between work and family life are blurring. The future starts here: we have to act now by building and transforming our policies towards proactive, preventive, integrative, human-centred and holistic policies.

## 3. Status Quo & Good Practice

### 3.1 Status quo of activities implemented by ESF-MAs

This chapter informs on ESF-activities in place in the countries present at the ETN meeting in Brussels (12-13 December 2018) that aim at supporting smooth transitions in the frame of the 'Future of Work'. Please note that information on the activities in this chapter is not exhaustive and builds on the knowledge of attending participants only.

Currently, the ESF is mainly supporting 'classical transitions'; i.e. from school to work (work training, dual learning, internships, professional training, etc.), from unemployment to work (skills competences, self-employment, training, subsidies to employers, etc.), and from work to work (skill trainings, coaching, mobility, etc.).

Transitions not yet supported or transitions where a need for improvement is seen by ETN participants (though the ESF partly already supports some of these transitions in some countries) concerns the following:

- pre-retirement/retirement to employment;
- sickness to work;
- work conducted abroad to work in the MS;
- care to work;
- self-employment to employment;
- precarious work (in-work poverty) to better paid jobs; and
- when changing professions.

The following section takes a deeper look at practices implemented in EU Member States. The brief description of cases should assist in enhancing future practices in the ESF.

### 3.2 Case descriptions

This section demonstrates key features of selected approaches applied in the EU and includes examples presented by ETN members and their partner organisations during the meeting in Brussels. Three cases were presented during the meeting:

Bénédict Wauters from ESF Flanders/Belgium presented the case “Transitions between education and employment and how ESF can work with this: The Flemish case”. Bettina Reuter from the German ESF-MA informed about “Shaping digital transformation: future centres” and Ria Van Peer from SERV in Flanders/Belgium provided an input on “Digital partners on the fast track”.

Please find a brief description of the examples in the following tables.

Table 1: *Good practice of ESF-MA Flanders/Belgium*

<b>Transitions between education and employment and how the ESF can work with this: The Flemish case</b>	
<b>Country</b>	Belgium
<b>Rationale</b>	The project is implemented by the ESF-MA Flanders/BE (in partnership with the research unit of the department of work and the department of education) to support the transition process towards 'Work 4.0'. It targets the labour market transition phases of individuals between education and employment. The ESF-MA builds the ground through desk research to launch calls for proposals within the ESF community in order to tackle upcoming challenges referring to the future of work.
<b>Specificities of the approach</b>	Before launching the call for experiments, the ESF-MA Flanders/BE invested in setting up the project collaboratively with stakeholders such as policy makers, pioneers, and ESF project promoters. Comprehensive desk research was conducted to better understand and compile already available know-how (studies, etc.) of the specificities of the trends behind the change process. The common ground built was finally used for the development of a joint vision and the call for experiments.
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting up a broader innovation network;</li> <li>• Visioning with group of independent pioneers;</li> <li>• Launching calls/experiments responding to major challenges; and</li> <li>• Projects fitting to local circumstances (and implemented jointly by stakeholders) and assisting in fighting challenges faced in Flanders/BE related to the future of work.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combining various trends from available studies;</li> <li>• Developing daily routine scenarios of people in different future professions; and</li> <li>• Building a common vision with policy makers.</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>	The first call was launched just recently; more calls are upcoming. Results of project implementation is not yet available.

Contrary to the Flemish example, the German approach taken by the 'Future Centres' specifically targets disadvantaged regions (here: Eastern Germany) before mainstreaming (see table 2).

Table 2: **Good practice of the ESF-MA Germany**

<b>Shaping digital transformation: future centres</b>	
<b>Country</b>	Germany
<b>Rationale</b>	Future Centres (Zukunftszentren) are first to be set up in East Germany before the approach is spread across Germany (East Germany is particularly affected by structural and demographic change).
<b>Specificities of the approach</b>	The Future Centres shall work as external 'Think Tanks of the Regions' on digital transformation. They shall also develop and test innovative solutions at the company level.
<b>Aims</b>	The Future Centres aim at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting SMEs, employees and self-employed persons;</li> <li>• continuing established dialogue and knowledge sharing on the future of work; and</li> <li>• assisting in rethinking training and skill development at the company level.</li> </ul>
<b>Structure</b>	In the framework of the "Work 4.0" dialogue, initiated by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the following structure will be established in East Germany: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 regional Future Centres based in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt, Saxony, Thuringia;</li> <li>• 1 supra-regional Digital Work Centre; and</li> <li>• 1 House of the Self-Employed.</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>	Results of project implementation are not yet available.

Finally, the good practice 'Social partners on the digital fast track' was presented highlighting activities of social partners in this field (see table 3).

Table 3: **Good practice of a Social Partner in Flanders/Belgium**

<b>Social partners on the digital fast track</b>	
<b>Country</b>	Belgium
<b>Rationale</b>	The project was set up since digitalisation requires an active role of governments and social partners. To this aim, a cross-country partnership was created and a kick-off meeting was held in February 2018.
<b>Specificities of the approach</b>	Round table discussions, study visits and international exchange are core for the social partners to learn from other experiences related to the future of work and labour market transitions of individuals.
<b>Aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange of know-how, good practices and experiences;</li> <li>• International comparison concerning best practices related to lifelong learning and future-proofing the economy and the labour market and the process of social dialogue; and</li> <li>• Development of a stable network of international social partners.</li> </ul>
<b>Output</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange of good practices and examples;</li> <li>• Small intermediate reports after every roundtable;</li> <li>• Final report presented after the Valencia round table (June 2019) including a cross-country comparison of digitisation agendas and policies, main messages and ideas, recommendations for social partners and policy recommendations; and</li> <li>• Information exchange platform (online at <a href="http://www.digitalfasttrack.eu">www.digitalfasttrack.eu</a>).</li> </ul>



To conclude, ESF-MAs and their partners at the national and regional geographical levels can do much to improve the situation of individuals during labour market transitions. They can also explore the situation regarding upcoming trends by exchanging practices, co-designing policies and calling for or setting innovative practices at the local and regional levels, as the above cases implemented by the ESF-MAs and their partner organisations have shown.

To enhance future activities regarding labour market transitions within the ESF (and ESF+), the participants at the ETN meeting did not only exchange practices, they also drafted recommendations for public administration (see following chapter).

## 4. Recommendations of ESF-MAs

The recommendations presented here were developed during the meeting and primarily are addressed at public administrations, especially ESF-MAs, other national and regional policy bodies as well as European institutions such as the European Commission.

To ensure that more holistic approaches are taken in designing and implementing policies, participants recommended building up partnerships, i.e. strengthening social dialogue and alliances especially between non-state and state actors. The importance of cooperation and negotiation in managing labour market transitions is also stated by the European Commission (2018a). In general, initiatives should be taken that help the setting up and support of partnerships at all geographical scales but especially at the local levels (along the lines of the past “EQUAL programme”). More specifically, ESF-MAs request for an involvement of relevant stakeholders already during the programme design process.

It is recommended that common agreements should be achieved about the priorities set. Moreover, the procedure of engagement with stakeholders should be certified. Participants also discussed the idea of a ‘Partnership Fund’ (earmarked money for partners) and stressed the need that the mechanism of partnership should be made compulsory within the ESF. Next to the requirement for partnerships that contribute to applying an integrated approach, ESF-MAs and other policy programming bodies should “think out of the box” and “break the policy silos” when drafting programmes aimed at addressing local/regional/national social issues and societal challenges.

A general call for integrated measures and services was observed. But how can this be achieved? ESF-MAs can, for instance, apply integrated approaches by setting up one-stop-services, especially at the interface of the labour market and social policy (social assistance combined with employment services). Furthermore, integrated services between social and healthcare policies are recommended. On the practical level, applying integrated approaches also means taking the family situation into account rather than the circumstances of the unemployed person only.

Due to the rapid change in the world of work, ESF-MAs and other policy bodies should take preventive approaches, apply the life-course perspective, support transitions and foresee trainings for employers and social partners for workplace adaptations and age management (Scoppetta & Aparicio Jodar, forthcoming 2019). Work placement support for vulnerable groups is favoured which requires enhanced collaboration between Public Employment Services (PES) and employers. Finally, lifelong learning and career guidance is regarded as key for success and thus should be strengthened.

Further recommendations regarding the Future of Work include the increase of outreach of social services, working directly with employers, financial support for soft-skills training and digital skills, individual psychological support and the need for offering coaching to workers at higher potential risk of unemployment. The latter activity gains momentum due to digitalisation and automatisisation processes in particular. ESF-MAs could also launch calls about the 'Future of Work' and 'Social Innovation', as practiced by the ESF-MA in Flanders/Belgium.

It also was suggested to the European Commission (EC) to increase the flexibility of the Operational Programmes and enhance support for transnational cooperation and innovation. While the EC should have a long-term vision about the future of work, they should support the sustainability of the transnational networks. It is recommended that the future of work should be an investment priority for the EU.

To sum up, while partnership is the key to proactively address the challenges faced regarding automatisisation and digitalisation, recommendations of ESF-MAs and other present stakeholders encompass the implementation of preventive measures, financial support for (labour market) transitions and the application of integrated approaches throughout the support pathway.

## 5. Conclusion

*“There must be innovations in access to, and provision of, job services and social protection, to support the likelihood of people of working age experiencing more transitions, of more types, in the labour market”, informs EAPN (2018, p.27). Strategies for managing social risks related to non-standard forms of employment and the corresponding increase of transitions between different employment relationships over the life course include new skills, new jobs and how to be prepared for this as well as: “Making transitions pay via extending social insurance principles beyond the risk of unemployment, especially including volatile income risks associated with critical events over the life course reflected to some extent in NSFE (school-to-work-transitions, job-to-job transitions, working time transitions, and transitions from work to retirement)” (Schmid, 2016, p.15).*

ESF-MAs and other public bodies thus have a challenging phase ahead in adjusting policy programmes and social security schemes towards current and upcoming needs linked to ‘Work 4.0’ to ensure a “just transition” (ILO, 2018). Individuals are faced with, and differently affected by, various risks over the life course, but they are endowed with different capabilities to cope with these risks (Schmid, 2016). Consequently, holistic approaches must be taken in the labour market and social policy that include the change from age differentiation towards age integration and the shift from the ‘classical school’ of labour market transitions towards the incorporation of various forms of transitions that comprise also currently unpaid forms of work such as family care. Labour market transitions in all their potential forms need to be supported across the life course, and individuals, in particular vulnerable groups in our society, prepared for new skills and new jobs and “social insurance systems adjusted that accommodate life transitions and external shocks” (ILO, 2018, p.5). To develop policy systems that are integrated, incorporate labour market transitions over the life course and include preventive approaches, partnerships between stakeholders are required, amongst which social dialogue is a key.

The future of work must be more equal. Enhanced equality between specific groups in our society, such as people with migrant backgrounds and the ‘working poor’, and especially the eradication of the gender bias that exists in many policies today must be a prime goal, especially in view of the upcoming challenges of the ‘Future of Work’ in order to achieve the UN 2030 Agenda where no one is left behind.

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**0. TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION in the ESF 2014-2020 – An introductory guide – November 2015**

This guide describes the Common Framework for transnationality in the ESF in the 2014-2020 period, including the common themes, calls for proposals, thematic networks, and how the ESF can contribute to Macro-Regional Strategies. It concludes with a list of National Contact Points.

**1. THEMATIC NETWORKING – A guide for participants – April 2016**

This user guide to the nine thematic networks that support transnational co-operation in the ESF sets out the stakeholders involved, and suggests principles and tools for animating their interaction.

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Drawing on evidence from the employment, inclusion, youth employment, governance and partnership thematic networks, this dossier presents the theoretical and practical arguments for service integration.

**4. CO-PRODUCTION – Enhancing the role of citizens in governance and service delivery – May 2018**

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**5. SYSTEMS THINKING for European Structural and Investment Funds management – May 2018**

This handbook explains how to apply the Vanguard Method to improve service quality in managing European funds.

**6. Tackling Long-Term Unemployment through RISK PROFILING AND OUTREACH – May 2018**

This discussion paper from the Employment Thematic Network reviews approaches to risk profiling and outreach, summaries their benefits and challenges, and gives case examples.

**7. REVIEW OF THE EUROPEAN CODE OF CONDUCT ON PARTNERSHIP (ECCP) – Thematic Network on Partnership – May 2018**

The main aims of the review were to assess the usefulness of the ECCP, learn more about the challenges encountered in its implementation, and develop recommendations to embed the partnership principle into the next European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) programming period.

**8. FEMALE (UN)EMPLOYMENT AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE – November 2018**

This paper examines gender equality issues in employment (including segregation, the pay gap, entrepreneurship and care responsibilities), describes ESF projects which address it, and concludes with the ESF Employment Thematic Network's recommendations.

**9. Addressing youth unemployment through outreach, activation and service integration – November 2018**

This dossier consolidates the three sharing papers published by the Youth Employment Thematic Network on outreach, activation and service integration. It features studies of Ohjaamo in Helsinki, Rubikon Centrum in Prague, So Stay in Gdańsk and MRC Pathways in Glasgow.

**10. Inspirational practices for tomorrow's inclusive digital world – May 2019**

Digitalisation is not only transforming the economy; it is transforming our society as a whole. This dossier presents the contribution of the ESF Transnational Platform Thematic Network on Learning and Skills to the ambitious policies developed both at EU and national levels: building an inclusive, knowledge-based digital economy and society in Europe.

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