

Revue Française des Affaires Sociales

**Call for multidisciplinary papers on
“Atypical jobs and employment and social protection”**

for issue no. 2-2013

This call for papers is of interest to researchers in the fields of political science, history, law, economy and sociology, as well as to professionals involved in social welfare.

Papers must be submitted before **May 30, 2013**.

The so-called “standard” employee, working for a single employer in a full-time, permanent position is still the predominant feature in the labour landscape. However, this standard employee is starting to lose ground to other types of employees and employment, qualified as “atypical” or “non-standard”. Part-time workers, workers with fixed-term contracts (this includes many employment schemes), temporary agency workers, apprentices, paid trainees, etc. fall into this category. They hold positions that are often, but not always, labelled as “insecure”. Indeed, as a general rule, there is less job security, wages are lower and/or working conditions are poor. Workers with few or no qualifications, women and young people are over-represented in this category. Clearly, the question of entitlement to social welfare for this category of workers is particularly relevant. A long history of secular movement towards universal access to basic rights for all workers (indeed - for the entire resident population in France) has certainly shaped our social welfare system. However, the duality or the segmentation of the labour market can go hand-in-hand with different compulsory or optional social welfare systems depending on the status of the worker. This can be less effective for workers with atypical jobs and employment status.

This is why the RFAS wishes to devote a special section to the question of social protection for this category of worker. Submissions should focus on the different social rights that people in atypical employment (and, as a result, affiliated to different social security regimes) are entitled to. In other words, compared to other employees, how and to what extent are they “losing out” or discriminated against when it comes to their social rights?

Specific focus should be put on amendments to labour legislation both in France and other countries of the European Union since the beginning of the economic crisis, as well as the impact on social rights for workers with insecure jobs and employment. It will be particularly important to study and analyse the evolution of welfare systems through the lens of current changes in the labour market, taking into consideration the wide variety of atypical types of employment.

In the context of this call for papers, we will consider that all professionally active people who do not fit the profile of the standard employee (i.e., working for a single employer, with a permanent, full-time contract a non-standard job or status) fall into the category of atypical jobs or types of employment. The list is long - self-employed workers with a certain degree of job insecurity (“auto-entrepreneurs”, consultants, etc.), part-time workers, temporary workers or workers with fixed-term contracts (especially certain government employment schemes), workers in the entertainment industry, seasonal workers, employees in the human services

sector paid at a fixed rate, paid trainees, workers posted for the purposes of cross-border provision of services, etc.

In order to address these issues, this edition of the RFAS wishes to:

- Summarise the present state of research with *Comparative literature reviews* on the different themes outlined in this call for submissions.
- Publish articles on specific research subjects. Suggestions for areas of research have been listed under broad headings below. The RFAS wishes to compile *original and innovative contributions* on these themes.
- Publish papers that specifically take into consideration the gender approach. It is true that women are over-represented in “insecure” jobs and in “specific types of employment”¹.

THEME 1: Workers in atypical jobs and employment: what are their rights to social protection?

The RFAS wishes to receive study results on the situation of these workers, focussing on one or several categories, with regard to the legal regulations that determine their entitlement to social welfare rights. Reviews of historical events will be welcomed on this subject with a view to showing how changes in the labour market or social welfare reforms have encouraged or, on the contrary, held back the move towards equal social rights.

Comparisons should be made using standard workers’ situations in order to identify any inequalities in terms of social rights suffered by atypical workers in different areas of social welfare: health insurance, retirement, unemployment, family allowances, early childcare facilities and services, minimum welfare benefits, disability, invalidity.

It will be possible to distinguish between cases where workers entitled to no social rights whatsoever and cases where even if they are entitled to them, they receive a lower level of coverage.

The social welfare system is organised according to socio-professional status and because of the co-existence of different social welfare regimes, entitlement to social rights can vary depending on the area of activity and employment. Some people are even excluded from certain systems. A well-known example is self-employed workers. Even certain workers on employment schemes do not qualify for unemployment benefit. There is also the case of workers posted for the purposes of cross-border provision of services. This is because they may be affiliated to the welfare system of the country they are working in (outside France). There is also the case of young workers under 25 who do not qualify for the RSA (*Revenu de Solidarité Active* - a complementary allowance to people working with low wages). Indeed, a detailed study of social rights for young people – over-represented in the category of insecure employment – would be particularly useful for this special section.

¹ The publication by Margaret. Maruani and Monique. Méron (2012), *Un siècle de travail des femmes en France* (Paris, La Découverte) may be consulted on this subject.

Non-eligibility for social rights may not be explicitly stated in the texts. It may simply be due to the actual nature of atypical employments, for example, insufficient working time and/or level of remuneration for example.

Shorter working time and job insecurity may also deprive workers of social rights. If a worker wishes to qualify for unemployment benefit, disability insurance or daily maternity allowance, he/she must have worked for a minimum amount of time prior to stopping work. Failure to comply with these requirements means exclusion. Temporary and seasonal workers – indeed anyone with an irregular career path - are over-represented in this case.

This also applies to certain rights and services provided by the family section of the social security system. For example, it would be interesting to know how many mothers and fathers with atypical jobs and employment status are eligible for the PAJE-CLCA and parental leave schemes, especially as far as the minimum amount of time they need to have worked beforehand is concerned (which, in the case of the CLCA can vary according to the child's rank in the family).

Finally, jobs and low-income often go together. So even if people in this type of job are not officially excluded from social welfare schemes, the welfare they receive is limited. This is the case for all contributory rights giving access to replacement income (unemployment benefit, maternity allowance, retirement pension, disability allowance benefit).

It would be interesting to know more about the impact of reforms on atypical workers compared to standard workers. Do retirement or unemployment benefit reforms tend to narrow or widen the equality gap between standard and atypical workers?

Another interesting focus point would be the question of entitlement to derived rights and social rights via the spouse, particularly retirement insurance (widowhood pension) or supplementary health coverage. To what extent will potential entitlement to these derived rights lead to wider acceptance and increase of insecure employment?

Although this call for papers primarily concerns compulsory social protection, research into optional schemes provided by either companies or collective bargaining agreements (for specific sectors of activity) will also be welcome, particularly regarding health and old-age/retirement. When reforms lead to reductions in compulsory health or retirement coverage decreases, optional coverage (health insurance, collective pension savings plans such as the PERP and PERCO, etc.) take on greater importance. It would be useful to explore inequalities in terms of access to these optional social protection schemes in order to better understand how people in atypical jobs are covered compared to people in standard employment. For example, what about optional health coverage when the employment is terminated? In this case, is there even more inequality in terms of entitlement to health care?

THEME 2: Workers in atypical jobs and non-take-up to social rights

We already know that almost 68% of the working poor qualifying for the RSA do not claim the rights they are entitled to. In the case of atypical workers, the problem of non-recourse to social rights is particularly relevant.

Moreover, according to a recent edition of the l'ODENOR (*Observatoire des non recours aux droits et services*)², 24% of eligible households do not receive the Supplementary Universal Healthcare Coverage (CMUC).

- What is the link between atypical and/or unstable employment and take-up to certain benefits? Social stigma, feelings of guilt, not knowing what rights are granted to this status, difficulty understanding (especially for foreigners) and complex regulations are all factors worth examining.
- Are the budgetary issues faced by many local authorities (for example, welfare pricing of energy and home help) an aggravating factor?

We know that there was an increase in salaried temporary employment following measures in favour of a more flexible labour market and less restrictive legislation for labour relations. Like outsourcing, temporary agency work is an adjustment variable used by companies to manage their human resources during periods of peak activity (the industrial and construction sectors are temporary agencies' top clients). Some temporary workers are hired with a GLE Contract (a GLE is a Local Employers Group - a non-profit organisation). In terms of non-recourse, do temporary agency workers differ from other employees with insecure jobs?

The different criteria used to grant access to many family allowance schemes end up favouring "protected" employees working in standard jobs. The CLCA is a perfect example of this (see *supra*). Will these complex allocation rules and eligibility conditions lead to a high non take-up rate among employees in atypical and/or insecure employment?

THEME 3: Comparisons with Europe and viewpoints from abroad

What lessons can France learn from changes and development in these areas in other countries? Has social welfare for atypical workers been reduced to a bare minimum or alternatively, has it been maintained or increased?

- Results of studies of the impact of the Hartz IV reforms introduced in Germany during Chancellor Schröder's 2nd term of office would be welcome. As part of structural changes made to the employment system in this country, the *Minijobs*, for example, were subjected to minimum social rights.
- The Scandinavian countries also increased the flexibility of their labour system with the implementation of the "flexi-security" system. By doing this have they moved away from their previous objectives?
- Studies of countries with a significantly high level of unemployment (Spain and Portugal for example) would also be of particular interest.

² ODENORE (2012), *L'envers de la fraude sociale, le scandale du non recours aux droits sociaux*, Editions La Découverte, Paris.

Further information on the contents of this call for submissions may be obtained by contacting Jeanne Fagnani, co-editor of the RFAS or Antoine Math (IRES) who have been charged with drafting this edition at the following addresses: **fagnani@univ-paris1.fr** and **antoine.math@ires-fr.org**

If you wish to submit a paper on this question you are requested to send it, together with a résumé and presentation of the author (c.f. "**instructions for authors**") to **Françoise Leclerc, Secretary General of the RFAS**: rfas-drees@sante.gouv.fr

before May 30, 2013

Instructions for authors (including editorial standards) are available at: http://www.sante.gouv.fr/IMG/pdf/recommand_articles-2.pdf

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