



Call for Abstracts

The Fifth Conference of the *Regulating for Decent Work* Network

Organized by *International Labour Office* (ILO)

in collaboration with:

Centre for Employment and Labour Relations Law (CELRL) - University of Melbourne, Australia

School of Social Sciences - Jawaharlal Nehru University, India

Durham Law School (DLS)- University of Durham, UK

Fairness at Work Research Centre (FairWRC) - University of Manchester, UK

Institute for Advanced Labour Studies (AIAS) - University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

Institute for Applied Economic Research (IPEA) - Brasilia, Brazil

Institut Arbeit und Qualifikation (IAQ) - University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany

Korea Labor Institute (KLI) - Seoul, Korea

THE FUTURE OF WORK

International Labour Office

Geneva, Switzerland

3-5 July 2017

<http://rdw-conference.org/>

(RDW conference website will be available from 15 November 2016)

The world of work is undergoing novel and rapid changes that will endure and potentially intensify. Driven by massive and continuous technological changes and globalization, the world economy has generated prosperity, yet also vast unemployment and underemployment, strikingly among the young; and global economic growth has yet to return to pre-crisis levels. Disparities in the global workforce remain striking and are reflected in trends that include the lower participation rates and wages of women; large numbers who continue to work in extreme poverty, particularly in low-income countries; growing migration for work; and an urgent need to ensure decent care for a rapidly expanding older population. Yet in responding to these challenges, policy-makers confront novel features of working life and governance: the urgent need to secure employment-led paths to economic development; intensifying downward pressures on working conditions and the challenges of establishing floors of minimum social protection and labour conditions; the internationalization of production through Global Value Chains (GVCs); and the sustained presence of informal work, including through new forms of contracting for waged labour.

To respond effectively to these new and lasting challenges, the United Nation's International Labour Organisation (ILO) has launched a *Future of Work Initiative* as a global process of reflection on the future of

working life. An element of activities to mark the ILO's centenary in 2019, the *Future of Work Initiative* is helping to guide the ILO's efforts towards social justice as the Organization enters its second centenary.

The ILO is inviting the global research community to be involved in this process. The fourth RDW Conference in 2015 identified and examined key dimensions of the future of work. The 2017 Conference will continue to pursue this theme, with a focus on identifying potential policy and regulatory responses. We therefore invite papers that will generate new ideas and policies to help the global community to shape a better future at work.

The papers for RDW2017 are expected to centre on the ILO's four *Centenary Conversations*: (i) work and society; (ii) decent work for all; (iii) the organization of work and production; and (iv) the governance of work (see Conference Tracks below). The overarching aim of the Conference is to provide concrete guidance for the future activities of the ILO. It therefore offer participants the opportunity to influence global policy.

RDW2017 will be held in the International Labour Office, Geneva, from 3-5 July 2017. Researchers from all regions are welcome and from all pertinent disciplines including economics, law, industrial relations, geography, human resources, and development studies.

DEADLINES

Abstract submission - <i>RDW Fellowship</i> applicants (see below)	31 December 2016
Abstract submission	31 January 2017
Communicating acceptance - <i>RDW Fellowship</i> applicants	28 February 2017
Communicating acceptance	31 March 2017
Full paper submission	31 May 2017

CONFERENCE TRACKS

Track I. Work and society

Coordinators: Laura Addati (ILO), Christina Behrendt (ILO), Sean Cooney (ILO), Kea Tjildens (AIAS)

Track I explores the changing interaction between work and society. Paid work serves a key economic function, enabling people to meet the material needs of themselves and their families so as to participate actively in society. More broadly, work can be a key site of social connection, and, where it occurs in decent conditions, a positive aspect of individual identity. However, the ongoing transformation of work, employment and the labour market is reconfiguring the relationship between work and society. While new forms of work open up improved economic and social opportunities for those with the relevant skills, they also risk leaving many people impoverished and excluded. Blurring boundaries between work and private life may allow some to better balance work and family, yet others continue to struggle with the unequal distribution of unpaid work, including care work, which remains among the key drivers of inequality.

Papers in this track will address the transformation of the work/society relationship through one or more distinct disciplinary perspective(s) (economic, political, sociological, psychological, and so on). While all papers on this topic are welcome, there are several issues that the Track I sessions will seek to address:

- *The work/life relationship*: What are the implications of the blurring of boundaries between work and private life (including through the use of technology to extend work interactions beyond the physical workplace), and what are its effects on paid and unpaid work, and on work-family balance?

- *The social aspects of work*: What are the implications of new forms of work on the social aspects of work, considering that some new forms risk leaving individuals isolated, insecure and alienated, while other forms promote greater individual autonomy and participation? How can the relationship between work and society be moulded in a way that opens up economic and social opportunities for all?
- *Education and learning*: How can changes in skill requirements be addressed so that individuals, especially the most disadvantaged, can benefit from new labour market conditions? How to tackle the challenge of collecting reliable information on the demand for skills and the capacity of education and training systems to educate for these skills?
- *Social protection systems*: How can social protection systems respond to profound changes in the labour market and in society, and how can they facilitate structural transformation and inclusive development? How can social protection systems adapt to the requirements of changing employment patterns, and ensure coverage for all and adequate levels of protection? What is the role of social protection in promoting the transition from the informal to the formal economy? How can social protection systems address the extent and distribution of unpaid care work and support its reduction and redistribution?
- *Renewing the social contract*: In view of the evolving role of work and employment in society, whether and how can the social contract be renewed to foster more equitable societies and a fairer distribution of resources? What are the implications for economic, social and fiscal policies?

Track II. Decent jobs for all: new jobs for the future and their nature

Coordinators: Sukti Dasgupta (ILO), Ekkehard Ernst (ILO), Praveen Jha (Centre for Informal Sector and Labour Studies), Christiane Kuptsch (ILO), Agustín Escobar Latapí (CIESAS Occidente), Anne Posthuma (ILO), Ninna Nyberg Sørensen (Danish Institute for International Studies)

As labour markets around the globe recover, albeit slowly, from the deepest crisis of the past few decades, new challenges are creating potential constraints for the world of work today and in the future. Technological change, globalisation of production and consumption, aging societies and a shift in population growth from developed to emerging and developing countries, along with heightened environmental risks, create new challenges for the world of work. Global unemployment remains stubbornly high, especially for young people. Labour income shares continue to decline. Non-standard forms of employment are on the rise, and wage employment has lost momentum, with self-employment and informality spreading even in advanced industrialised economies. Rent-seeking by special interest groups has further contributed to an inequitable growth in earnings and decent jobs. Furthermore, jobs are not necessarily where workers are, and rising inequalities have created incentives for workers to migrate. In turn, migration has highlighted issues of access to labour markets and the need for a better connection between education systems and business models.

This objective of this Track is twofold:

- Firstly, it promotes a better understanding of the sources of new jobs for full employment. How can the still large jobs gap resulting from the crisis be closed, and new employment be generated for the 40 million young workers who will enter the labour market every year over the next decade? Which sectors, industries and occupations are likely to expand and what can policy makers do to help the transition of workers into these new jobs? What will it take to realize the potential of the green economy? Ageing societies have special needs in terms of investment and consumption that can be a motor for job creation - what is the jobs potential of ageing societies? How can progress in reducing working poverty be accelerated to achieve the *Sustainable Development Goals* by 2030?
- Secondly, the Track reflects on innovative methods of generating equitable access to available work and of compensating it fairly. For example, what policies need to be pursued so that education and training systems continue to improve their capacity to anticipate and respond to skill needs? What measures need to be taken with a view to meaningfully recognising the skills of migrant workers? What are the linkages with, and implications for, human mobility in this regard? How do we address labour market segmentation along gender and ethno-national lines when it becomes difficult to implement non-discrimination standards for lack of a comparator? To what extent can and should unpaid work be transformed into remunerated occupations in personal care services or have a more gender-balanced

distribution? Would social economy approaches suit the needs of ageing societies better than the existing economic models?

Track III. The organization of work and production: challenges for decent work

Coordinators: Uma Rani (ILO), Janine Berg (ILO), Gerhard Bosch (IAQ), Jill Rubery (FairWRC)

In an increasingly globalised economy, technological advancement and competitiveness are bringing forth rapid changes in the organization of work and production. Geographical fragmentation and the expansion of global supply chains have meant that multiple enterprises are involved in the production of goods and services, with work diffused through a network of entities and individuals, and blurred lines of responsibility. In addition, regulatory gaps and changes in labour regulations as well as other tax and social policies, have also contributed to the growth of “non-standard” forms of work, including triangular employment relationships, disguised and dependent self-employment, and “on-call” work. These developments have weakened the labour standards of core workers as well as contributing to a growing ‘informalization’ of the labour market. While some organizational changes have brought benefits to businesses, in terms of cost-saving and greater efficiency, they pose challenges to existing business models and, most importantly, to the social protection and labour rights of workers, as they often circumvent the existing regulatory framework, operating in some instances in an unregulated environment. Coupled with limited laws and regulations governing the responsibility of general contractors for sub-contractors, crowd-work, triangular employment relationships or dependent self-employment, the end result is an increase in insecure work. Thus the changes in the organization of production risks undermining the employer-employee working relationships that form the basis of international labour standards and national labour laws, with profound consequences for social justice.

Track III will address the challenges that shifting organizational practices pose for the world of work, with a view to devising policy responses. Papers addressing the following questions are welcome:

- What are the implications of the changing organisation of work and production on working conditions, intensity of work, worker well-being and work-family balance?
- How can income security for workers be ensured as work and production become increasingly fragmented? What mechanisms are needed to ensure employer-responsibility across global supply chains? What kind of policies and institutions are needed to ensure that workers have sufficient labour income and social security coverage? How do we establish fair pay and regular work and working time within fragmented and globally-dispersed labour markets?
- What is the impact of the changing organisation of work and production on the incidence of home-based work? What policies are needed to ensure that home-based workers have sufficient labour protection?
- How can existing unions and new forms of organisation help in promoting the welfare of precarious workers and protecting their rights?

Track IV. The governance of work: labour regulation’s complex future

Coordinators: Colin Fenwick (ILO), Susan Hayter (ILO), John Howe (CELRL), Deirdre McCann (DLS)

As the global economy rapidly evolves, the question of law’s response has become both vital and complex. Legal regulation is a crucial component of effective policies towards socially just development. Yet the array of challenges captured in the *Future of Work* initiative are accompanied by complexities in securing effective legal regulation. These challenges - which are also crucial research questions for the interdisciplinary study of legal regulation - include: the role of labour law in employment creation; the enduring challenge of effective enforcement, in particular in financially-constrained states; the expansion of ‘non-standard’ forms of employment, including through the rise of the ‘gig economy’; the destabilising of once-secure rights through vocal challenges to tripartism, collective bargaining, and the right to strike; the myriad modes through which working relations evade regulatory regimes, particularly in the global South, that are captured

in the notion of the ‘informal economy’; the impact of austerity policies on worker protections and job quality; the challenge of effectively measuring and comparing the impact of regulatory regimes; the relationship between CSR initiatives and state-led interventions in the regulation of Global Supply Chains; and the most effective role and form of transnational standards, including those that emanate from the ILO.

Track IV will reflect on these crucial questions. The aim is to propose an agenda for the future regulation of the global economy as a contribution to the ILO’s *Future of Work* initiative. Papers are therefore expected to be policy-oriented in an expansive sense, by either proposing strategies and mechanisms to regulate modern labour or empirically evaluating existing regulatory frameworks.

RDW SESSIONS

A series of *RDW Sessions* have been organised by the Conference partner institutions. These *Sessions* will investigate key developments in working life and governance across the globe that are central to the ILO’s *Future of Work* initiative. Conference participants are also invited to submit proposals for Special Sessions (see below).

1. Better Work in Global Supply Chains: implications for the future of work

Convenors: Anne Posthuma (ILO), Arianna Rossi (ILO)

Harnessing labour regulation to achieve decent work alongside competitiveness in a changing world characterised by transnational employment relations in global supply chains (GSCs) is a critical question for analysis and policy. Given the importance of this issue, Special Sessions with a focus on labour in GSCs and on the *Better Work* programme (a joint ILO-IFC initiative) have featured in the *Regulating for Decent Work* Conferences since its inception in 2009. Each session has explored different dimensions, sectors and country case studies in GSCs research.

At the 2017 Conference, the GSCs *RDW Session* will focus on two core issues:

- (1) The specific opportunities and challenges for decent work and inclusive growth created in labour-intensive global supply chains, including lessons learned for policy and practice from the empirical experience of the *Better Work* programme;
- (2) Examining the dynamic transformations of GSCs in their structure, geographical location and operation as well as the implications (now and in the future) for workers, government and employers.

The choice of this dual focus arises in the context of two important events for the ILO - the Centenary Initiative on the Future of Work and the General Discussion on Decent Work in Global Supply Chains held during the International Labour Conference in June 2016, which produced a renewed mandate for the Organization to play a pivotal role in ensuring decent work in GSCs.

In this light, papers in this Special Session will address research questions related to decent work in GSCs, such as:

- *Empirically-driven contributions to understanding the implications of jobs in GSCs for workers’ lives beyond the workplace:* How has the *Better Work* programme affected workers’ families and communities? What are the impacts of quality jobs in global supply chains on changing societal norms?
- *Analyses of decent work dimensions of jobs in GSCs:* What do jobs in GSCs mean for workers in terms of wages, health services, and voice and empowerment? What is the outlook for the sustainability of changes brought about by *Better Work*? More broadly, what policies and practices can ensure that global supply chains deliver on their potential?

- *The changing nature of the organization of work and production*: What are the recent transformations taking place in GSCs and how do they affect work and production patterns now and in the future? How do GSC interventions such as *Better Work* influence firm behaviour and strategy and impact productivity? How can changes in the organization of work and production stimulate a move from a ‘low road’ to a ‘high road’ to development? How can lessons from *Better Work* translate in other labour intensive supply chains?
- *Governance opportunities and challenges in GSCs*: What global governance mechanisms and configurations can deliver win-win scenarios for workers, suppliers and brands alike in GSCs? How is the ILO positioned as a global governance actor in GSCs in the aftermath of the ILC 2016 General Discussion? How can greater synergies and coherence be built between different governance initiatives in the public, private and social spheres? Which governance approaches, such as *Better Work*, have shed light on work outcomes in global supply chains?

2. The future of globalization and decent work in Asia

Convenors: Jiyeun Chang (KLI)

The advent of globalization creates new opportunities for economic growth of some developing countries. However, there is enduring concern about the impact of globalization on works and workers. The internationalization of production through global supply chains (GSCs) has triggered significant changes in the quality of jobs and in labour relations in Asian countries. While some point to the positive impacts of globalization on labour, others argue that globalization centres exclusively on the use of low-skilled workers and maximizing labour cost-savings. Given these conflicting views, this *RDW Session* will support an open discussion on the future of globalization and its contribution to decent work, particularly in Asian countries. The policy areas for discussion will include the freedom of association and the right to effective collective bargaining, the abolition of child labour and forced labour, the promotion of non-discrimination and equality, occupational safety and health and working time arrangements, as well as the need for effectively-structured minimum wage regulation and effective wage protection measures that can shield workers and their families from income insecurity.

3. Unacceptable Forms of Work (UFW): global dialogue/local innovation

Convenors: Judy Fudge (University of Kent), Sangheon Lee (ILO), Deirdre McCann (DLS)

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has called for workers to be protected from unacceptable forms of work (UFW): jobs that “deny fundamental principles and rights at work, put at risk the lives, health, freedom, human dignity and security of workers or keep households in conditions of extreme poverty.” This policy agenda responds to growing awareness that an expanding segment of the global workforce is in insecure, detrimental and low paid labour, and that historically-disadvantaged groups, including women, migrant workers, working class communities, and ethnic minorities, are disproportionately found in precarious jobs. The growth in UFW contributes to the rising inequality that has galvanised contemporary debates on economic life. Yet the policy and regulatory strategies that can effectively eliminate UFW have not yet been identified.

The project on *Legal Regulation of Unacceptable Forms of Work* responds to the urgent need to combat UFW. Phase I of the project generated a *Multidimensional Model* that (1) identifies the dimensions of UFW (2) empowers local actors to determine priorities and (3) proposes strategic regulatory responses with substantial and systems-wide effects (Fudge and McCann *Unacceptable Forms of Work* ILO 2015). Phase II of the project, the subject of the *RDW Session*, will investigate legal initiatives on UFW in a number of countries, including by empirically testing the *Multidimensional Model*, to derive insights on effective regulation. An interdisciplinary and impact-centred project, it brings together scholars and policy-makers with the aim of generating meaningful reforms in the design and implementation of domestic and international laws that can reach the most disadvantaged in the global workforce.

SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS

The organizing committee invites you to submit abstracts for the 2017 RDW Conference:

- Abstracts should be in English.
- Including references and appendices, abstracts should be a maximum of 400 words.
- Abstracts are to be submitted on the Conference website: <http://rdw-conference.org/>
- Author(s) should indicate the preferred Conference Track (see above)
- Deadline for abstract submission: 31 January 2017 [*RDW Fellowship* applicants: 31 December 2016]

The abstracts will be subject to a competitive review process. Guidelines for final papers will be communicated to the authors of selected abstracts. It is expected that an edited volume will be produced, drawn from selected Conference papers.

PROPOSALS FOR SPECIAL SESSIONS

- Proposal for Special Sessions devoted to existing research projects and frontline themes are encouraged. The proposed Sessions should be international in content. They will be 90 minutes in length and involve at least three presenters, a chair, and a discussant if preferred. Session abstracts should be in English.
- Session proposals:
 - must have a maximum of 600 words, including references and appendices.
 - can be submitted on the conference website: <http://rdw-conference.org/>
 - should describe the session as a whole, including the names and affiliations of the three presenters, the chair, and the discussant if applicable. It is not necessary to identify a Conference track.
- Special Session abstract submission deadline: 31 January 2017.

FEES AND EXPENSES

There will be no fee for conference participants. Travel costs must be met from participants' own resources, although limited funds will be available for authors of selected papers who are based in developing countries (see *RDW Fellowships* below). Interest in these funds should be indicated in the abstract proposal.

RDW FELLOWSHIPS

A unique aspect of the RDW Conference is our commitment to creating an environment for global research dialogue, especially between industrialized and developing countries. To this end, an *RDW Fellowship* fund has been established to support researchers from developing countries who may otherwise be prevented from attending. Interested researchers are strongly encouraged to submit their abstracts no later than 31 December 2016 (please note that this deadline for submission is one month earlier than the general deadline).

Successful applicants will receive *Fellowship* grants of an amount determined by the estimated cost of travel and other expenses.

Important notice: Due to the level of interest in *RDW Fellowship* grants, from RDW2017 the *Fellowships* will be restricted to new applicants. Grants are not available for applicants who were born in developing countries but are currently working or doing a PhD in developed countries.

COMMITTEES

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FURTHER INFORMATION

Further details will be made available on the RDW website from 15 November 2016:

<http://rdw-conference.org/>

For any queries, please contact the Conference Organizing Committee rdw@ilo.org.