



ONLINE

SOCIAL PROTECTION

KNOWLEDGE-SHARING EVENT ON EXTENSION OF COVERAGE TO WORKERS IN NEW FORMS OF WORK IN ASIA AND PACIFIC

18 MAY – 26 MAY 2021

Information Note



Improving China's Institutional Capacity
towards Universal Social Protection Project



ILO/Korea
Partnership
Programme



BACKGROUND

Social protection systems are a key mechanism for reducing poverty, promoting equality and enhancing income security. When well designed, they attenuate the impact of social risks on households' incomes and foster social cohesion by reducing income inequalities after social transfers. However, fragmented social security systems with reduced social solidarity may also reproduce differences in the labour market status of workers in social protection outcomes across a wide range of life cycle events. In many countries, workers in various forms of employment fail to be adequately covered or protected whether due to the narrow legal scope of coverage, skewed eligibility criteria, the low monetary value of protection or employer non-compliance. Such problems are exacerbated in a context where the pattern or the inclusiveness of economic development, forms of industrial organisation or specific business models accentuate the prevalence of unprotected forms of flexible employment.

While some emerging work and employment arrangements may provide greater flexibility for workers and employers, they may also lead to significant gaps in social protection coverage. This occurs at a time when the increased precariousness of employment demands more and better social protection. It is therefore necessary to strengthen and adapt social protection systems to enable them to continue to fulfil their key role in preventing and reducing poverty, enhancing income security and limiting inequality, and instead fostering social cohesion and social inclusion.

As the world of work is evolving, shaped by global trends such as digitalization, automation and globalization, as well as socio-demographic changes, social protection systems will need to adapt to changing contexts and demands (ILO, 2017a, 2018a; ISSA, 2016). In particular, the growing diversification of work arrangements has become a distinct feature of today's labour markets in both developed and developing countries. While some of the more traditional forms of employment are disappearing or transforming in the wake of automation and digitalization, new forms of employment have been growing, with newly emerging occupations and sectors forms of work, such as the platform economy digital employment (ILO, 2017b, 2017c; OECD, 2016). Today, one of the critical questions in some countries is whether these forms of work are stepping-stones for more stable, permanent and formal jobs, or as economies grow at more steady states, the new forms of employment are here to stay and to become a permanent feature for growing segments of the workforce. That may also depend on whether social protection cushions people against economic and social shocks, at the occurrence of an accident, health hazard, or through short periods of unemployment during labour market transitions.

Many of the new forms of employment are found in forms of employment which deviate from a standard open-ended, full time, dependent employment relationship, which constitutes the key reference point for most labour and social security legal and policy frameworks (ILO, 2016a; Degryse, 2016). These new forms of employment offer both opportunities and challenges for labour markets and social protection (ILO, 2017d) making this one of the most debated topics in the moment in the area of social protection.

Among the questions that countries are confronted in terms of design the following appear to be the amongst the most important:

- Should there be comprehensive social security coverage for workers in all forms of employment or for certain labour relations (such as for example workers on digital platforms) a focus on most immediate and pressing needs of such workers? If yes what would be those social risks be? Should and could coverage be compulsory or does it need to be voluntary and if yes, how to take into account different contributory capacities?
- Should some requirements for eligibility and contributions be lifted or on the contrary be aligned with the case of permanent full time employees?
- Should other funding alternatives be considered instead of or to complement payroll contributions?
- Particularly with regards to accidents at work employers traditionally mediate between the worker and social insurance to carry out some administrative tasks (for example accident reports, medical progress reports and work resumption reports). How are these tasks performed in case of workers on digital platforms or other task forms of work? Can some form of government umbrella agencies or professional associations help?
- How is unemployment defined in case of self-employment? What mechanisms can be used to verify unemployment it and avoid fraud in case of self-employment or part time work?
- How to reduce administrative workload involved with changes in labour status, location of work and when multiple employers are involved?
- The increased use of digital technologies has allowed to provide cost efficient solutions to some of the questions above.

The COVID 19 pandemic has shown how work in some of the new forms of work, such as workers on digital platforms, temporary workers or freelancers is rapidly growing in many countries. As a result of the crisis, many governments have taken unprecedented steps to expand social security coverage for these groups of people, at fast pace. Many countries have specifically highlighted freelancers and gig economy workers as an important target group for this extension. In Spain, self-employed workers are now eligible for a benefit similar to that of employees in receipt of unemployment benefits. Special income support measures for the self-employed have been introduced in Singapore where self-employed persons can receive a monthly cash benefit for up to nine months, based on a household income and asset test. Malaysia expanded the Self-Employment Social Security Scheme from a protection to taxi, e-hailing and bus drivers to 19 other sectors.

These series of learning and sharing events over two weeks focus specifically on the experiences and investigations in South Korea, Japan and China reflecting on recent experimentations and innovations to strengthen the protection of workers in platform digital employment in the Asia and Pacific region.

OBJECTIVE OF THE EVENT

Discuss the challenges placed to social protection by the emergence of new forms of work in Asia and Pacific and the solutions that countries are adopting and the current ongoing national debates.

The event will offer a forum to discuss updates on policy regulations worldwide on the social protection of the work with a particular focus on Platform Economy Digital Employment. Specifically it will present findings emerging from two reports: a Study by the ILO ROAP on the challenges of covering workers in new non-standard forms of work in the Republic of Korea and will showcase the results of a Report assessing coverage, needs and measures for the social security of platform workers in China with results from survey data in China collected in March 2021 by Academy of Labour and Social Security of the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security.

It will also offer an opportunity for a first interaction in view of a regional publication on the topic, including among others Japan, China and the Republic of Korea.

FORMAT AND CONTENT

This knowledge-sharing event combines two online webinars of two hours each. Between the two webinars, a common workspace will be available for participants to place comments, share ideas, relevant documents and useful links.

Tuesday 18 May 2021: Live Webinar 1: The Challenges of Extending Coverage to Workers in New Forms of Work in Asia and Pacific

- Welcome remarks
- Session I: ***Introduction to the challenge***
- Session II: ***The social situation of workers in non-standard forms of work in China and India***
- Closing session: ***Explaining the virtual campus and the next session***

19 - 25 May 2021: Thinking of solutions

- Knowledge-sharing digital activities on the emerging solutions
- Open space for technical discussions
- Interaction with other participants
- Possibility to formulate questions for the panelists

Wednesday 26 May 2021: Live Webinar 2 - Ideas and innovation

- Wrap-up of the Live Webinar 1 and snapshot of the Knowledge-sharing Week.
- Session I: ***Innovations to extend social security coverage to different categories of workers in new forms of employment***
- Session II: ***Debate guided by the questions placed under the Knowledge-sharing Technical Forum***
- Closing session: ***Conclusions from the workshop – a contribution for the future of SP in Asia and Pacific***

* Simultaneous interpretation will be available in Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese.

AGENDA

DAY 1: The challenges of extending coverage to workers in new non-standard forms of work in Asia and Pacific

TIME	AGENDA
14:30 – 14:40 (Bangkok)	Welcome remarks Speaker: Mr. Kil Jun Noh, Director General, International Cooperation Bureau of the Ministry of Employment and Labour, Republic of Korea
09:30 – 09:40 (Turin)	Moderation: Ms. Panudda Boonpala, Deputy Regional Director, International Labour Organization (ILO)
15:30 – 15:40 (Beijing)	
16:30 – 16:40 (Seoul)	
14:45 – 15:45 (Bangkok)	Session 1: Introduction to the Challenge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Global Perspective Speaker: Ms. Shahrashoub Razavi, Director, Social Protection Department, International Labour Organization (ILO)
09:45 – 10:45 (Turin)	
15:45 – 16:45 (Beijing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The challenge of covering workers in new non-standard forms of work in Asia and Pacific, the case of the Republic of Korea. Speaker: Prof Sophia Seung Yoon Lee, Associate Professor of Social Policy at the Department of Social Welfare, Chung-Ang University, Seoul
16:45 – 17:45 (Seoul)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges of new forms of work from an Employer Perspective Speaker: Mr. Trevor Sworn, Director, Enduring Consultancy. Q&A
	Moderation: Ms. Panudda Boonpala, Deputy Regional Director, International Labour Organization (ILO)
15:50 – 16:20 (Bangkok)	Session 2: The social security situation of workers in non-standard forms of work in China and India
10:50 – 11:20 (Turin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report assessing coverage, needs and measures for the social security of platform workers in China. Speaker: Dr. Fei Ping, Head of Research, Chinese Academy of Labour and Social Security (CALSS)
16:50 – 17:20 (Beijing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The situation of workers in new forms of work in India. Speaker: Ms. Amarjeet Kaur, General Secretary of All India Trade Union Congress from India
17:50 – 18:20 (Seoul)	Moderation: Ms. Panudda Boonpala, Deputy Regional Director, International Labour Organization (ILO)
16:20 – 16:30 (Bangkok)	Closing session: Explaining the Virtual Campus and the next session
11:20 – 11:30 (Turin)	Speaker: Charles Crevier, Programme Manager International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO)
17:20 – 17:30 (Beijing)	
18:20 – 18:30 (Seoul)	

Knowledge-sharing Week (19-25 May 2021) – A virtual space for participants to place comments and questions. These interventions will be discussed during Day 2.

DAY 2 (26 MAY 2021): Ideas and innovation

TIME	AGENDA
14:30 – 14:40 (Bangkok)	Wrap-up of the Live Webinar 1 Snapshot of the Knowledge-sharing Week.
09:30 – 09:40 (Turin)	Summary of questions/discussions held on the E-campus workspace.
15:30 – 15:40 (Beijing)	
16:30 – 16:40 (Seoul)	
14:45 – 15:30 (Bangkok)	Session 1: Innovations to extend social security coverage to different categories of workers in new forms of employment
09:45 – 10:30 (Turin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates on European policies and measures in new forms of employment with particular reference to the platform economy, considerations for the Asia and Pacific Region Speaker: Ms. Maria Luz Rodriguez, Senior Specialist Labour Market Institutions, Inclusive Labour Markets, Labour Relations and Working Conditions Branch (INWORK), International Labour Organization (ILO)
15:45 – 16:30 (Beijing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Employment Support Programme: The introduction of Korean unemployment assistance scheme for no one left behind Speaker: Mr. Sang Hyon Lee, Research Fellow of Employment Service Innovation Division, Korea Employment Information Service (KEIS)
16:45 – 17:30 (Seoul)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension of Workers' compensation Insurance(WCI) & Employment Insurance(EI) for non-standard forms of work in Korea Speaker: Mr. Geun Youl Lee, Director in Korea Workers' Compensation & Welfare Service (KCOMWEL) • Q&A <p>Moderation: Mr. Luis Frota, Manager, EU-China project: Improving China's institutional capacity towards universal social protection</p>
15:30 – 16:20 (Bangkok)	Session 2: Debate guided by the questions placed under the Knowledge-sharing Technical Forum
10:30 – 11:20 (Turin)	Interactive session managed by the ITCILO
16:30 – 17:20 (Beijing)	
17:30 – 18:20 (Seoul)	
16:20 – 16:30 (Bangkok)	Closing session: Conclusions from the workshop – a contribution for the future of SP in Asia and Pacific
11:20 – 11:30 (Turin)	Speaker: Mr. Nuno Cunha, Social Protection Senior Specialist of the Decent Work Technical Support Team for East and South-East Asia, International Labour Organization (ILO)
17:20 – 17:30 (Beijing)	
18:20 – 18:30 (Seoul)	

INFO

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
PLEASE CONTACT**

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