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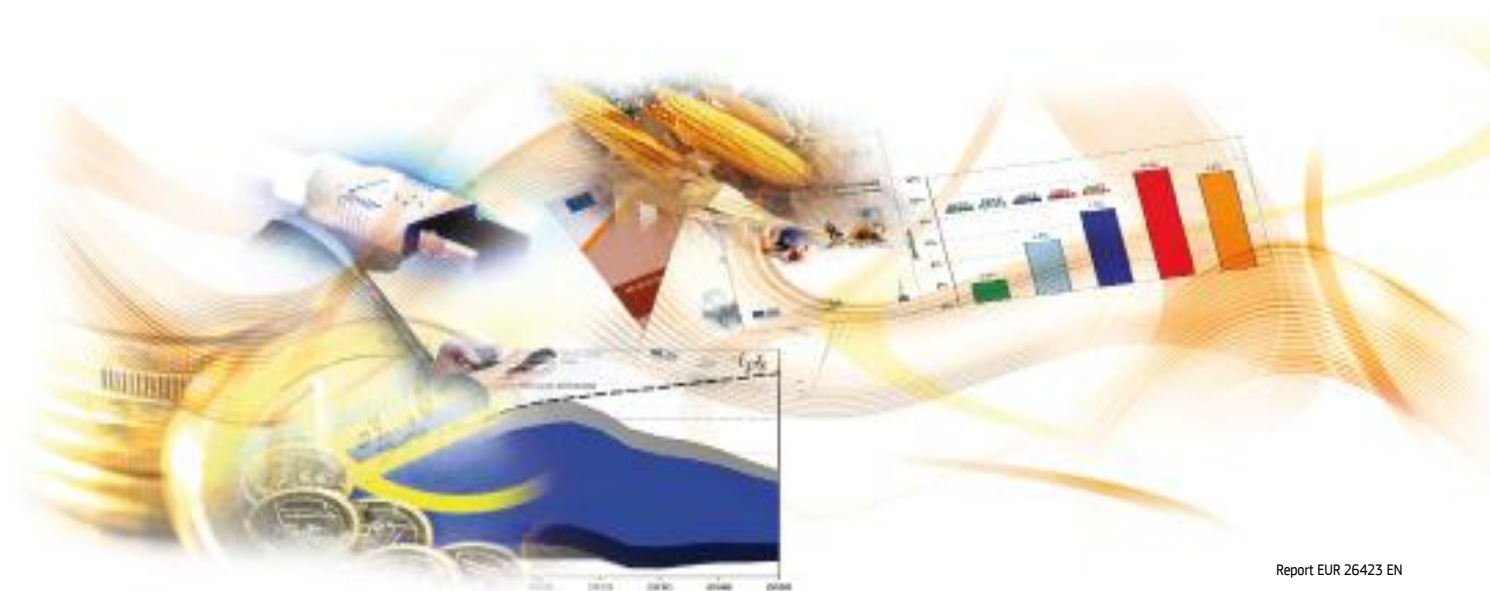
# Exploratory Research on Internet-enabled Work Exchanges and Employability

Analysis and synthesis of qualitative  
evidence on crowdsourcing for work,  
funding and volunteers

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Disclaimer: The views expressed are those of the authors and may not in any circumstances be regarded as stating an official position of the JRC or the European Commission.

## PREFACE

As the Internet pervades the economy and society, new tools and cultural models for human activity are being developed that change the practices and possibilities of work: the way that tasks are executed, how they are organized; how human capital is contracted, exploited and developed; and the ways and places that people are able and choose to work and develop their working lives.

In the current economic context where a key policy emphasis is on employment, the JRC-IPTS Information Society Unit undertook a project, ICT for Employment - Future Work, to build understanding of four novel forms of internet-mediated work activity, both paid and unpaid: online work exchanges, crowdfunding, online volunteering and internet-mediated work exchanges (time banks). The project comprised a set of parallel studies of the state of understanding and practice in these areas, and in-depth qualitative studies of the users and creators of services based on these concepts, analysed from the perspective of employability.

These studies capture some of the ways work, and pathways into work, are changing, in order to identify whether these changes offer opportunities for policy to promote employment and growth, or whether they represent new challenges with respect to labour markets and employment conditions, such as creating new barriers to participation in the labour market. There is considerable public, private and third sector activity in these areas, and many initiatives can be seen as models of social innovation. The findings are relevant to policy concerns in a range of EU policies, most notably, the Agenda for New Skills and Jobs, and specifically the *European Commission Employment Package 2012* Key Action 8 which identifies a need to "Map new forms of employment", and the *Social Investment Package 2013*.

The studies are both descriptive and analytic and set out to answer:

1. How do new internet-based systems based on exchange or donation of labour, or capital provision, operate from both the user and operator perspectives?
2. What are the opportunities and challenges that each of these types services present to policy?

The following reports have resulted from the project ICT for Employability.

Thematic reports:

1. Internet-mediated Volunteering in the EU: history, prevalence, approaches and relation to employability and social inclusion;
2. The potential of time banks to support social inclusion and employability: An investigation of the use of reciprocal volunteering and complementary currencies for social impact;
3. Crowdfunding and the Role of Managers in Ensuring the Sustainability of Crowdfunding Platforms;
4. The Value of Crowdfunding;
5. From Cloud to Crowd: Online work exchanges for contract and crowdsourced labour;

Synthesis reports:

1. CrowdEmploy: Crowdsourcing Case Studies. An empirical investigation into the impact of crowdsourcing on employability;
2. Exploratory Research on Internet-enabled Work Exchanges and Employability (the present report);
3. ICT for Employment, Future Work Final Report, Four trends in paid and unpaid work: implications for employability.

These reports are available on the JRC-IPTS website:

<http://is.jrc.ec.europa.eu/pages/Employability-TheFutureofWork.html>

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is one of a series from the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies of the European Commission's Joint Research Centre ICT4EMPL Future Work study. This study focuses on internet-enabled exchanges which are changing the way people interact in their daily lives, particularly when undertaking paid and unpaid work. The choice of topics was originally inspired by the term 'crowdsourcing', a term used here to define internet-enabled exchanges *that allow users (organisations or individuals) to access other users via the internet to solve specific problems or to achieve specific aims*. In particular, the CrowdEmploy study looks at:

- *Crowdsourcing for paid work (CSW)* – using the internet to access and undertake paid work (usually, but not necessarily, undertaken remotely);
- *Crowdsourcing for funding (CSF)* – using the internet to access funding for personal or social projects, including start-up businesses and other ventures;
- *Crowdsourcing for unpaid work (CSV)* – using the internet to access unpaid work (which may, or may not, be undertaken online);
- *Exchange rings* – a subset of CSV denoting a method of reciprocal service exchange that uses units of time as a currency (sometimes referred to as 'time banking').

This report will demonstrate that the above practices break out of the conventional definition of crowdsourcing and represent a much broader and heterogeneous set of practices.

**Crowdsourcing for paid work (CSW)** is a relatively new form of managing and organising a (potentially) geographically dispersed pool of labour using the internet. It is generally accepted that crowdsourcing for paid work is a growing trend in which both small businesses and large multinational corporations participate. While some types of crowdsourcing focus on the outsourcing of micro-tasks (small tasks completed in a few seconds or minutes) to a large 'crowd', other freelance exchanges allow for the contracting of 'macro-tasks' and complex tasks requiring more skill and time. The latter are growing very fast. A wide range of services are being crowdsourced including: software or product development; design; writing and editorial services; translation; administration; tagging and link checking; and web development. While much of this work is online, online exchanges can also be used to organise face-to-face or onsite work, such as caring. Evidence from the research concludes that:

- Overall, employer/ organisational practices are of particular relevance to CSW. CSW offers buyers (i.e., organisations or individuals purchasing services) access to a pool of suitable labour 'on demand' (i.e., sellers, or individuals undertaking work for payment), so affording them the flexibility to manage and respond to their changing needs. By engaging with CSW, they are able to access an online pool of resources, without incurring a long-term commitment to workers. The buyers argued that this flexibility was efficient and cost effective.
- For small businesses, CSW offers them a way of accessing resources for specific specialist tasks, which they would not be able to afford if they had to recruit a direct employee. Nonetheless, the case study evidence suggests that cost is not necessarily the foremost criterion in buyers' selection processes. For some buyers, foremost concerns are with quality control and ensuring reliability of the seller. This is where rating and reliability systems play an important role; even though, in the case studies, this was not akin to ongoing monitoring and surveillance.

- CSW can be a *route to employment* for individuals, whether they are engaged in employment, self-employment or are unemployed or economically inactive. However, CSW is *probably not suitable for everyone*: individuals lacking generic skills are unlikely to be successful operating in a freelance capacity, even if they have specialist specific skills and their socio-economic and household context is compatible with freelancing.
- CSW may offer opportunities for people to build *work experience* (with buyers as potential referees for future job applications), to *'brush up' existing skills* through practice, to *uncover latent skills*, and to *develop specialist skills* (albeit at the workers' expense), which may lead to other employment –even in sectors and in roles where individuals may have had no previous direct employment experience.
- CSW can be a means of *enhancing adaptability*, as those successfully engaged in this form of work have learnt to be flexible and adaptable to choose how, when and what to work on; and/or by responding to employer demands. Individuals can create and expand their networks through CSW, and thus the potential employment opportunities available to them.

**Crowdfunding (CSF)** is defined as *an online mediated exchange that allows users (organisations, individuals, etc.) to access funding from other users via the internet to solve specific problems or to achieve specific aims*. It can help individuals raise money to realise projects, causes or ideas and it can also generate indirect effects. Entrepreneurs and SMEs can benefit from crowdfunding at multiple levels. It provides opportunities to test the market, to make pre-sales, and to garner encouragement and support from others. Crowdfunding platforms can be seen as intermediaries that assist fundraisers or project owners in the process of raising monetary contributions through the internet. Though there are endless possibilities in how crowdfunding platforms work; platforms are typically classified into four different groups: donation-based crowdfunding, reward-based crowdfunding, lending-based crowdfunding, and equity-based crowdfunding. This report focuses on reward- and equity-based crowdfunding and concludes that:

- The *relationship between employment and equity-based crowdfunding* is perhaps more evident than it is for *reward-based crowdfunding*. The former can lead to self-employment and to the creation of new jobs if a business with growth potential is successful.
- A key feature of CSF is having the drive and motivation to make a project or business idea happen. Employability skills (e.g. digital, communication and problem solving skills) are deployed and developed in this process. Moreover, in order to achieve their aims, fundraisers and entrepreneurs must use and develop a range of resources (including raising funds and developing their networks) which can also be seen as relevant to employment and employability.
- CSF is suitable for individuals who have a project in mind which is well-developed before they decide to run a crowdfunding campaign. Individuals who do not have skills in the use of digital social media, or an initial community of backers and a convincing project, will struggle to make a reward-based campaign successful. On the other hand, equity-based crowdfunding requires entrepreneurial and business skills.

Another form of crowdsourcing involves **using the internet to access unpaid work (CSV)**. This can take the form of volunteering or participation in exchange rings. These two internet-enabled exchanges involve calls made to the 'crowd' via the internet to participate in volunteering activities or in services that involve reciprocal exchanges of services. In the former case, organisations seeking volunteers may benefit from the possibility of reaching a larger number of people via the internet and recruiting volunteers more efficiently. In the case of exchange rings, the internet may make it possible to extend exchanges beyond the local community. However 'going global' is not necessarily the aim of these communities, which may place more emphasis on neighbourly support. Case study evidence suggests that:



- **Online volunteers** interviewed already had good IT literacy, which allowed them to engage in online volunteering without the need for IT training. More generally, skills that the volunteers honed or developed depended on their volunteering role and included writing clearly in an online context that is devoid of non-verbal clues, interpersonal skills and skills in specific areas associated with their role. As a result of their online volunteering and also the training they received for their role, some became more confident, while others felt that their roles offered little, in any, scope for skills development.
- While face-to-face volunteering roles may offer other benefits, such as direct personal contact and the development of a wider range of skills, the greater flexibility of the online volunteering role helped some individuals to continue volunteering when their personal circumstances changed or called for a reduction of the time commitment they were able to give.
- **Exchange rings** can be seen mainly as a means to create local networks and provide neighbourhood help. Employability effects are merely a by-product of these voluntarily-organised exchange rings.
- Similarly to CSW and CSF, the skills needed to participate in exchange rings are generic. These skills are transferable to employment, and in some cases, there were ways in which members learned new skills through participation in an exchange ring. The supportive context offered by reciprocal exchange rings is an important factor here.
- Exchange rings are valuable in broadening social networks, which in turn may be useful in finding opportunities for formal employment.

Four essential pre-conditions for engaging in crowdsourcing are: (1) awareness of platforms; (2) access to ICT; (3) literacy and (4) basic (or above) ICT skills. Many platforms have safeguards in place to ensure a good service is delivered by all parties. Labour market intermediaries, including public employment services, education and training providers and the voluntary sector, together with the platforms themselves, have a role to play here in helping to ensure that all pre-conditions are in place.

The evidence from the case studies and the temporal conjunction of *advances in technology* with *economic crisis* suggests that these two drivers have worked together to reinforce participation in crowdsourcing. Some users, who might not otherwise have done so, have turned to CSW/ CSF and CSV in the face of a relative lack of alternative opportunities (for labour market participation and in some instances for investment). The evidence suggests that participation in crowdsourcing activities often takes place alongside conventional economic exchanges.

## Conclusions:

1. Crowdsourcing is not only about the younger generation who have grown up in the digital age, but also about the fact that confidence and experience are important if the user is to operate effectively with internet-enabled platform skills.
2. The skills and attributes individuals bring to crowdsourcing are important. Self-efficacy, self-motivation and confidence, as well as relevant job-specific skills, may be more crucial to operating in a crowdsourcing environment than in many conventional jobs.
3. The social networks users bring with them are important in accessing opportunities; moreover, crowdsourcing can help activate and invigorate existing networks to the users' advantage.
4. In crowdsourcing for work, the onus is on individuals to develop their own skills, while volunteers might find that organisations invest in their skills development.
5. Crowdsourcing has relevance not only for paid work, but also unpaid work and organisations that use volunteers.
6. Internet-enabled platforms are opening up new ways of raising capital, finding clients and subcontractors, and balancing paid and unpaid work –thus they enable new ways of working.
7. Crowdsourcing offers new pathways to learning and practising skills while building the networks necessary to operate in this environment, and can offer new social support.
8. Crowdsourcing is associated with increased flexibility for all parties involved, but at the cost of uncertainty.
9. The global and the local matters: while globalisation is a feature of some sorts of work, other aspects of this environment are very much about reshaping local communities and labour markets through local connections.
10. Crowdsourcing is diverse and dynamic. This poses challenges from a policy perspective and means that a 'one size fits all' policy, whether in terms of supporting users or in terms of regulation, is unlikely to be effective.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. The CrowdEmploy study – introduction

#### 1.1.1. Key terms

Key terms that are central to this study are:

- *Crowdsourcing* – an online mediated exchange that allows users (organisations or individuals) to access other users via the internet to solve specific problems or to achieve specific aims;
- *Crowdsourcing for paid work (CSW)* – using the internet to access and undertake paid work (usually, but not necessarily, undertaken remotely);
- *Crowdsourcing for funding (CSF)* – using the internet to access funding for personal or social projects, including start-up businesses and other ventures;
- *Crowdsourcing for unpaid work (CSV)* – using the internet to access unpaid work (which may, or may not, be undertaken online);
- *Exchange ring* – a subset of CSV denoting a method of reciprocal service exchange that uses units of time as a currency (sometimes referred to as ‘time banking’);
- *Employability* – gaining, sustaining and progressing in employment.

#### 1.1.2. Overview

This report one of a series of reports from the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies of the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre ICT4EMPL Future Work study. The studies focus on the changing shape of work in the ‘internet age’, with technology, culture, globalisation and the economic crisis together creating new opportunities and encouraging people, businesses, public bodies and the third sector to explore new forms of business and work. The specific focus is internet-enabled exchanges and the way these are changing the ways people interact with each other and with organisations, and the skills that required and used.

These relatively recent online interactions present new opportunities, impact on the way people interact with each other and with organisations, and have led to changes in skills required and used. This report is based on a set of in-depth qualitative cases commissioned from The University of Warwick (the ‘Crowdemploy’ study).

#### 1.1.3. Aim and definitional issues

The aim of the CrowdEmploy study was to explore the relationship between the use of internet-enabled exchanges and employability through insights from six qualitative case study examples. It addressed the following interrelated research questions in more detail:

- How do internet-enabled models based on exchange or donation of labour or capital operate from both user and operator perspectives?
- What are the opportunities and challenges that these services present for employment and employability?

This report explores the findings of Crowdemploy concerned with the “relationship between the potential to access the ‘crowds’ via the internet to achieve a goal and employability” (Barnes, et al., 2013<sup>1</sup>).

The starting point for the research was the term ‘crowdsourcing’, which was first coined by Howe (2006, 2008)<sup>2</sup> to define the outsourcing of work to a large group through an open call made possible through advances in technology and individual access to personal computers, smart phones and the internet. However, this study adopts a much broader definition of crowdsourcing. It focuses on the possibility to access a wide range of resources via the internet, which can be seen as opening new possibilities at the same time as generating new challenges. The working definition of crowdsourcing used here is:

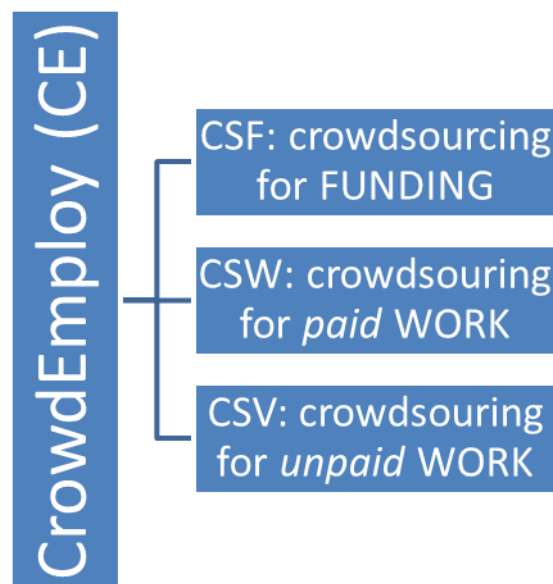
an online mediated exchange that allows users (organisations or individuals) to access other users via the internet to solve specific problems or to achieve specific aims.<sup>3</sup>

More precisely, this report focuses on ‘crowdsourcing’ in relation to:

- 1) using the internet to access funding for personal or social projects (CSF), including start-up businesses and other ventures with a direct or indirect connection to employability and/or employment;
- 2) using the internet to access and undertake paid work (CSW) (which is likely to be conducted remotely); and
- 3) using the internet to access unpaid work (CSV) and develop employability skills.

Figure 1.1 provides a diagrammatic representation of the CrowdEmploy study and its focus. Further details are provided in Section 2.

**Figure 1.1: CrowdEmploy: Focus of the study**



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<sup>1</sup> Barnes, S-A., de Hoyos, M., Baldauf, B., Behle, H. and Green, A. (2013) *D2: Review of state of the art and mapping: CrowdEmploy*. Review submitted to the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies.

<sup>2</sup> Howe, J. (2006) 'The rise of crowdsourcing', *Wired* 14(6); Howe, J. (2008) *Crowdsourcing: How the Power of the Crowd is Driving the Future of Business*, London: Random House Business.

<sup>3</sup> The term ‘users’ highlights the fact that the actors that represent the supply and the demand side vary depending on the type of crowdsourcing initiative involved.

## **1.2. Methodology**

### **1.2.1. Elements of the study**

The CrowdEmploy study comprised a *literature review* examining the hypothesis that crowdsourcing enables exchanges that can support employability. This also included a *mapping of initiatives* and platforms in the European and global context and classification. An extensive list of the types of platforms supporting crowdsourcing for funding (CSF), crowdsourcing for work (CSW) and crowdsourcing for unpaid work (CSV).<sup>4</sup> The final element of the study was a set of *six case studies*; the units of analysis for these case studies can be defined as crowdsourcing platforms providing a range of services. These investigated how, and if, CSF, CSW and CSV could be regarded as enabling support factors that can assist both individuals and employers by enabling the connection of labour supply and demand and the exchange of resources such as time and money.

### **1.2.2. Case study platforms**

The platforms researched were selected purposively based on their potential to reflect the impact of crowdsourcing on employment and employability, though they cannot be regarded as representative. They include CSW, CSF and CSV platforms, and so cover both paid and unpaid work. They also play different roles in the direct and indirect development of employment and employability. The case studies are indicative of the range of platforms and practices in existence. They are drawn from three European Union countries: the UK (four of the cases are from the UK, which is indicative of both the availability of platforms in the UK and the global reach of the English language), Spain (where there has been particular interest in the development of crowdsourcing in the context of economic crisis), and Germany. The managers/ representatives of the following platforms agreed to participate in the study:

- PeoplePerHour – a UK-based crowdsourcing for paid work platform;
- Slivers of Time – a UK crowdsourcing for paid work matching platform operating in the public, private and voluntary sectors as a staffing tool for outsourcing and finding work in the local community;
- PleaseFund.Uk – a reward-based crowdfunding platform from the UK;
- SociosInversores – an equity-based crowdfunding platform from Spain;
- Do.It – a UK-based platform for facilitating volunteering;
- Tauschwiki and LoWi e.V. – exchange rings in Germany.

The case study results presented are exploratory and provide understanding of how crowdsourcing operates and of the opportunities and challenges it presents in terms of employment and employability. The case studies serve as a basis for further research by suggesting approaches to be taken in the study of internet-enabled exchanges, as well as which questions might be asked. Although the platforms are unique in many ways, their challenges and possibilities are likely to resonate with those experienced by other platforms within and beyond the study.

## **1.3. Structure of the synthesis report**

The aim of this synthesis report is to integrate the findings from the literature review and the six case studies undertaken. A matrix approach has been used to compare and contrast material across the case study reports and to allow similarities and differences to emerge. The similarities

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<sup>4</sup> Which is subdivided into online volunteering systems and exchange rings) systems.

suggest patterns across initiatives and types of initiatives, while differences indicate specific variations.

The types of internet-enabled exchange platforms (CSW, CSF, CSV online volunteering and CSV exchange rings) are described in the second section of this report. Alongside this description, how the platforms work and for whom, plus their features and attributes are summarised and discussed. An overview of their relationship with policy actors is also included. The third section of this report examines the literature on internet-enabled exchanges in relation to the employability framework developed by Green et al. (2012<sup>5</sup>). Key themes are discussed together with the implications for support, training and development of crowdsourcing platforms. Implications for policy in terms of gaps in knowledge, barriers, challenges and key learning points are noted in the fourth section. The report concludes by looking to the future and reporting on possibilities for widening the evidence base.

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<sup>5</sup> Green, A., de Hoyos, M., Barnes, S.-A., Owen, D., Baldauf, B. and Behle, H. (2012) *Literature Review on Employability, Inclusion and ICT, Report 1: The Concept of Employability, with a Specific Focus on Young People, Older Workers and Migrants*. Report prepared by the Warwick Institute for Employment Research (IER) for the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS). Available at: <ftp://ftp.jrc.es/pub/EURdoc/JRC75518.pdf>. (Accessed: 20/03/2013).

## 2. OVERVIEW OF INTERNET-ENABLED EXCHANGES EXPLORED IN THE CASE STUDIES

### 2.1. Introduction to case studies

This section presents findings from the six case studies, characterised by the four types of internet-enabled exchange platforms defined as part of the wider CrowdEmploy study. These included crowdsourcing for work (CSW) platforms, crowdsourcing for funding (CSF) platforms and crowdsourcing for unpaid work (CSV), which here is subdivided into online volunteering and exchange rings. For each case a description of the platform is presented, followed by an outline of how the platforms work and for whom, key features and attributes, and relationships with policy actors, particularly with regard to skills, training and regulatory issues.

#### 2.1.1. Case study methodology

The IER research team approached the platform owners to invite them to participate in the study. Once collaboration was agreed, platform owners provided IER with a list of potential interviewees for the study. As requested by IER, the candidates were selected purposively to reflect some of the diversity of users, albeit these interviewees should not be regarded as representative<sup>6</sup>. Those interviewees who agreed to take part were interviewed by telephone at a time convenient to them; a few interviews were conducted face-to-face. In total 55 interviews were conducted with users of crowdsourcing platforms (i.e. those providing services and those wanting services performed), together with 13 interviews with platform owners, representatives and intermediaries.

The purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to discuss user experiences of the platforms, their engagement with internet-enabled exchanges and the impact it had on their personal and professional life. In addition, interviews were also conducted with platform owners and managers. Interviews lasted between 18 and 75 minutes and were digitally recorded; field notes were made for data analysis purposes. Participant consent was sought before each interview took place and interviewees were reassured that their identities would be anonymised. Pseudonyms are used throughout the case studies.

Detailed case studies are provided in a separate report.<sup>7</sup> This synthesis report provides less detailed summaries.

#### 2.1.2. Overview of those engaged in crowdsourcing

Table 2.1 and Table 2.2 provide an overview of the characteristics of interviewees.

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<sup>6</sup> For Do-it the approach was slightly different: the owner of the platform was approached and once collaboration was agreed, the researcher contacted organisations using Do-it and volunteers who filled posts advertised on Do-it through these organisations. In the case of PeoplePerHour one 'buyer' and one 'seller' were sourced directly by the researcher.

<sup>7</sup> Green, A., de Hoyos, M., Barnes, S-A., Baldauf, B. and Behle, H. (2012) *CrowdEmploy: Crowdsourcing Case Studies An empirical investigation into the impact of crowdsourcing on employability*, IER, University of Warwick, Coventry.

**Table 2.1: Characteristics of platform users**

Characteristics*		CSW		CSF		CSV online volunteering Dolt.org	CSV** exchange rings Tauschringe
		PeoplePer Hour ***	Slivers of Time	Sociosl nverso res	Please Fund. Us		
Gender	Male	3 sellers 5 buyers	1	7	5	2	3
	Female	3 sellers	4	2	5	3	5
Age	Under 20 years					1	
	20-29 years	1 seller		2	2	3	
	30-39 years	1 seller		1	5		
	40-49 years	3 sellers		4	2		
	50-59 years	1 seller	1	2	1		
	60-64 years		3				
	65 plus		1			1	
Employment status	In education					1	
	employee and freelancer	2 sellers		1	1		2
	freelancers (self- employed)	4 sellers		8	8		2
	In transition from education to work				1	1	
	employed full-time or part-time		1			2	4
	retired/semi- retired		4			1	
Time engaged with platform	Less than 1 year:	1 seller					
	1-3 years	2 sellers	3				
	More than 3 years	3 sellers	2				8
Previous engagement with this form of internet- enabled exchange			No: 5	Yes: 2 No: 7	Yes: 2 No: 8	No: 5	

\* Data provided where available.

\*\* All of the platform owners/managers were also members of exchange rings, and most of them were also asked about their activities as members.

\*\*\* In relation to economic status the PeoplePerHour case study sellers reported different statuses at different times; for example, two had started using PeoplePerHour when sick, some who were currently freelancers had previously been employees and freelancers, and some were 'buyers' as well as 'sellers'.



**Table 2.2: Overview of other users/actors interviewees**

	CSW	CSF	CSV online volunteering	CSV exchange rings
<b>Platform owner/manager/representative</b>	2	2	1	2
<b>Intermediary/broker using platform</b>	2	n/a	3	n/a
<b>Others</b>		1 user from another platform		1 Scientific researcher

Interview data were analysed using a matrix approach in which interviewees' comments were classified according to emerging topics and then each topic was sub-analysed and developed. The research was conducted between April and September 2013.

## **2.2. Crowdsourcing for paid work**

Crowdsourcing for paid work (CSW) is a relatively new form of managing and organising a (potentially) geographically dispersed pool of labour using the internet. Felstiner (2011: 147)<sup>8</sup> provides a definition of crowdsourcing *for paid* work as:

...cognitive piecework – discrete sets of cognitive tasks, performed and compensated at piece rate within an online platform. Some tasks require low to moderate skill and can be performed in a comparatively short period of time. Others call for more qualifications and expertise.

This method of employment involves: *buyers* (those requiring tasks to be completed for compensation); *platform owners*<sup>9</sup> (those providing an online platform in which tasks are advertised); and workers or *sellers* (those who respond to the advertisement, undertake and submit the work, then receive financial compensation).<sup>10</sup> It is generally accepted that crowdsourcing for paid work is a growing trend with small businesses to large multinational corporations participating. Historically, CSW has been about outsourcing of micro-tasks which are small tasks completed in a few minutes (such as checking hyperlinks, tagging images or content, proofreading online content), but macro-tasks and complex jobs are becoming more common in CSW. These complex or macro-jobs take longer to complete, often requiring specialist skills and knowledge. Both micro and macro tasks can form part of a larger project or job. A wide range of services are being crowdsourced, including: software or product development; design; writing and editorial services; web development; and so on. Tasks may be advertised online, task administration may be done online and the task itself may be undertaken online or offline.

Two different case studies of crowdsourcing for paid work platforms are presented next: PeoplePerHour and Slivers of Time.

<sup>8</sup> Felstiner, A. (2011) 'Working the Crowd: Employment and Labor Law in the Crowdsourcing Industry', *Berkeley Journal of Employment & Labor Law* 32(1): 143-203.

<sup>9</sup> In some instances, platform owners can be buyers themselves. For example, large organisations can develop and establish their own platforms (such as LEGO).

<sup>10</sup> So, in relation to classical labour market definitions, the buyers represent labour demand, the sellers represent labour supply and the platform represents a labour market intermediary.

## **2.2.1. PeoplePerHour**

### **2.2.1.1. Description of the platform**

PeoplePerHour (PPH) is a CSW matching platform “where employers find freelancers and freelancers find work”;<sup>11</sup> (see <http://www.peopleperhour.com/> for further details). Its founding was inspired by a “vision of the future of a world which works in a more open and interconnected way, where both the provider and buyer of work get the job done smarter, more flexibly and more independently”. The management team at PPH aims to power the transition towards ever more businesses “using remote talent in the cloud to become more productive, lean, agile and tap into better talent”.

PPH was established in 2007 by the founder from a London office. In 2008 it was featured on the BBC 6 o’clock News. In December 2010 Series A funding was secured for £3.6 million led by Index Ventures and Michael van Swaaij (former Chairman of Skype), an angel investor. In April 2011 PPH opened an Athens office (mainly concerned with technical developments) and in May 2012 a New York office. In October 2012 a further £2 million funding was secured from Index Ventures. By May 2013 PPH had over 450,000 users in over 200 countries. PPH is the UK and European leader in online working.

From the time of the launch of PPH ‘buyers’ have posted jobs on the PPH internet platform for freelancers to respond to. This conventional CSW model of employers specifying jobs and selecting workers (in this case freelancers) to undertake them has continued.

In July 2012 PPH launched ‘Hourlies’ – partly to transform the way people think about getting jobs done online and, as a by-product, to encourage more activity, more quickly for users, with the purchase of an Hourlie leading to another job, and perhaps another bigger job. Hourlies involve freelancers posting specific services on the PPH internet platform that they can undertake for a set price (often in an hour – hence the name ‘Hourlies’) for ‘employers’/‘buyers’ to browse and respond to. This way of working accords with the PPH mission of: “allowing people to recognise their dreams of working for themselves and building their business from the ground up. One hour at a time.”<sup>12</sup> One year later a new feature – Hourlie Add-ons<sup>13</sup> – was introduced allowing the addition of extra services to Hourlies.

These new features are indicative of the evolution and dynamism of the platform. Key drivers of change are users’ feedback<sup>14</sup> and developments in hardware and software. With regard to hardware key developments are the greater use of mobile devices and tablets, and associated advances in software are utilised also. The PPH management team reported that legislation and regulation are not key barriers in the future development of the platform; their perception is that regulators increasingly appreciate the importance of innovation and technology in driving entrepreneurship.

Types of work undertaken on PPH include (in usual descending order of volumes of work undertaken on the platform) design commissions (including Websites, book covers, etc), Web development, writing (for magazines, blogs, etc.), business support, commissions for videos, photos and audio work, marketing and PR, creative arts, target marketing for market research and advertising purposes, administration, social media applications, translation, and software

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<sup>11</sup> Northcott M. (2013) ‘BLOG: New age freelancing is genuinely cool’, *Management Today* 9 July 2013, <http://www.managementtoday.co.uk/news/1190028/BLOG-New-age-freelancing-genuinely-cool/?DCMP=ILC-SEARCH> (accessed 26 July 2013).

<sup>12</sup> From presentation on PPH provided to the researcher.

<sup>13</sup> See <http://blog.peopleperhour.com/blogroll/updates/add-a-little-extra-to-hourlies-to-put-more-money-in-your-pocket/> (accessed 8 August 2013).

<sup>14</sup> Users can post feedback on current services and ideas for new services on PPH forums – see <http://blog.peopleperhour.com/blogroll/introducing-a-new-feature-requests-forum/> (accessed 8 August 2013).

development, followed by categories of ‘extraordinary’ and tutorials. Within each of these categories there are sub-categories (see Table 2 for examples from selected major categories).

### **2.2.1.2. How the platform works and for whom**

The term ‘buyer’ is used to describe those organisations and individuals purchasing services by posting jobs on PPH and/or buying Hourlies on PPH. The term ‘seller’ is used to describe those individuals undertaking work for payment via PPH by responding to jobs posted on PPH and/or from Hourlies. Despite this distinction it should be noted that ‘sellers’ can become ‘buyers’ – either simultaneously or subsequently, and likewise ‘buyers’ can become ‘sellers’ (although this is likely to occur less frequently than in the former case).

The manner in which PPH operates for ‘buyers’ and for ‘sellers’ is summarised in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3: Summary of the operation of PPH for buyers and sellers**

<b>Buyers</b>	<b>Sellers</b>
<i>Post a job</i> – outlining to freelancers what is needed, receive proposals, review and select, make a down payment to start the job, which is released on completion	<i>Build a profile</i> – outlining story and skills
<i>Search ‘Hourlies’</i> – see if offers meet requirements	<i>Search for jobs and submit a proposal directly</i> – search and get notifications of jobs; 15 proposals per month free – can buy more proposal credits
<i>Search sellers’ profiles and contact freelancers directly</i>	<i>Post ‘Hourlies’</i> – outline what can do for a fixed price
Monetary implications: <i>NO CHARGES</i>	Monetary implications: <i>PPH ‘TOP SLICE’ PAYMENT</i>

As indicated in Table 2.3, *buyers* can either post a job (providing details of an hourly rate or a fixed price) on PPH, wait for proposals to come in, select and contact one or more likely ‘sellers’ through PPH to discuss a proposal in more detail.<sup>15</sup> In order to ensure that the services purchased meet buyers’ requirements and to help sellers in bidding for jobs, buyers are urged to provide a clear brief – setting out details of deliverables expected and timescales, and a realistic budget. Secondly, buyers can search Hourlies systematically, or on spec, to see if these provide the services required. Thirdly, buyers can approach sellers directly and invite them to bid for work.

When buyers award jobs/ purchase Hourlies they are asked to pay one or more deposits (relating to specific job milestones) or place all funds into an Escrow account with PPH. Funds are held in the Escrow account until the job has been finished, the seller raises an invoice, and the buyer confirms that the job has been completed and pays the invoice. This Escrow facility provides the seller with security that the funds are available before starting work on particular milestones of the work or the whole job.

Just as it is in buyers’ interests to write a clear brief setting out services required, so *sellers’* need to build a profile on PPH, providing (what they consider to be) relevant details about themselves and setting out their skills. They can obtain work in two ways: first, by registering for notifications of jobs likely to be of interest to them and/or by searching for jobs posted on PPH and submitting a proposal directly. Sellers are advised to write a clear proposal without delay – tailored to the needs of the ‘buyer’, including relevant samples setting out what they can do (as appropriate) but not free

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<sup>15</sup> Buyers and sellers are encouraged to undertake all communications and make all agreements on the PPH ‘WorkStream’. In the event of a dispute, buyers and sellers are encouraged to try and resolve disagreements between themselves. In case of the need for PPH Customer Services to provide dispute resolution, PPH will use the communication in the WorkStream as sole evidence.

ones. Secondly, sellers can obtain work via buyers responding to Hourlies that they have posted on PPH.

The key principle underlying the PPH *funding model* is that no charges are placed on buyers for posting jobs or for finding and using sellers on PPH (see Table 2.3). However, buyers incur fees for payment processing when using a credit/debit card or PayPal to pay for services on PPH. Buyers also incur a small fee if they choose to have their job listed as 'urgent' on PPH.

While it is free for sellers to register, promote their services, post Hourlies and search for work on PPH, sellers incur costs on earnings from work obtained from and undertaken through via PPH. From August 2012 the service fees for sellers involved:

- 15% (excluding VAT) on the first £175<sup>16</sup> billed and paid by the Buyer in the calendar month; and
- 3.5% (excluding VAT) on all work billed and paid for *after that* in the month.

The 15% fee on the first £175 of a seller's activity per month is where PPH makes its profit, whereas the standard 3.5% fee following that is a servicing fee designed to recoup costs and serve PPH customers. The pricing structure is designed to support loyal users (i.e. those using PPH most) and to encourage sellers to undertake longer-term work rather than purely ad hoc work through PPH each month.

Sellers receive a free allocation of 15 proposal credits per month for bidding for jobs on PPH. Sellers can purchase additional proposal credits for a fee. Sellers also incur fees if they purchase 'extra features' – including 'featured proposals' and 'featured Hourlies' – that are designed to help them win work on PPH. Seller feedback suggests that paying for extra advertising to 'feature' an Hourlie can boost interest and sales, so easily recouping the costs incurred.<sup>17</sup>

PPH offers access to a worldwide virtual workforce for short- or long-term jobs. Over three-fifths (63.5%) of users in May 2013 were in the UK, with the next largest shares in India(9.9%), the USA (5.3%), Pakistan (2.6%), the Philippines (2.0%), South Africa (0.7%) and Canada (0.7%).<sup>18</sup> In the UK 47% of users were in London.

### **2.2.1.3. Features and attributes**

#### *Feedback and rating system*

Trust between buyers and sellers in PPH is built via an online reputation system based on feedback reviews involving a 'star rating' (from 1\* for the worst rating to 5\* for the best rating) and comments system for work carried out on PPH.<sup>19</sup> The buyer can (but need not) rate the seller, and vice versa when the seller completes a job and the buyer pays the invoice. The feedback rating and comments given are based on personal opinion and so are subjective.

If a job is cancelled by the seller (for example due to a problem with delivering the work on time or to specification) the seller will automatically receive a 1 star feedback review. If a cancellation is caused by the buyer then the buyer will automatically receive a 1 star feedback review.

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<sup>16</sup> PPH's rationale for the £175 fee is that this is the average day's earnings on PPH.

<sup>17</sup> For a review aimed to support sellers see <http://blog.peopleperhour.com/blogroll/the-benefits-of-featured-hourlies-an-impartial-review/> (accessed 8 August 2013).

<sup>18</sup> The English language would appear to be an important influencing factor here, with several Commonwealth countries included, rather than other EU Member States.

<sup>19</sup> While feedback is at the centre of the online rating system the synthetic algorithm producing the ratings also takes account of factors such as speed of response, job abandonment rates, refunds and disputes. The feedback system is honed over time.

The rating system is designed to help buyers select sellers and to advise sellers about buyers. Hence feedback ratings on PPH are an important indicator of the reliability of PPH users (both buyers and sellers) based on their track record on PPH. On a user's profile page the feedback scores they have received on jobs are displayed as a buyer (under "My Buyer Activity") and as a seller ("My Seller Activity"). An overall feedback rating is provided which is the percentage of positive (4 and 5 star) reviews that they have received over the total number of reviews received. Buyers and sellers with high overall ratings appear at the top of relevant buyer and seller lists on PPH.

#### *Skills needs and development*

Users need to have at least a minimum level of IT skills to use PPH and subsequently may develop their skills base further as a result of using the platform. These skills may be specific and/or generic. To compete successfully for tasks sellers also need job specific skills. It is up to buyers as to whether they are prescriptive about formal qualifications/ specialist skills required. In practice many sellers will have the job specific skills required to perform a task already, whereas in other instances sellers may develop specific skills while doing the job.

#### *Making work attractive*

For PPH to work effectively for users the work provided has to be attractive to all parties. This entails buyers making their specifications attractive to sellers, and sellers making their bids attractive to buyers. Cost is a key component here, but is not the sole factor in considerations of attractiveness. While a low cost may be attractive to buyers (holding all other factors constant), low costs are not attractive to sellers.

#### *Selection issues*

Closely related to the attractiveness issues outlined above are those of selection. While cost is one component, buyers want to engage sellers who will reliably produce work of the required work on time. Likewise sellers prefer buyers who provide a precise specification with a realistic cost and timeframe. This means that procedures and practice supporting quality working are important from both buyer and seller perspectives.

#### *Quality issues*

The feedback and rating described above lies at the heart of ensuring quality control. It serves as a guide for buyers and sellers. From the evidence of the case study interviews conducted, sellers tended to be more concerned about the rating system and its impact than were buyers. This may reflect what some interviewees perceived as inequalities in the relationship between buyers and sellers using PPH, with buyers being in what one seller described as "a privileged position".

### **2.2.2. Slivers of Time**

#### **2.2.2.1. Description of the platform**

Slivers of Time is a matching platform; an "online people booking system for paid workers and volunteers" (Slivers of Time website, 2013). It operates in the public, private and voluntary sectors. It operates two business models: first, an organisation can purchase a licence for the platform for a year and have unlimited transactions; and second, an organisation can pay per transaction.

Slivers of Time is a sophisticated "booking system for all forms of work" (Slivers of Time website, 2013) and is considered as "a warehouse of hours [...] where hours are the currency" (Representative, Slivers of Time). Individual buyers can seek out workers themselves on the platform or use a broker/intermediary (this can be either the agency or an advocate, such as a family member). Alternatively, a buying organisation can set up administrators who act as buyers and proactively seek out workers (paid and unpaid) from a work-ready workforce who meet their requirements. Equally, workers can find work (paid and unpaid) that fit their requirements. This is considered to be both efficient and cost effective for the buyer, and for the worker enables

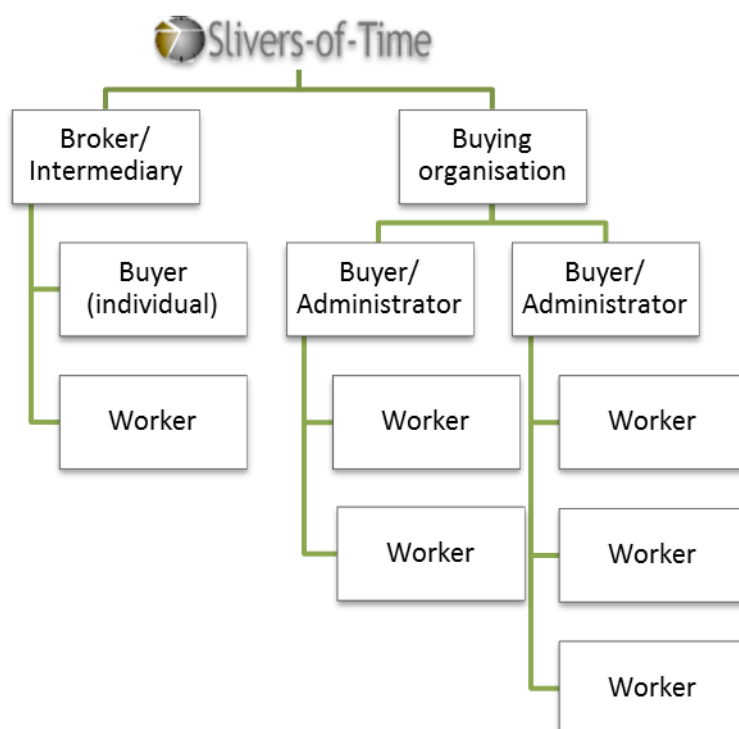
engagement in the labour market under their terms. It is not a bulletin board or request for a quote site. It can be defined as “a click, click, buy model” (Representative, Slivers of Time), therefore a buyer with a staffing need can log on to the platform, search and select a worker to fill the shortage.

Unlike other CSW platforms, Slivers of Time does not create a market platform for buyers and workers where workers bid for work; rather it can be seen as a new staffing tool for outsourcing work and finding work (see Figure 2.1 for a representation of the Slivers of Time operation). In terms of its implementation it is a complex system. More information on the Slivers of Time platform is available at: <http://www.slivers.com/>. Currently, there is no information on the profile of the workers (paid and unpaid) using the Slivers of Time platform. A profile of those interviewed is presented in Tables 2.1 and 2.2, above.

The platform was developed in 2005 by the platform founders with a grant of £0.5 million from the UK Central government (the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (OPDM), now known as the Department for Communities and Local Government) to create a platform for those able to engaging in some work in their local communities (Rowan, 2010<sup>20</sup>). It was part of the initiative to ‘heal deprivation’ by enabling people to find flexible work opportunities in their local community. Slivers of Time is now self-funding through commercial licencing, grants and funding from other unspecified sources.

Currently, there are nine members of the Sliver of Time team. The Slivers of Time database currently includes 65,000 workers of which an estimated few hundred engaged in paid work or volunteering on a particular day. The Slivers of Time platform operates across the UK working with a diverse range of organisations, agencies and charities, but will operate at the local level.

**Figure 2.1: Slivers of Time operational model**



<sup>20</sup> Rowan, W. (2010). *Could online marketplaces tackle poverty? JFR Viewpoint*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Retrieved from: <http://modernmarketsforall.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/tackling-poverty-online-summary.pdf>

### **2.2.2.2. How the platform works and for whom**

A buying organisation or broker/intermediary (known as 'buyers' for the purposes of this report) purchase a licence for the Slivers of Time platform and receive training and support in operating the platform<sup>21</sup>. One buyer talked about the process of setting up the platform and working with workers to introduce and train them on how to use the platform. Sarah reported that: "It was a time consuming process for one person in the organisation". The platform is embedded within the organisation's website and operated from within it. The worker's relationship will be with the buying organisation or the broker/intermediary rather than Slivers of Time. Table 2.4 summarises the stakeholders and actors using the Slivers of Time platform, their relationships and their role in the process.

Workers<sup>22</sup> (both paid and unpaid) are then recruited, vetted (i.e. legally able to work, checked via the Disclosure and Barring Service) trained (where necessary) and shown how to use the platform inputting their availability for up to 6 weeks at a time. This availability can be amended at any time, thus giving the individual worker control of their time hour by hour. For Slivers of Time, workers can be both paid and unpaid and in terms of commitment the unpaid workers or volunteers are similar to timebankers. The buyer (the buyer organisation or broker/intermediary) completes the worker profile detailing contact information, qualifications, skills, travel-to-work area, tax code and, if the platform allows, variable pricing can be set (this could increase if they are required to travel further or would be available at short notice). All work is recorded and declared for taxation purposes. The platform is able to construct individual pay rates dependent on the job offered and how far the worker would have to travel (i.e. if a worker has to take two buses to reach a destination then the pay rate can be increased to cover the extra travel cost). Therefore, the platform "enables you [the buyer] to create talent pools of vetted and approved people that are right for your organisation, right for your roles. Ahead of you needing them for an individual opportunity" (Slivers of Time website, 2013).

When a position needs filling a buyer is then able to search for available workers who meet their needs and selection criteria (such as time, duration of job, remuneration and location) and book them. This is one transaction. Buyers can search for workers who they have trained or hired previously and look at the reliability scores. Workers can be scored on their reliability, punctuality and ability to undertake the work by buyers. The job (or booking) may be for one hour immediately to one day a week for the next month. Once a buyer has selected a worker, the worker is then notified by email or SMS text (dependent on their preferences inputted into the platform) of the job and can decide whether they wish to accept. The offer is only valid for a certain period. An acceptance or refusal code is sent by the worker back to the platform. Buyers are notified of the worker's decision and are able to search for another worker if the offer is not accepted. If the worker accepts the booking then they are sent information on the post and who to go to upon arrival. Each booking generates a timesheet which has to be approved by both the buyer and worker. The platform accommodates feedback from buyers, which contributes to the reliability monitors

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<sup>21</sup> Costs of the licence are not publicly available.

<sup>22</sup> Workers can be unemployed, employed part-time or full-time, self-employed or freelancers.

**Table 2.4: Summary of the stakeholders and actors using the Slivers of Time platform**

Stakeholder/actor		Role
<b>Buyers</b>	Broker/intermediary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installs the Slivers of Time platform and embeds within website</li> <li>• Vet workers and build a worker profile on the platform</li> <li>• Induct workers into the Slivers of Time platform</li> <li>• Broker any booking requests from individual buyers</li> <li>• Ensures worker profiles are up-to-date</li> <li>• Monitors platforms usage</li> <li>• Ensure a suitable pool of a labour is maintained</li> <li>• Organise training where required for workers</li> </ul>
	Buying organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Installs the Slivers of Time platform and embeds within website</li> <li>• Vet workers and build a worker profile on the platform</li> <li>• Induct workers into the Slivers of Time platform</li> <li>• Set up administrators on the platform to act as buyers</li> <li>• Monitors platforms usage</li> <li>• Ensure a suitable pool of a labour is maintained</li> <li>• Organise training where required for workers</li> </ul>
<b>Individual buyers</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post a job, search and select suitable workers</li> <li>• Make a booking</li> <li>• Provide feedback on individual workers</li> <li>• Approve timesheets</li> </ul>
<b>Workers (paid and unpaid)</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete profile and confirm legally able to work and availability</li> <li>• Maintain an online diary of availability for 6 week periods</li> <li>• Respond to booking requests</li> <li>• Approve timesheets</li> </ul>

Slivers of Time does not offer digital tasks (although there is no reason why it could not do so), unlike many crowdsourcing for paid work platforms. The platform is able to support all types of work undertaken in the local area, some examples include administration, social care, retail to roles in the food and drink sector. Work can be both paid and unpaid. It is unlike other platforms (such as PeoplePerHour) that offer remote working, because work is community based and local. The work offered through Slivers of Time varies greatly. Workers spoke of last minute employment opportunities lasting for a couple of hours to 6 days a week over a six-week period. Buyers usually booked small amounts of time.

### **2.2.2.3. Features and attributes**

#### *Operation of the platform in local markets*

Setting up new markets can be challenging as they are “fragile [...] and you need a block of buying power to get it going and bring it through critical mass” (Representative, Slivers of Time). The Slivers of Time team analyses the market to determine where the buying power is; invariably it is the public sector that is likely to have a fund for contingent labour. Although the platform and model would be advantageous to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), individually they do not have the buying power. However, the public sector has to deliver a range of public services, needs part-time casual workers to deliver those services. It also has an interest in supporting their local labour market, as well as enabling individuals to enter and engage in the local labour market.



An analyses of the labour market not only entails determining interest by key stakeholders, but also determining whether local councils have managed service agreements in place (such as a contract with an agency to supply labour), which means Slivers of Time could not be implemented. The public sector is seen as “a catalyst”, which enables SMEs to then get involved (Representative, Slivers of Time).

#### *Slivers of Time and voluntary work*

Initially, the platform dealt with and managed opportunities for paid work, but in 2009 volunteering opportunities were also offered. An umbrella system was developed and implemented, which received mixed reviews (as discussed later). Currently, the largest share of the Slivers of Time business is volunteering as it is the supplier of two Department of Health contracts. This share of the market is likely to expand in the future due to cut backs in government-funded social care provision, the increasing demand for social care help and the changes to the personalisation of services, where individuals will be buying the services they require at a particular time. Many charities (i.e. Age UK, Mencap) are responding to the cutbacks and trying to engage volunteers to take on these social care roles. The Slivers of Time platform has been specifically designed to support this form of working in the community.

The Slivers of Time platform was found to operate very differently in the volunteering sector explored as part of this case study. Very few buyers and workers were reported to be using the system as intended or should be. All bookings from workers and buyers were inputted by a broker/intermediary. When an individual is assessed in terms of their needs by the broker/buyer, they are introduced to the online booking platform and asked if they will use it. The platform is also shown to the volunteers (or workers) during their induction, but they are reluctant to input their availability with most preferring to pick up the phone. The broker/intermediary has tried one-to-one training on the platform with workers/volunteers, but it has not increased usage. However, the broker will still be using the platform over the longer term as it is considered a better way of working. The aim will be to get new volunteers on board, which is expected to be easier as they are younger. Expansion of the service is a natural part of the organisation's growth and not a consequence of the platform.

#### *Skills needs and development*

To operate the Slivers of Time platform, workers need some basic IT skills and access to the internet through a PC or other device. All the workers interviewed had received training on how to use the platform and manage their online diaries. All reported that they were confident in their IT skills. One example was reported in which a buying organisation received government funding to train and induct potential workers to the Slivers of Time platform. For many, this training introduced them to some basic IT skills, developing their confidence in using IT and accessing the internet.

Workers were also asked about any training they had received on using the platform as part of the Slivers of Time workforce, together with their experience of learning and skills development since their engagement with crowdsourcing for paid work. The most common training offered was induction training (such as an introduction to the organisation and skills relevant to the current job). For example, one organisation would, every so often, run a one day induction course for around 20-30 people registered on the Slivers of Time platform and interested in working in the sector to increase the pool of potential workers. Some buyers offer workers induction training so that they become part of an approved workers list. The representative from Slivers of Time suggested that buyers have also been known to offer preferred workers higher levels of training so they are more desirable to the organisation. The majority of the workers spoke of their on-the-job training and having to pick up skills and learn quickly. All of the workers seemed to enjoy this element of the work. One buyer stressed the importance of on-the-job training, but also reported that workers received support whilst undertaking their role with another member of staff or the manager. Overall, it was evident that workers/sellers were able to develop their employability, as they were continually given opportunities to learn new skills and develop existing skills.

### *Reliability scores and quality issues*

The Slivers of Time platform operates a rating system to promote and ensure quality of its workers. When a new market is created all workers have unproven or untried reliability. The platform monitors a range of indicators, such as timeliness of response, non-response, notice required to accept a job and feedback from buyers. Workers have to have a track record to prove reliability. Those that have proven reliability are considered more appealing. It is the agency that sets what equates to poor reliability (for instance, five non-responses could result in a reduced reliability score). Workers were aware of their reliability score and all reported high rates (this may reflect bias in the sample willing to be interviewed). Most were very casual about their scores, not placing any emphasis on them. For these workers, it was about being a 'good worker'; being punctual and 'not letting people down'.

For buyers, the reliability score for each individual gave them some assurance about the individual they were booking. Both buyers interviewed reported that there had been very few instances where someone had not turned up for a booking; their experiences had been positive. They also understood the importance of providing positive feedback to their workers (both paid and unpaid). Neither suggested that there was high turnover of workers as they were able to book individuals they had trained and employed before.

### **2.2.3. Relationship with policy actors**

#### **2.2.3.1. Skills and training**

Whilst many individuals engaged in this form of employment had well developed skills demonstrated by their previous or current engagement in the 'traditional' labour market, evidence emerged of individuals not only developing their skills, but also expanding them as a result of CSW activities. Interviewees from both PeoplePerHour and Slivers of Time case studies highlighted the skills, knowledge and networks they had developed in order to be successful. The onus was very much on the individual to develop those skills. However, Slivers of Time is different from PeoplePerHour due to the organisation of the work in that brokers or intermediaries often provided induction training and training relating to the job being performed for those registered on the platform. This was mainly to ensure that they had a work-ready pool of labour to call upon. Conversely, PeoplePerHour may be thought of as a freelancing platform where sellers are expected to have the necessary skills before they are engaged by a buyer. It is up to sellers to equip themselves with the necessary skills.

Generally, platforms users need a minimum of basic IT skills and access to the internet in order to engage in this form of employment. Overall, there is need to enable access and the development of basic IT skills. There is also a role for provision of specialised short courses for to develop specific skills relevant to types of work they wish to do.

#### **2.2.3.2. Regulatory issues**

Although no specific regulatory concerns were reported in the crowdsourcing for paid work case studies, there are underlying issues around how this form of employment is monitored and whether it is declared for tax and benefit purposes in the UK. In the case of the Slivers of Time platform, individuals' online profiles included their tax code so enabling monitoring and reporting for tax purposes. In the case of PeoplePerHour the onus is on individuals to organise their own tax affairs.

Some individuals reported concerns around the lack of job security and benefits linked to being an employee. These issues are associated with freelancing in general, rather than being specific to internet-enabled platforms *per se*, and interviewees seemed to accept this as consequence of engaging in this type of employment. Some interviewees commented on relatively poor rates of pay, tending to note that pay rates via CSW tended not to be commensurate with employment in the 'conventional' labour market. This raises questions regarding (self-)exploitation.

### 2.3. Crowdsourcing for funding

Crowdfunding supports projects that seek to gather monetary contributions through calls aimed at individuals who can be accessed via the internet. Such projects gather resources from the 'crowd' and in this way crowdfunding can be seen as a form of crowdsourcing (Belleflamme et al., 2012; Lambert and Schwienbacher, 2010)<sup>23</sup>. In line with the general definition of crowdsourcing, crowdfunding is defined here as

An online mediated exchange that allows users (organisations, individuals, etc.) to access *funding* from other users via the internet to solve specific problems or to achieve specific aims.

Crowdfunding can help individuals raise money to realise projects, causes or ideas but it can also generate indirect effects. De Buysere et al. (2012)<sup>24</sup> suggest that entrepreneurs and SMEs can benefit from crowdfunding at multiple levels: crowdfunding "can provide the benefits of pre-sales, market research, word-of-mouth promotion, and crowd wisdom without additional cost" (p. 18). For individuals or organisations seeking funds for a personal or social project, crowdfunding can provide opportunities such as developing a reputation and a network of contacts. Thus crowdfunding can be seen as a process that involves connecting people to achieve a specific aim.

Crowdfunding platforms can be seen as intermediaries that assist fundraisers or project owners in the process of raising monetary contributions through the internet. There are endless possibilities in relation to how crowdfunding platforms work; nonetheless, platforms are typically classified into four different groups:

- Donation-based crowdfunding: Contributions are made towards a charitable cause or social enterprise. Donations are intrinsically or socially motivated rather than motivated by monetary rewards.
- Reward-based crowdfunding: Investors receive non-monetary rewards for their funding. Their contribution can be a donation or a pre-purchase, or some other form of non-monetary reward.
- Lending-based crowdfunding: Investors expect to receive money over time in exchange for their loan, although projects may accrue funding without offering an interest payment – for example, if they are charitably motivated.
- Equity-based crowdfunding: Consists of investing in a company in exchange for stakes in the business. Contributions may be motivated for monetary reasons but social or intrinsic reasons are not excluded.

The next section describes the two platforms that took part in the crowdfunding case studies. One is a reward-based platform and the other is an equity-based platform. The cases illustrate the diversity of crowdfunding models. For example, in the case of the equity-based platform, entrepreneurs do not seek small donations from a large number of supporters. Instead, they seek, from among the 'crowd', a small number of investors (ideally one or two) who are interested in

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<sup>23</sup> Belleflamme, P., Lambert, T. and Schwienbacher, A. (2012) *Crowdfunding: Tapping the Right Crowd*. Available at: [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=1578175](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1578175) (Accessed: 31/01/2013); Lambert, T. and Schwienbacher, A. (2010) *An Empirical Analysis of Crowdfunding*. Available at: <http://www.crowdsourcing.org/document/an-empirical-analysis-of-crowdfunding-/2458> (Accessed: 04/02/2013).

<sup>24</sup> de Buysere, K., Gajda, O., Kleverlaan, R. and Marom, D. (2012) *A Framework for European Crowdfunding*. Available at: <http://www.crowdfundingframework.eu/>. (Accessed: 16/02/2013).

their business idea and are willing to provide credit as well as support in other ways. This model would not fit some definitions of crowdfunding. For example, NESTA defines crowdfunding as “a method of getting finance by sourcing small amounts from a relatively large number of people rather than getting large amounts from one or a few”.<sup>25</sup> However, the broader definition of crowdfunding used in this study focuses on crowdfunding as an internet-enabled exchange, which allows users to access monetary resources. More specifically, crowdfunding is defined here as:

An online mediated exchange that allows users (organisations, individuals, etc.) to access *funding* from other users via the internet to solve specific problems or to achieve specific aims.

These differences also mean that the aims and concerns of users of these platforms vary and it may even be argued that they represent two altogether different types of internet-enabled exchanges.

### **2.3.1. Description of the platforms**

#### **2.3.1.1. PleaseFund.Uk: A reward-based crowdfunding platform**

PleaseFund.Uk is an international crowdfunding platform based in the UK through which money can be raised for “any ideas, causes or charities” (see <http://www.pleasefund.uk/> for further details)<sup>26</sup>. The platform provides an online space where people can showcase their projects to the online community and invite other people to pledge money to make it happen. This platform was created by James Bailey and Tarkan Ahmet in 2011 as a result of ideas they had been developing for several months and a vision to create a global platform that would work well in the UK context. PleaseFund.Uk has their offices in London and technical aspect of the site is covered from Santa Barbara, Ca.

Being an ‘all or nothing’ platform, PleaseFund.Uk fundraisers will receive the money pledged only if their campaign achieves its target amount. If this is not the case, all the money will be returned without any fees or costs for fundraisers or backers. If a project reaches its funding target, a flat fee of five per cent of the money raised will be charged. In addition to this, there will be other fees charged by the payment processor; these fees can take up to a further 3.5% of the total amount raised. The platform website explains these fees and advises fundraisers to factor into their target amount the money that would be deducted if their campaign were successful.

As a reward-based platform, PleaseFund.Uk fundraisers offer rewards in exchange for pledges to contribute to the campaign. Rewards are defined by fundraisers and can be anything related to the project or the fundraiser. This includes gifts in kind, experiences or products with or without market value. The fact that rewards can be in kind and of no market value points to the blurred distinction between donation- and reward-based platforms. In all, it can be said reward-based platforms may include donation-seeking projects such as the charitable project presented as a first example in Table 2.. The table includes other examples of projects and illustrations of the rewards offered.

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<sup>25</sup> <http://www.crowdingin.com/what-we-mean-crowdfunding>

<sup>26</sup> PleaseFund.Uk is now known as ZEQUS and from September 2013 all PleaseFund.Uk URL's are re-directed to ZEQUS.com. The platform has made some changes in the way campaigns are run and is now free in that no commission is charged.

**Table 2.5: Example of a reward-based crowdfunding project**

Category	Example	Rewards (examples)
Charity	<p>“A half marathon for <i>La casa de mi padre</i> and <i>La casa de esperanza</i>. This project seeks to provide opportunities for those who simply don't have them in Chasquipampa, La Paz &amp; the city of el alto in Bolivia.”</p> <p>Target: 500 GBP (successful)</p>	For 10 GBP: “Thank you for your support, without it this campaign would not be possible! We will find a way of saying thank you even if it is a simple card, or shoutout through Facebook or Twitter!”
Comics/ Writing& publishing	<p>Boom Books and Comics Project Funds. This project seeks funds for developing comic books and further material.</p> <p>Target: 30,000 GBP (unsuccessful)</p>	For 49 GBP: “Pledge £49 or more and get your name printed on both books 'thank-you' pages, + "OBON" in E-book version + ARTWORK signed CUSTOMIZABLE.”
Dance	<p>‘Connectingvibes*’ bid to perform at the 2013 Grenada National Dance Festival. The campaign seeks to raise funds to cover the airfares of seven members of the company to attend the festival.</p> <p>Target: 5,000 GBP (successful)</p>	For 10 GBP: “Dance Class with IRIE! Dance Theatre at the Moonshot Centre in New Cross as part of the Dance Yourself Fit Programme, choice of African Dance, Caribbean Dance or Pilates.”

### **2.3.1.2. SociosInversores: An equity-based crowdfunding platform**

SociosInversores (<http://www.sociosinversores.es/>) is an equity-based crowdfunding platform (CSF) founded in January 2011 in Spain by Javier Villaseca, a young entrepreneur who was 23 at the time. The idea of the platform emerged from the combination of a series of factors including previously developed ideas about potential new businesses, an awareness of crowdfunding developments in the US market, and the lack of financing possibilities for those looking to start a business or develop a project. An underlying factor was the European economic crisis which has affected the employment situation of a high proportion of the population and which had prompted individuals to seek self-employment options.<sup>27</sup> As the founder explained:

The idea of the platform emerged in the light of the current economic situation in Spain. I've always had an entrepreneurial character and had plenty of ideas in my head but access to credit was something that was stopping me. I observed what was going on in the US market in relation to crowdfunding and decided to adapt the idea to the Spanish market.

The combination of these factors led to the development of an online platform which provides a space for entrepreneurs to showcase their projects and business ideas, and for the public to search for investment opportunities. As a collective financing instrument, SociosInversores is a resource that increases the possibility of accessing funding for new or existing projects by tapping on the financial resources of those who are looking for alternative options to invest in new ventures and

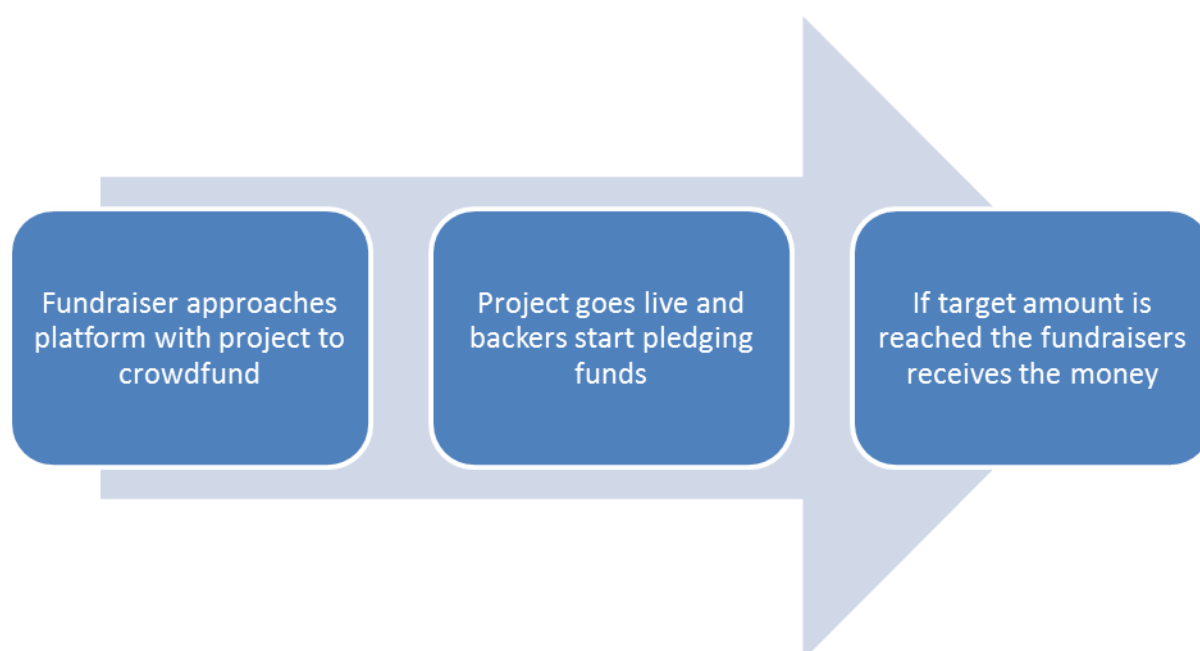
<sup>27</sup>Spain's unemployment rate was estimated at 26.3 per cent in June 2013, while the youth unemployment rate was 56.1 per cent; these figures are the second highest among the Member States after those for Greece. (Source: Eurostat unemployment statistics: Available at: [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/Unemployment\\_statistics#Main\\_statistical\\_findings](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Unemployment_statistics#Main_statistical_findings) Accessed 12/09/2013).

support their development. It can potentially lead to new businesses and to the creation of new jobs.

### **2.3.2. How the platforms work and for whom**

PleaseFund.Uk and SociosInversores work in very different ways and during the analysis it became evident that they offered different services for different users. PleaseFund.Uk is an all-or-nothing reward-based crowdfunding platform<sup>28</sup>. This means that fundraisers can only cash in the pledges they receive if the target amount is reached. Figure 2.2 provides a description of how this platform works. First, fundraisers approach the platform and present their project, cause or idea and plans for the campaign. The project is reviewed by the platform team who review it and might make some suggestions or requests before it is deemed ready to be made online. Once this is agreed, the project goes live and fundraisers start campaigning to encourage their networks of contacts to start pledging funds in support. Campaigns run for a set period of up to 55 days and must accrue their target amount in that time; otherwise no money is deducted from the backers' accounts.

**Figure 2.2: The PleaseFund.Uk crowdfunding process**

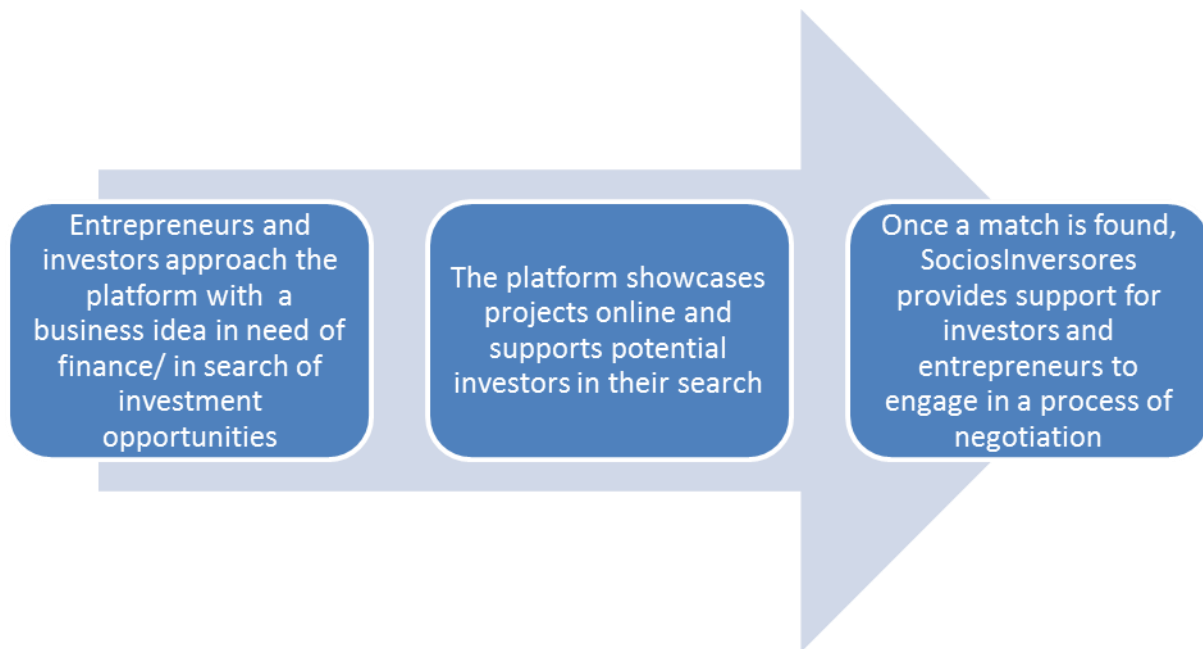


SociosInversores works in a different way by acting as an intermediary between entrepreneurs and investors but does not collect or distribute any money. For their services, the platform charges five per cent of the total amount invested in a project. This model means that the platform is able to avoid some legal limitations that other crowdfunding platforms can face, particularly because its service focuses on facilitating contact between investors and entrepreneurs but does not include financial or legal transactions. This model provides advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it was suggested that it simplifies the process and gives credibility to the platform. On the other hand, it means that platform management team does not have control over the transactions that actually take place. Figure 2.3 illustrates SociosInversores' operation process.

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<sup>28</sup> This feature has changed with ZEQUUS (see ZEQUUS.com).

**Figure 2.3: The SociosInversores crowdfunding process**



As can be seen in Figure 2.3, the role of SociosInversores is of a facilitator in terms of matching investors and entrepreneurs. The process starts with entrepreneurs approaching the platform with a business idea in need of finance, and with potential investors using the platform to search and explore business opportunities. In response to this, the platform showcases projects online and supports potential investors in their search. Once a match is found, SociosInversores provides support for investors and entrepreneurs by introducing them to each other and helping them to enter a process of negotiation, which could potentially lead to a partnership.

### **2.3.3. Features and attributes**

#### **2.3.3.1. PleaseFund.Us**

PleaseFund.Us can host international projects with the only requisite being that a bank account that can be linked to a PayPal account is available. Funders can make one-off payments using any credit or debit card and there is no need for them to have a PayPal account. There are no other restrictions as to where projects are based or where the funding comes from. PleaseFund.Us projects are classified in the categories shown in Table 2.6. This table also provides a crude indication of the number and proportion of projects in each category.

One of the features that distinguish PleaseFund.Us is the relationship they seek to establish with their users. To this end they encourage fundraisers to get in touch by phone or email with a team member and also provide one-to-one support throughout the campaign. Besides a focus on providing personalised support, they organise and participate in clinics and workshops to share information and advice on crowdfunding with the community of users.

**Table 2.6: Projects hosted in PleaseFund.U.s**

Category	No. of projects	Per cent	Category	No. of projects	Per cent
Art	68	11%	Food	24	4%
Business	65	10%	Games	29	5%
Charity	20	3%	Music	46	7%
Comics	9	1%	Photography	24	4%
Dance	25	4%	Sport	17	3%
Design	36	6%	Technology	57	9%
Fashion	20	3%	Theatre	52	8%
Film & Video	104	16%	Writing & Publishing	46	7%

Source: PleaseFund.U.s (Note: This table is indicative and includes current and past projects as published on <http://www.pleasefund.us/projects/> on 09/09/2013. Some projects may be included in more than one category.)

### **2.3.3.2. SociosInversores**

As a collective financing instrument, SociosInversores is a resource aimed at increasing the possibility of accessing funding for new or existing projects by tapping on the financial resources of those who are looking for alternative options to invest in new ventures and support their development. It can potentially lead to new businesses and to the creation of new jobs. The platform is made up of a team of ten permanent staff based in Madrid. The following characteristics differentiate SociosInversores from other type of platforms, particularly from reward- or donation-based platforms, but also from other equity-based platforms.

- The projects hosted by SociosInversores are enterprises at different stages of development. The different 'sectors' include: agroindustry, distribution & commerce, building & real estate, energy, education & culture, export, industry, marketing, services, health & beauty, and technology & internet, among others.
- The number of investors per project is smaller than for other forms of crowdfunding and they tend to invest more money (e.g. compared to reward-based crowdfunding). Projects where one or two investors contribute with the full amount required are not uncommon.
- Project owners, or entrepreneurs, offer investors a financial return on their investment mainly through shares in the business or in the profits it generates, but other forms of remuneration can also be considered such as employment or accommodation.
- Monetary transactions between investors and entrepreneurs are not handled by SociosInversores.<sup>29</sup>

SociosInversores also offers marketing and consultancy related services which complement the support offered to those looking for funding to start or grow a business project or idea and those

<sup>29</sup> PleaseFund.U.s handles transactions via third party processors (GoCardless or PayPal) who charge fees of up to 4%.



looking for investment opportunities. The model is explained as ‘freemium’ as it provides a basic service for free but offers the option of accessing other services charged at different rates depending on the chosen plan.<sup>30</sup> The personalised business support and consultancy services range from support with developing a business plan to strategic online marketing and human resource management. Additionally, SociosInversores is in the process of preparing support material in the form of ‘training pills’, which will provide basic information on topics such as standardised contracts, risks and how to handle investment agreements.

The total number of users for this platform as of June 2013 was estimated at 2,461, including investors and entrepreneurs. As can be seen in the table below, users are predominantly men for both entrepreneurs and investors. In terms of the leading sectors, technology and internet-related projects are the most popular and the most popular locations for projects are Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia. An observed changing trend is that whereas until recently projects seemed to be coming from more experienced individuals (the average age for entrepreneurs is 55 for men and 35 for women), projects by young people in their 20s are becoming more common.

**Table 2.7: Number of users of SociosInversores by role and gender**

	Men	Women	Total
<b>Entrepreneurs</b>	866	132	998
<b>Investors</b>	1,300	163	1,463
<b>Total</b>	2,166	295	2,461

Source: SociosInversores

SociosInversores has classified over 1,400 investors into small (those investing up to €300,000) and large (those investing around €0.5m or more) categories. They calculate there are around 1,100 small investors and 300 large investors. Around 70% of small investors have no previous investment experience whereas large investors include established investors, big businesses, venture capital firms, investment funds and business angels.

The platform has expanded to Latin America where the model was reported to be working well and they have now investors and entrepreneurs in both continents. SociosInversores see themselves as leaders in crowdfunding in Latin American markets, with language being an obvious advantage. Nonetheless, they also have participation from other countries including France. Latin America is seen as an important market and area of opportunity due to the growth being experienced by some countries in the region as opposed what Europe is facing at the moment.

### **2.3.4. Relationship with other policy actors**

#### **2.3.4.1. Skills and training provision**

Developing a project and presenting it online with the purpose of generating funds requires skills in a number of areas including marketing and social digital skills in addition to the skills required to develop the project itself. Some participants had these skills and others were able to develop them. Platforms provide some support in relation to this. PleaseFund.Us provides access to ‘angels’ or mentors that assist fundraisers during their campaigns and they also provide a wealth of information and advice as to how to prepare a campaign, present it to others and encourage support. As for SociosInversores, there was an indication that ‘information pills’ were being developed to assist entrepreneurs and investors. Although the skills and experience of the users of

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<sup>30</sup> This is a separate fee to the five per cent commission fee on the money exchanged between entrepreneurs and investors.

SociosInversores varied widely, there was a view that business, communication and financial skills were some of the areas which investors and entrepreneurs could develop further.

This raises the question of whether policy actors should be involved in providing training in relation to the skills highlighted above. Platforms seemed to be developing their own training and support resources although there was an evident need to take this further, either by platforms themselves or by other stakeholders. As a service, crowdfunding seems to be developing in an innovative way, which responds to the needs and preferences of its users. An intervention from policy actors would not necessarily be required unless specifically asked for. However, policy makers could take into account the skills and attitudes that crowdfunding requires to be successful and integrate these in their general provision of skills. In relation to reward-based platforms, these skills – which are interrelated and complement and enhance each other – include digital skills, presentation/communication skills, and organisation skills. In relation to platforms supporting new businesses, it was suggested that training and support around entrepreneurship issues and business management (including communication and financial skills) had been useful in the process of seeking funding using the internet. The process of developing a business plan was highlighted as an area where previous support, sometimes through government funded programmes, was seen as useful.

#### **2.3.4.2. Regulatory regimes**

There is a marked difference between projects seeking a financial return and projects seeking donations or patronage in exchange of a non-monetary reward. As a consequence, there are different implications for policy. Since they involve for-profit monetary contributions, equity-based platforms can be seen as the focus of debates on whether crowdfunding should be more or less regulated.<sup>31</sup> The need to regulate (or deregulate) crowdfunding was discussed at the ‘Crowdfunding: Untapping its potential, reducing the risks’ workshop organised by the European Commission in June 2013.<sup>32</sup> Participants brought to the fore the fact that crowdfunding is an innovative model but is not without risks. The challenge for policy makers in Europe is to devise an approach which regulates sufficiently but without stultifying the model and that is satisfactory across Member States.

There were no regulatory concerns reported in the two crowdfunding case studies presented in this research. It can be argued that this had to do with the fact that one of the cases was a reward-based platform and that the equity-based platform operated a model whereby they did not handle the money transactions between investors and entrepreneurs. The latter is not a typical case and this leaves the question of what regulations would benefit equity-based crowdfunding as a topic for further research. Nonetheless, the relevance of regulatory issues cannot be ruled out (e.g. in relation to the tax status of donations or regulation of donations at the international level; or, in the case of SociosInversores, in relation to competition or confrontation with other financial mechanisms). This is obviously a concern not only for the Europe, but of global interest as suggested by experts at workshops and events exploring the rules that should be established for equity crowdfunding.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, whereas there were no particular comments in relation to regulations around using crowdfunding, case study participants brought to the fore the relevance

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<sup>31</sup> Lending-based campaigns can also be profit oriented and there are some reward-based platforms which host projects that can potentially become successful businesses.

<sup>32</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/internal\\_market/conferences/2013/0603-crowdfunding-workshop/](http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/conferences/2013/0603-crowdfunding-workshop/). (Accessed 20/10/2013).

<sup>33</sup> E.g., the ‘Crowdfunding: Setting the Research Agenda’ research conference at UC Berkeley on 17-18 October ([http://funginstitute.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/Crowdfund%20Conference%20UC%20Berkeley%20Oct17.%202013\\_rev7.pdf](http://funginstitute.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/Crowdfund%20Conference%20UC%20Berkeley%20Oct17.%202013_rev7.pdf)).

of the context and how the economic crisis had played a role in encouraging people to seek alternative funding and employment opportunities.

## **2.4. Crowdsourcing for unpaid work – Online volunteering**

### **2.4.1. Description of the platform**

The website [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk) (henceforth referred to as Do-it) is the largest volunteering database in the UK where organisations can advertise volunteering opportunities and individuals can search for suitable volunteering roles, including virtual volunteering roles undertaken from home or the computer. The online charity YouthNet launched the service in 2001 when it spotted an opportunity to innovate and is currently in the process of transferring it to a new owner as YouthNet wants to focus on providing services for young people. Do-it has previously been largely funded by central government grants (and other sources of public funding) but new business models will have to be developed as central government funding will cease by April 2014.

Do-it is an online broker for organisations seeking to recruit volunteers and volunteers seeking suitable opportunities. Once the two parties have established contact through the website, Do-it no longer plays a part in the brokerage. Do-it works with more than 650 partners, representing an estimated total of 28,000 organisations (YouthNet, 2012<sup>34</sup>). The majority of opportunities on Do-it are reported to be posted by local Volunteer Centres on behalf of other charities in England. Moreover, a range of other organisations, including large established ones and also some young small charities, post opportunities directly onto Do-it.

The website has attracted just under one million registered volunteers since registration began in 2004 and offers about one million volunteering opportunities. During 2011/12 there were more than 200,000 newly registered volunteers and nearly 500,000 volunteer applications (YouthNet, 2012<sup>35</sup>).

Volunteering opportunities can be searched for by postcode, subject area, type of activity, keyword, availability, and whether virtual. The opportunities cover a wide range of causes and of most interest are: children, youth, older people, families, health and social care, disability, mental health, education and literacy, sport and recreation and employment support (YouthNet, 2013<sup>36</sup>). Virtual volunteering opportunities are relatively few and far between compared with opportunities for volunteering involving face-to-face interaction. While Do-it offers volunteering opportunities UK-wide, the majority of its opportunities are in England.

### **2.4.2. How the platform works and for whom**

YouthNet launched Do-it and continued to develop and maintain it over the years, currently with the help of nine members of staff working full-time on Do-it and five part-time (YouthNet, 2013<sup>37</sup>).

Do-it offers an annual membership scheme for opportunity providers, who can then upload volunteering opportunities onto Do-it using a software programme developed by YouthNet. Software programmes are free of charge for volunteer centres, while other organisations (i.e. those not operating on a non-profit basis) have to pay an annual fee for corporate volunteering, depending on the annual income or the number of employees in the UK. Software training courses are run on a regular basis for a fee. Both fees represent, only a small percentage of the overall

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<sup>34</sup> YouthNet (2012) *Annual report and accounts for the year ended 30 June 2012*.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> YouthNet (2013a) *Background information*. <http://www.YouthNet.org/2013/05/do-it-transfer-documentation/>.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

income of Do it. It is the responsibility of the organisation to vet volunteers they have recruited through Do-it via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, as necessary, or to provide any training that is required for the volunteering role.

Volunteers can search for volunteering opportunities for free. They can register their profile with Do-it prior to submitting an application form for a specific opportunity or when they respond to a specific opportunity. The expectation is that opportunity providers respond to the submission as soon as possible or within 10 days. The majority of the registered volunteers are female (72% compared to 28% male) and under 30 (58%). Moreover, nearly a quarter are from ethnic minorities (26%) and 5% report a disability (YouthNet, 2013<sup>38</sup>).

The findings of the exploratory case studies have shown that Do-it can be a key recruitment tool whereas other organisations may use Do-it selectively to advertise volunteering opportunities as they have alternative means of recruiting volunteers through their own websites. Equally the volunteers interviewed may have learned about their current volunteering opportunity through other channels (including networks) rather than through the advertisement on Do-it.

### **2.4.3. Features and attributes**

*Online brokerage:* Since Do-it acts as a broker for organisations and individuals it is neither responsible for the quality control of the voluntary work nor for any regulatory matters.

*Skills and training provision:* For each volunteering opportunity further details are provided in the form of a template by volunteer centres on behalf of volunteer seeking organisations or directly by volunteer seeking organisations. This includes the skills required for the role and the skills that can be developed as part of the role, either through learning by doing or through a training programme. In fact, nearly half of all registered volunteers taking part in a large-scale survey run by Do-it reported that they had gained or improved skills and gained work experience (Di Antonio, 2012<sup>39</sup>).

Do-it has also been working on a new service which allows Do-it partner organisations to search for suitable volunteers within the Do-it database (e.g. those with particular skills).

The website itself is easy to use, requiring low level IT skills for internet browsing.

*Searches for virtual volunteering opportunities:* The website primarily facilitates searches for volunteering opportunities by locality (i.e. postcode and radius of up to 50 miles) and then allows these results to be searched for virtual volunteering opportunities.

*Do-it search widget:* Organisations can help to promote volunteering opportunities on their own website by installing a free Do-it search widget. It is maintained by Do-it and allows for searches by postcode (basic version) and interest and activities (enhanced version).<sup>40</sup>

### **2.4.4. Relationship with other actors**

Do-it has been able to draw on core funding from the government since its launch, most recently from the Office of Civil Society at the Cabinet Office after the UK Coalition Government came to power in 2010. Moreover, it has attracted money from other central government departments, such as the Department of Health to help expand volunteering opportunities in health and social care, an important area for volunteering given the underfunding of the social care system for older people, and from the Department for Work and Pensions to support the skills development of young people through volunteering via the introduction of skills matching that enables organisations to search for

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Di Antonio, E. (2012) *Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2012*. <http://www.YouthNet.org/2012/11/volunteer-satisfaction-survey-2012/>

<sup>40</sup> See <http://www.do-it.org.uk/partners/syndication/do-it-search-widget/>

particular skills volunteers can offer or wish to gain (YouthNet, 2012<sup>41</sup>). This emphasises the fact that employability is constitutive of the platform and the initial YouthNet project using it, as opposed to being a spin-off from it.

## **2.5. Crowdsourcing for unpaid work – Exchange rings (Tauschringe)**

In section 1.1.1 exchange rings were defined as a method of reciprocal service exchange that uses units of time as a currency. Even though no single common definition exists, Tauschringe have been described as regional organisations with a large number of members and a common cause, i.e. members can exchange goods and services using their own currency (Brandenstein et al., 1997<sup>42</sup>). Most Tauschringe call their currency 'Talent'; however, other names exist usually taking the regional culture and history into account (i.e. Blüten, Heller, Kreuzer, Peanuts, Kohlen). Exchange rings differ in terms of their numbers of members, their organisational structure, their interconnectivity with other exchange rings or other voluntary organisations, and their public visibility. Other differences exist with activists' and users' political, social and economic commitment which varies from the creation of social networks to that of a new economic system (Kristof et al., 2001<sup>43</sup>).

### **2.5.1. Description of the platforms: Tauschwiki.de, tauschen-ohne-Geld.de, Ressourcentauschring and the exchange ring LoWi e.V.**

The focus of the case study was on three organisational platforms ('tauschwiki.de', Ressourcentauschring RTR and 'tauschen-ohne-geld.de') and, in particular, the exchange ring LoWi e.V. in Münster (<http://www.tauschring-LoWi.e.V.de/>). These are outlined in turn below.

#### *Tauschwiki.de*

Tauschwiki, a communally produced encyclopaedia and a handbook for individuals involved with exchange rings with 338 articles<sup>44</sup>, is an initiative of German exchange rings. As the name suggests, it uses open source software and the design of the popular Wikipedia platform. It has been opened more than 300,000 times since its launch in 2009 according to the website on which it is hosted, but the real number of hits is probably higher as many websites of individual exchange rings have linked particular articles to their own websites.

#### *Tauschen-ohne-Geld.de*

Tauschen-ohne-Geld is a platform which enables exchange rings to organise themselves (e.g. in terms of administering users, or documenting transactions). Originally, it was launched to help one individual exchange ring, but now approximately 100 exchange rings in all parts of Germany use the platform to organise their members and finances. Additionally, Tauschen-ohne-Geld allows exchange rings to generate their own newspapers. Other possible platforms that allow the online administration of exchange rings are obelio<sup>45</sup>, clyclos<sup>46</sup> (based in the Netherlands), while Tauschrausch.de offers offline administration software.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Brandenstein P., Corino, C. and Petri, Th B. (1997). *Tauschringe - ein juristisches Niemandsland?* in: Neue Juristische Wochenschrift, Nr. 13/1997, S.825-831.

<sup>43</sup> Kristof, K., Nanning, S. and Becker, CH. (2001). *Tauschringe und Nachhaltigkeit*. Wuppertal Papers, Nr. 118. Wuppertal Institut. ISSN 0949-5266. Available online: <http://epub.wupperinst.org/frontdoor/index/index/docId/1269>

<sup>44</sup> From the website, accessed: 29-07-13

<sup>45</sup> <http://obelio.com/de/index.html>

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.cyclos.org/>

*Ressourcentauschring RTR [www.ressourcen-tauschring.de/inhalt.html](http://www.ressourcen-tauschring.de/inhalt.html)*

The RTR is a clearing system for exchange rings. Using the RTR, registered exchange rings can exchange 'currencies' with other exchange rings. Individual users cannot become members. All registered exchange rings hold an account within the RTR. Currencies within individual exchange rings are converted to allow for exchanges across different exchange rings. In August 2013 there were 85 exchange rings registered as members within the RTR. The RTR uses the platform 'Tauschen-ohne-Geld' for their inter-regional transactions.

*LoWi e.V. ([www.tauschring-LoWi e.V.de](http://www.tauschring-LoWi e.V.de))*

The local exchange ring LoWi Tauschring für Münster e.V. was launched in 1996. The name stands for 'Lokale Wirtschaftsinitiative' (local economic initiative). In summer 2013 the exchange ring had more than 250 members exchanging goods and services such as cleaning, photography, help for parties. LoWi e.V. users have a currency called 'Talente' and, even though they allow users to negotiate individual fees for services<sup>47</sup>, they recommend that users charge 20 Talente for each hour worked. In 2013 each member paid an annual subscription fee for the administration of the exchange ring of €18 (48 Talente).

LoWi e.V. is organised exclusively by volunteers paid for with Talente. There is an organisational committee and a small office team. LoWi e.V. uses clyclos software for administration of members' records and transactions. Members can use the platform to invoice other members for services used and goods purchased.

### **2.5.2. How LoWi e.V. works and for whom**

The exchange ring LoWi e.V. is based in Münster, a town in North Rhine-Westphalia<sup>48</sup> in the former West Germany<sup>49</sup> with 290,000 inhabitants (Statistisches Bundesamt<sup>50</sup>). Münster is home to a large traditional university and other smaller higher education institutions, and has a lower unemployment rate than the regional average.

LoWi e.V. was founded in 1996 and is organised professionally with an online administration, a steering committee and ten users working in the office. As one expert explained: "we are a small voluntarily-organised professional company." He stressed the need to be well-organised and, some time ago, had written work plans using his quality management skills. There is a list with all areas of expertise for the steering committee, and all office tasks are well documented. This allows new volunteers to understand quickly the tasks expected of them. Couriers distribute the newspaper all over town. A budget, compiled by the steering committee, documents all the planned expenses for the current year. Time spent working in the office or otherwise to support the organisation is compensated by a lower hourly rate than would usually be charged for exchange ring transactions as users are expected to work partly voluntarily. However, some users work solely on a voluntary basis.

One interviewee estimated that there were around 70 to 100 transactions a month. The principles of exchange are explained as follows on the LoWi e.V. website:

We are exchanging with the use of 'talents'. We ... are market-orientated and negotiate prices individually using on the basis of time spent, e.g. 20 Talents for each hour. As an example: Gabi wants to celebrate at her birthday party and is looking for somebody to

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<sup>47</sup> [http://www.tauschwiki.de/wiki/Tauschring-LOWI\\_e.V.](http://www.tauschwiki.de/wiki/Tauschring-LOWI_e.V.) (accessed: 29-7-13)

<sup>48</sup> See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North\\_Rhine-Westphalia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Rhine-Westphalia)

<sup>49</sup> See <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germany>

<sup>50</sup> See [https://www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/LaenderRegionen/Regionales/Gemeindeverzeichnis/Gemeindeverzeichnis\\_hm.html](https://www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/LaenderRegionen/Regionales/Gemeindeverzeichnis/Gemeindeverzeichnis_hm.html)

serve drinks. Bruno offers to work as a waiter. Both agree on an hourly rate of 20 Talents. Gabi is happy, and after the party she will give Bruno a voucher. Bruno will then send the voucher to the office. The agreed amount of talents will then be shown as a credit on Bruno's accounts and Gabi's account will show the same amount as a debit. Now, if Bruno employs Andrea for baby-sitting, and Gabi teaches Martin juggling, both debit and credit will be in balance again.

Offers and demands for services and goods are published online on a mailing list, supplemented by a printed newsletter published about four times a year. There are also regular meetings for members and activists, for example:

- A monthly regulars' table in a pub in which members can meet, chat, exchange but also discuss various subjects. This is used to help members to get to know each other and encourage transactions because 'personal contact leads to trust' (from the website).
- Every third Sunday, members can meet for 'Kaffee und Kuchen' (coffee and cake). Again, this meeting is for members to get to know each other.
- Other social events, such as summer parties or Christmas parties take place on a regular basis.

The following list summarises some of the services offered and demanded by the interviewed users within the exchange ring, so providing insights into some of the skills that users already had, or could practise (sometimes from a base of little previous experience), through the exchange ring:

- Courier jobs;
- Administrative jobs for the exchange ring – including membership organisation;
- Creation and maintenance of the website;
- Looking after pets during owners' holidays;
- Hair cutting;
- Assistance with moving house;
- Sewing, jam-making;
- Anything practical (i.e. help with cleaning the house, gardening);
- Massages and other health-related services;
- Organisation of children's or adult parties;
- Simple crafts (e.g. change of plugs, carpentry);
- Goods regularly exchanged are garden plants, self-made socks and slippers.

It is notable that very few of these are digital services. However, all case-study interviewees stated that they documented their transactions online (albeit they reported that some other exchange ring members came into the office to have their transactions documented online there).

### **2.5.3. Features and attributes**

#### *Quality Control of services and goods*

In general, there is no form of quality control with regard to delivered goods or services. Users build up a reputation with word-of-mouth, and if they deliver poor quality, this will get passed and, if reoccurring, they will struggle to sell their services within the exchange ring. There is no institutionalised rating system (such as exists in larger internet-based companies such as eBay or Amazon) but its introductions get discussed regularly.

#### *Social contacts*

Most users came to the exchange ring via personal contacts. The social component is crucial in the organisation of exchange rings. A lot of transactions are organised using face-to-face contacts, rather than offers in the online mailing lists or the newspaper.

#### *Induction*

New members are obliged to take part in an information event before being allowed to become members. The participation at this event is absolutely compulsory. The information event is conducted for a small group of two to three people so that they can get to know each other and learn how to take part in transactions. Members are expected to get engaged, build up contacts and get active.

### **2.5.4. Relationship with policy actors**

In reciprocal exchange rings individuals can use existing skills and/or practise latent/ new skills in a supportive environment. Skills levels may vary amongst members.

The rationale of reciprocal exchange rings is that they operate in a relatively self-contained fashion. As such reciprocal exchange rings tend to exist separately from mainstream policy actors. This does not mean, however, that members of reciprocal exchange rings should not signpost other members to existing support services outside the reciprocal exchange ring.

## **2.6. Conclusion**

This chapter has provided a summary of the case studies conducted and has highlighted some of the main findings. There are *marked differences between the internet-enabled exchanges explored* and it may even be questioned whether they should be included in a single category. The platforms are different in their aims and in the ways they seek to achieve them. Nonetheless, it was evident in all of the cases the internet represented a space where interpersonal connections could be made and maintained and where transactions could be organised.

The findings also show that the internet activity that takes place within these platforms is not limited to the virtual space of the internet but is mainly connected to offline activities (to varying degrees); indeed, only one case – PeoplePerHour – involved mainly online tasks. However, many of the offline (as well as online) activities facilitated by internet-enabled exchanges described are related to employment and employability, which is the main focus of this study. The next section thus explores this relationship in more detail.



### 3. INTERNET-ENABLED EXCHANGES AND THE EMPLOYABILITY FRAMEWORK

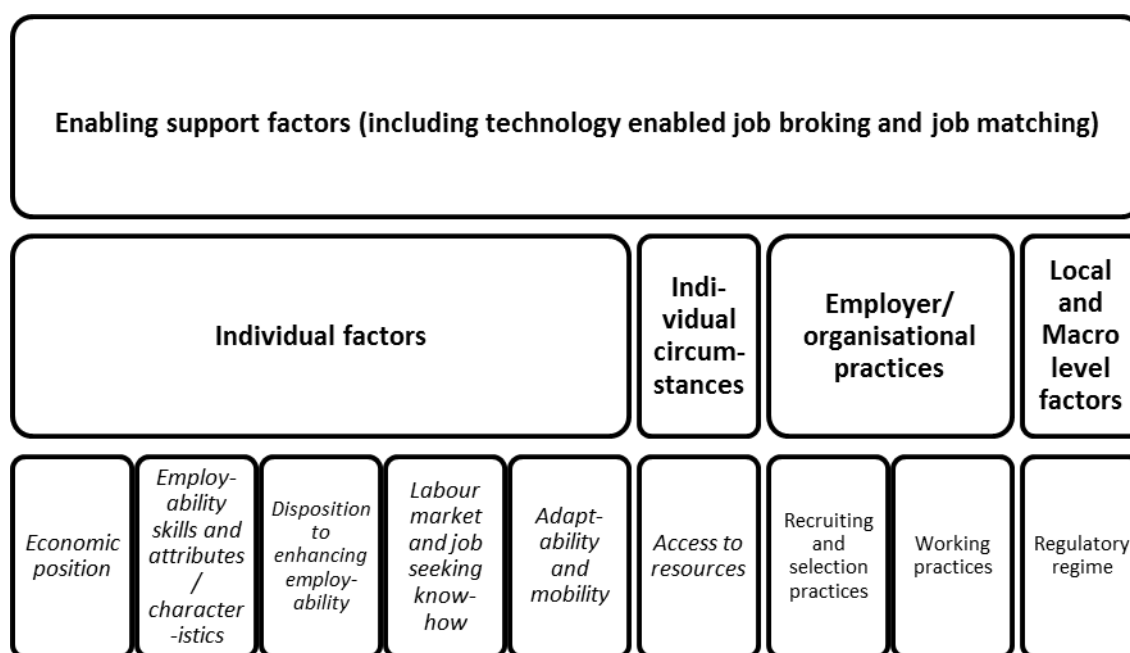
This section discusses the themes that emerged as a result of an overarching analysis of the case studies conducted and associated implications. Given that the focus of the study is on internet-enabled exchanges and their relation to employment and employability, Green et al.'s (2012)<sup>51</sup> employability framework provides a background to the findings. The framework is presented and emergent themes are discussed in section 3.1. It is noted that the employability framework is broad and covers a range of areas; only those directly raised by the case studies are discussed here. Section 3.2 discusses the implications arising for support, training and development for employment and employability.

#### 3.1. Discussion of key themes

##### 3.1.1. Context for discussion: the employability framework – abridged version

The employability framework developed by Green et al. (2012)<sup>52</sup> leaves behind the idea that employability relies solely on the individual (or any single actor, for that matter) and proposes five groups of factors that have potential to impinge on a person's journey into gaining and sustaining employment. These factors are: individual factors, individual circumstances, employer/organisational practices, local contextual factors, and macro level factors. Enabling support factors (encompassing technology enabled job broking and job matching, among others) have an overarching role, spanning all columns in Figure 3.1 and impinge on all aspects of employability.

**Figure 3.1: Simplified version of Green et al.'s (2012) employability framework**



The version of the employability framework presented in Figure 3.1 is an abridged one listing the main factors considered as relevant to the study of crowdsourcing and some examples of specific

<sup>51</sup> Green, A., de Hoyos, M., Barnes, S.-A., Owen, D., Baldauf, B. and Behle, H. (2012) Literature Review on Employability, Inclusion and ICT, Report 1: The Concept of Employability, with a Specific Focus on Young People, Older Workers and Migrants. Report prepared by the Warwick Institute for Employment Research (IER) for the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS). Available at: <ftp://ftp.jrc.es/pub/EURdoc/JRC75518.pdf>. (Accessed: 20/03/2013).

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

elements; (see the Annex 1 for full details). Within *individual factors*, the person's economic position, their skills and attributes, their attitude to employment, their knowledge of the labour market, and their adaptability and mobility are factors that are expected to shape their involvement in crowdsourcing. Moreover, *individual circumstances* (e.g. access to resources, caring responsibilities) are considered important elements too. *Employer and/or organisational practices* are crucial for CSW and CSV as they represent the role of the demand side; moreover, CSF is likely to have an impact on how ventures operate or projects are conducted. *Local and macro level factors* are both seen as relevant as they represent the context within which crowdsourcing takes place. Due to the global nature of CSW, the latter may be seen more significant, but evidence from CSV, CSF and CSW provides evidence on the impact of these exchanges for the operation of national and local labour markets.

In the following subsections key themes from the case studies are presented in accordance with broad dimensions of the employability framework.

### **3.1.2. Individual factors and circumstances**

#### *Introduction*

Individual factors and circumstances emerge as being of paramount importance in crowdsourcing. Demographic characteristics and other individual factors and circumstances are relevant but need to be explored further. To work successfully using these platforms individuals need an initial set of skills that they can sell or promote, and also self-efficacy, motivation, self-reliance and adaptability. The onus is very much on the individual when operating in a crowdsourcing context.

A table summarising selected characteristics of individuals participating in the case studies was presented in Table 2.1 (albeit it should be remembered that these are not statistically representative of platform users).

#### *Demographic characteristics: age and gender*

The results suggest that age (as measured by generation) has some relevance in use of the platforms examined. Contrary to what might be assumed, the main users of these platforms are not young people aged between 16 and 24 from a generation that has grown up with digital media. Instead, users tended to be older, reflecting the importance of previous experience and accumulated social and cultural capital needed to make efficient use of the resources offered. Do-it has the youngest age profile of case study users, but here the specific target group for YouthNet is younger people. It is notable that one seller from PPH indicated that CSW could combat age discrimination by employers. No evidence emerged from the case studies to indicate whether or not CSW countered discrimination on other demographic characteristics. These insights are not definitive but suggestive of questions that could be explored further.

On the basis of the case study findings, there seems to be some role differentiation according to gender. In the local exchange ring, for example, most users were women. In the case of SociosInversores, overall figures indicate that 88 per cent of users (including investors and entrepreneurs) were men and only 12 per cent were women. Interviewees were aware of the imbalance and provided further anecdotal evidence of the lack of women entrepreneurs in the context in which they conducted business. The imbalance was less pronounced in PleaseFund.Uk, the reward-based platform, where projects did not seek to generate any profit. In the case of Do-it, users were mainly female volunteers (71%, compared to 29% male volunteers). There was some variation by gender in prevalence of CSW in the Slivers of Time case study, with most workers being female. By contrast in PPH there was an even split of sellers by gender. The gender profile of those interviewed may be a consequence of the sectors covered but, again, this is an avenue for further investigation. Moreover, it is relevant to investigate whether these gender differences reproduce offline gender roles or whether platforms may facilitate access to online opportunities where there may be barriers offline.

### *Health and wellbeing*

Evidence from the PPH case study suggests that CSW can provide a way (back) into the labour market for individuals who had suffered physical or mental ill-health issues. For Slivers of Time workers there is a suggestion that CSW/CSV activity was a positive influence on well-being, as those engaged in social care found the work (whether paid or unpaid) rewarding and satisfying.

### *Economic position*

CSW sellers/ workers could have a complex economic position, being both employees (whether full-time or part-time) and self-employed. Some who were previously unemployed or economically inactive used CSW as a way back into employment. For some, engaging in CSW was about developing their skills and proving their employability. Those involved in reward-based crowdfunding conducted their campaigns *alongside* other their main income-generating activities, which included permanent jobs. For entrepreneurs using the equity-based crowdfunding platform the projects that they were trying to finance were part of their income generating activities.

Those engaged in CSV had a mixed profile representing individuals at different stages of transition in terms of their engagement with the labour market, ranging from those progressing within the education system, transitioning from education to work, having made the transition to the labour market and having retired

### *Employability skills and attributes*

Those engaged in CSF are characterised by having a project for which they want to raise funds or credit. Developing such a project requires dedication and some level of expertise and the evidence from the two CSF case studies suggest that fundraisers and entrepreneurs had a relatively high level of education (undergraduate degree as a minimum with one exception in each case).

The non-representative survey of registered volunteers conducted by Do-it indicates that particularly young people (15-25 year olds) also embark on volunteering because they want to develop their skills and become more employable. In fact, about half of all survey respondents reported that they developed their skills and gained experience and about a third thought they had become more employable, with figures again being higher for young people (Di Antonio, 2012)<sup>53</sup>.

Nearly all of the employability skills, attributes and characteristics identified in the revised employability framework are of direct relevance to success in CSW, CSF and CSV. In particular, successful individuals needed to display the following:

- Essential attributes - reliability, willingness to work, a positive attitude to work, responsibility and self-discipline;
- Personal characteristics – proactivity, diligence, self-motivation, judgement, initiative, confidence, self-efficacy and perceived employability;
- Basic transferable skills – literacy, writing, numeracy and (a minimum of) basic IT skills;
- Key transferable skills – problem solving, work process management, personal task and time management, e-skills and interpersonal and communication skills;
- High level transferable skills – business thinking, job-specific skills, enterprise skills and creativity.

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<sup>53</sup> Di Antonio, E. (2012) *Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2012*. <http://www.YouthNet.org/2012/11/volunteer-satisfaction-survey-2012/>. The survey covers all volunteers, irrespective of whether they volunteer face-to-face or online.

CSF in particular requires skills in using digital social media and an understanding of how these operate and their consequences. The use of social digital media is relevant in all internet-enabled exchanges but it is crucial in reward-based CSF where the fundraiser seeks to garner the support of a large number of backers. In the case of PleaseFund.Uk, previous experience in marketing, communication and using digital social media were useful skills in running a campaign and encouraging the community to support a project. Interviewees indicated that they developed such skills further through their involvement with the platform. In the case of SociosInversores, previous experience, knowledge of a business, and a network of contacts (clients) can be seen as relevant attributes. These skills and attributes were backed by the ability to develop a worthwhile project and the confidence to take it forward.

*Qualifications* were generally helpful in securing work in the CSW platforms, but were not essential. For instance, in some cases sellers reported that buyers were more interested in formal qualifications than their current or previous employers had been. Some felt that their certified skills (in terms of formal academic and specific technical skills) were recognised more in CSW compared with their experience of being an employee.<sup>54</sup> However some sellers with more technical skills felt they were under-valued, often because of lower pay rates. In CSV, concerns about qualifications were less prominent and the importance attributed to individual experience varied.

*Self-efficacy* -was important in getting established in the case of all of the platforms. It was evident for those working with Slivers of Time or CSV, as often they would have to work in a variety of environments performing different tasks (such as a customer facing role to an office based job). Generally, those interviewed were certain in their abilities and skills to perform tasks and undertake duties required. Individuals were focused on their work (whether paid or unpaid) or their project. The majority involved in paid and unpaid work were confident in their ability to adapt to new situations and environments and manage new challenges. They spoke of being able to learn new tasks quickly and 'get on with the job'. This was particularly important for those working with Slivers of Time, as they recognised that they were only working in a particular place for short periods of time. Consequently, there was also a strong sense of responsibility; a commitment to not only undertake the job if they registered their availability, but also to perform it well and to the best of their ability. This was also linked to build their reputation on the platform in order to increase the likelihood of gaining future work through the platform. This strong work ethic was particularly evident for those working with Slivers of Time, but was also fundamental for those establishing themselves and sustaining a presence on PeoplePerHour and for those using CSF to obtain funds for their projects. Skills developed through engagement with these case study crowdsourcing platforms can be considered as highly transferable, so can be seen to be enhancing individuals' employability.

*Self-motivation* - Use of the platforms researched seemed to be directly related to individuals' self-motivation. Volunteering or taking part in an exchange ring is the result of a personal decision; similarly, putting together a crowdfunding campaign or developing a business plan requires a proactive attitude. In the case of PeoplePerHour and Slivers of Time, individuals were very much responsible for developing and maintaining their (online) profile. It is evident that a particular individual thrives in this form of exchange: a *self-starter* with a strong *work ethic*; the term 'strong character' was used in the Slivers of Time case study.

#### *Disposition to enhancing employability*

Further development and utilisation of skills and attributes appear to be key to successful engagement in CSW, CSF and CSV – and especially so if CSW makes up a key component of an individual's income. Sellers on PPH reported typically that they needed to engage in continuous learning. A positive attitude to engagement in networking (see further discussion below) is a characteristic of successful individuals engaged in crowdsourcing. This may be so especially until individuals become established, but in CSF the maintenance of networks was of particular

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<sup>54</sup> In part this might be due to sellers having to sell themselves to new buyers.

importance for continued funding and support (not necessarily financial) to ensure projects remained viable or had the possibility to be extended.

#### *Labour market and job seeking knowledge*

Excluding those young people engaging in CSV primarily to build up their CVs and work experience, most of the CSV and CSW sellers/ workers had previous (sometimes substantial) employment experience and general work skills, which they could build on in CSW and volunteering activities.

To find out about the crowdsourcing platforms and engage with them, whether for paid or unpaid work, they needed to have a general awareness of opportunities for paid and unpaid work and funding opportunities. Interviewees tended to demonstrate a knowledge and use of both formal and informal information sources. Sellers on PPH emphasised the necessity of a realistic approach to job targeting.

#### *Adaptability and mobility*

Adaptability, flexibility and mobility were identified as key characteristics as individuals were able to exercise choice about how, where, when and what work to bid for/ undertake. Nearly all of the individual factors identified under this heading in the revised employability framework seem to be essential components of success in CSW; (these attributes were somewhat less prominent in the CSF and CSV case studies). Sellers and workers had to take charge of their own short-term work organisation and longer-term career management, and emphasised the importance of being adaptable. Most had to be functionally mobile (at least to some extent) to move from one job to another. While some individuals built on occupation-specific skills, others discovered latent skills through CSW and were occupationally mobile. To become established as a seller on PPH individuals noted that, at least initially, they had to be flexible about the amounts that they were prepared to be paid and to relax their reservation wage accordingly; (once established they might be able to raise it).

Flexibility was demonstrated by the willingness of many of the individuals interviewed to engage in new forms of work, and adaptability by the ability and enthusiasm (of some) to learn new skills quickly and face new challenges. Linked to this, responsiveness was also found to be a key characteristic. Novice or new sellers and workers were found to be particularly responsive to buyers in order to prove and improve their reliability and rating scores in order to become (and remain) more attractive to buyers in the future.

#### *Household circumstances*

For some (but not all) of the sellers/ workers using CSW platforms a positive feature of a flexible way of working was that it fitted with household circumstances. This was especially so for individuals in the case studies who had caring responsibilities for children, or had health issues which meant that they were no longer able to engage in full-time employment or needed to change jobs. Payment from CSW activity could contribute to household resources. For many, CSW was about finding employment that fitted with their other paid work, personal commitments, responsibilities (such as volunteering in the case of Slivers of Time) and personal circumstances (such as caring responsibilities, health, access to transport). For some (particularly those using PPH), it meant being able to work remotely from their chosen location. The Slivers of Time online diary, where individuals manage their hourly or daily availability for work demonstrates the flexibility afforded by this form of employment.

#### *Access to resources: the importance of social networks*

Social and economic networks are an important feature of individual resources and play a key role in crowdsourcing activity. In relation to reward-based CSF, individuals need to mobilise their pre-existing networks in order to be successful. Campaigns may provide some space for developing new connections, but an already existing network is essential.

Across the case study platforms, there was evidence of individuals not only developing their networking skills, but also developing and enhancing their networks. The expansion of networks was strongly believed to be enhanced by the crowdsourcing process. However, the types and purpose of such networks were very different for those engaged in the different platforms. Those commenting on PPH spoke of how the platform extended their networks and brokered contacts between buyers and sellers/workers. For these individuals, networks were primarily economic (albeit they could have a social element too in a few cases and social networks were important in some instances in getting established in the first instance). The purpose was to become known and trusted to ensure a steady stream of employment opportunities. For those engaged in work through Slivers of Time, CSF and CSV, their experience of networks was primarily social. As the Slivers of Time work was undertaken in the community rather than virtually, individuals spoke of enjoying the interaction with others. Networking was also a central feature of crowdsourcing linked to enhancing employability. For some, the possibility of expanding their social networks was a motivator for engaging in crowdsourcing.

### **3.1.3. Employer/organisational practices**

Employer/ organisational practices are of particular relevance to CSW. This sub-section summarises how and why employers (i.e. buyers) might get involved in CSW.

For buyers (including intermediaries and buying organisations) motivation for using the CSW platforms was focused on the efficient (and effective) sourcing of resources and labour. For small businesses CSW offers a way of accessing resources for specific specialist tasks which often would be unaffordable if they had to recruit a direct employee. The recruitment process is different from that in a conventional labour market, especially in the case of PeoplePerHour, because the buyer posts a specific (transparent) task, rather than a broader job role, and normally would not meet the seller engaged face-to-face, as would be the case in a conventional job interview. Hence, the recruitment and selection process is speedy and streamlined. Given that recruitment and selection is undertaken virtually, and may take place across international borders, sellers need to be aware of how buyers make their selection decisions in order to increase chances of winning work. Likewise, buyers need to adjust to selecting sellers virtually, rather than inviting in potential recruits for a conventional face-to-face interview. This is a particular challenge when they first engage in CSW.

The case study evidence suggests that cost is not necessarily the foremost criterion in buyers' selection processes. For some buyers foremost concerns are with quality control and ensuring reliability of the seller. This is where rating and reliability systems play an important role; albeit in the case studies this was not akin to ongoing monitoring and surveillance. Likewise some PPH sellers took note of ratings of buyers and tried to avoid bidding for poorly specified tasks. For new buyers, however, there may be a steep learning curve before they find out – often by experience of trial and error – how best to trade-off cost and quality (and time).

CSW offer buyers (or buying organisations) access to a pool of suitable labour 'on demand', so affording them the flexibility to manage and respond to their changing needs. By engaging with CSW, they were able to access an online pool of resources, while at the same time not having a long-term commitment to workers in the way that they would have had if the workers were employees. This flexibility was argued by the buyers to be time efficient and cost effective. However, for buyers there are advantages of building up relationships with sellers for repeat business and/or for forming ongoing working relationships. Such relationships may be advantageous for sellers also. However, these do not involve the same amount of commitment (on either side) as formal employment relationships; rather they are more akin to social networks.

In the case of Slivers of Time buying organisations also used CSW platforms to offer people the opportunity of work and to gain experience. One CSW buyer spoke of using the crowdsourcing platform to not only expand the pool of labour available to them, but more importantly to enable individuals to gain the experience of working in their organisation. Those individuals that had been

introduced to the organisation via the CSW platform were notified of all vacancies giving them the opportunity to be an employee.<sup>55</sup> This suggests that there are possibilities of moving from CSW to employee status, as well as moves in the opposite direction from employee status to CSW.

In the case of PPH the buyer does not have any direct responsibility for training and skills development of workers;<sup>56</sup> the onus is on the seller/ worker to develop the skills needed to perform the tasks that they bid for. This lack of commitment by buyers to training and skills development of workers is counter to the characteristics of high performance working practices. Rather access to workers with necessary skills is via CSW. However, for Slivers of Time, and for CSV, there is an emphasis on provision of training. This highlights the diversity of crowdsourcing.

The precise physical working conditions of sellers are generally outside the scope of concern of buyers, as long as sellers' complete tasks in a timely fashion to the standard required. Flexible working practices are at the heart of CSW and in the case of PPH CSW involves working from home/ or elsewhere beyond the buyers' premises nearly all the time. In the case of Slivers of Time willingness of workers to work flexibly fits organisations' models of working practices.

CSW need not be associated with employment quality. There is an issue of whether CSW is, at least in part, analogous to an increase in piece work and a 'race to the bottom' in the face of global competition with different wage levels in different countries. But evidence from PPH suggests that buyers tend to opt for "mid-range" as opposed to the "lowest" bids. However, some sellers reported that their earnings via PPH (particularly for technically-oriented work undertaken in competition with sellers from lower cost countries) were somewhat lower than they might earn in the conventional home labour market.<sup>57</sup> If more work is undertaken in this way it is possible, indeed likely, to be at the detriment of workers' security and social protection, albeit this may be more the case in some sectors than in others. This suggests that there may be a trade-off between quantity and quality.

#### **3.1.4. Local and macro level factors**

At face value local contextual factors may seem to be of limited relevance for crowdsourcing. However, local labour market circumstances impinge on CSW in a variety of ways. For some sellers in PPH the motivation for engaging in CSW was the lack of alternative paid work opportunities in the local labour market. In the case of PPH, since sellers tend to work virtually (generally from home) issues of spatial mismatch and physical transport difficulties in accessing work are overcome. All other platforms, especially the CSV platforms and Slivers of Time, were embedded in a web of local factors, and tended to target a geographically limited audience, even if they could be broader. So, in the case of Slivers of Time, generally workers' physical presence at a workplace is needed; hence local contextual factors, including issues of the location of workplaces relative to workers' homes, and the availability of transport, help shape opportunities. Likewise for reciprocal exchange rings and CSV activities requiring face-to-face contact local factors are important. For CSF the local context may be important in some instances, especially in the case of local projects.

At the level of the macro economy recession may have acted as a stimulus for ICT-enabled work (CSW). A shortfall in demand for labour and high unemployment was a factor in prompting take up of CSW. There is some evidence that it may also be a factor in investors looking for new investment opportunities in equity-based CSF, as quoted in the case study of SociosInversores. The economic crisis facing Europe, and Spain in particular, was seen by some interviewees as a catalyst

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<sup>55</sup> This is specific to the way Slivers of Times operates. There was no evidence of the number of people who had gained employment by this method.

<sup>56</sup> Unless a specific decision otherwise is made.

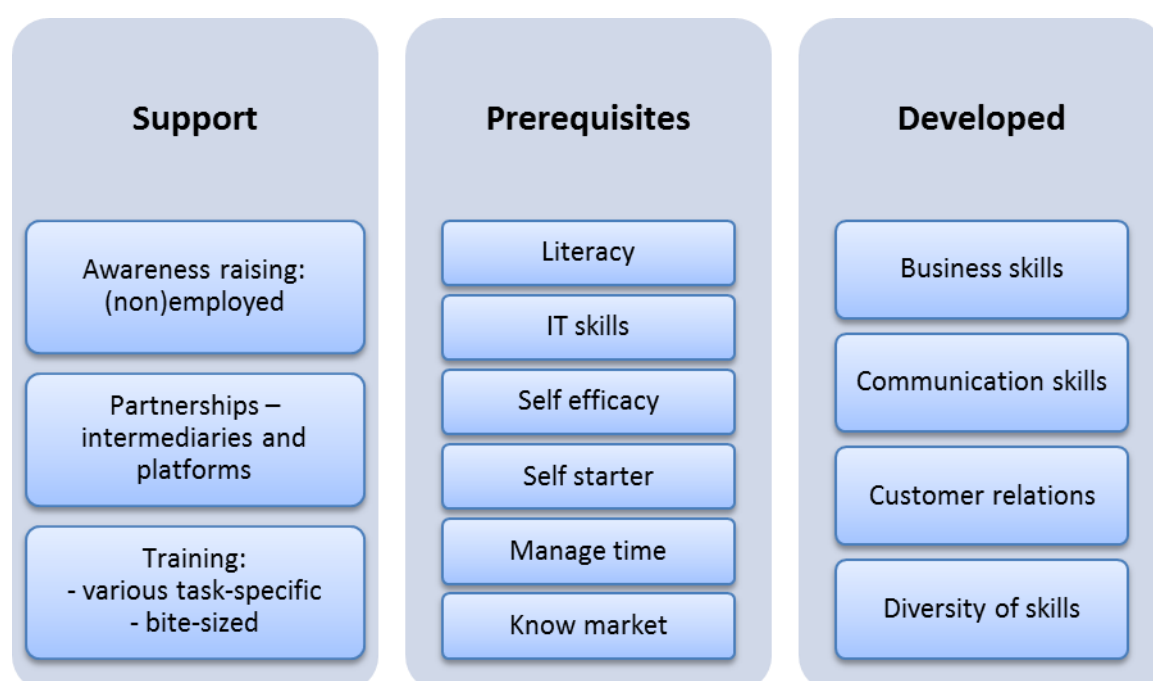
<sup>57</sup> A detailed comparison of wage rates via CSW compared with wage rates for similar work undertaken by employees was outside the scope of the case studies.

for individuals seeking new employment options and opportunities. Internet-enabled exchanges were seen as a resource that helped individuals visualise and pursue these opportunities.

### 3.2. Implications for support, training and development

Four essential pre-conditions for engaging in crowdsourcing are: (1) awareness of platforms; (2) access to ICT; (3) literacy and (4) basic (or above) ICT skills. Trust could also be considered as a fifth pre-condition, as workers need to be confident that they will not be unduly exploited and that buyers will be fair in their dealings with them. Many platforms have safeguards in place to ensure a good service is delivered by all parties, such as buyer and seller ratings, payment through the platform, and, in some cases, minimum pay levels. Labour market intermediaries, including public employment services, education and training providers and the voluntary sector, together with the platforms themselves, have a role to play here in helping to ensure that all pre-conditions are in place. Given the dynamism of crowdsourcing platforms, technological developments (in hardware and software) this needs to be an ongoing activity that would benefit from being undertaken in partnership. To be successful (as outlined in section 3.1) individuals also needed self-efficacy and to be self-starters with time management skills and knowledge of the market in which they wished to operate.

**Figure 3.2: Summary of support needs, prerequisites and skills developed through crowdsourcing (with particular reference to CSW)**



It was evident that many individuals engaged in crowdsourcing had a steep learning curve during the initial stages of their engagement with a crowdsourcing platform. This could involve everything from learning how to use the platform and its features, how to engage with the users and the etiquette required to liaise with others electronically, to learning particular skills to ensure their success, such as business development and marketing skills. Individuals engaged in crowdsourcing demonstrated a commitment to learn and develop their specialist and generic skills. Interviewees spoke of developing a range of generic skills and business skills, including: IT; social media; pitching and marketing; negotiating; customer relations; and communication (see Figure 3.2 for a summary). In PPH, these skills were relevant to posting, obtaining and completing the virtual working opportunities available through the platform. Time management skills were also key to success (more so in CSW) and often needed further development. Some of these skills were developed



through self-help (sometimes following guidance available via the crowdsourcing platform) and practise, but there also be an increasing need for bite-sized short courses to develop specific skills.

There were mixed views on whether skills were more or less recognised and appreciated in CSW. What is clear, however, is that individuals need to have self-awareness of their own skills and how to market them. This includes the latent skills that some users were developing through engagement in crowdsourcing.

For a few participating in crowdsourcing, their primary motivation was associated with knowledge development or exchange. This was particularly the case in CSF. CSF provides opportunities for individuals to be creative and innovative. Most importantly, it supports them in raising funds to make projects and ideas possible. However, a successful outcome cannot be guaranteed and the effort and resources that fundraisers and entrepreneurs must commit to their projects were often underestimated. Entrepreneurship was a common theme in the case of CSF and the view was that there is a need to foster a culture that values taking risks in order to create and take forward new projects and enterprises. The European context was seen as less supportive of entrepreneurs than it might be and was suggested that, in the US, for example, there was more evidence of a culture of embracing and supporting entrepreneurship. Such a culture is reflected in the success of crowdfunding in the US.

More generally those engaging in crowdsourcing, and specifically CSW, may need support regarding managing their financial (including insurance) and tax affairs. There may also be a need for guidance about the legal and benefits framework to support users in engaging in crowdsourcing while claiming out-of-work benefits.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This section starts by providing a summary of the role played by internet-enabled platforms in the changing landscape of employment and employability (Section 4.1). It then moves on to outline implications for policy, including barriers and challenges faced in promoting greater use of internet-enabled exchanges (Section 4.2) and the role of platforms in facilitating a shift to internet-enabled activity (Section 4.3). The section finishes with some overarching concluding remarks (Section 4.4).

### 4.1. Internet-enabled platforms and the changing landscape of employment and employability

#### 4.1.1. Crowdsourcing for paid work

CSW can be a *route to employment* for individuals whether they are engaged in employment, self-employment or are unemployed or economically inactive. The extent to which individuals are able to engage in CSW while claiming out-of-work benefits is determined by national welfare regimes and mechanisms for responding in real-time to more fragmented forms of labour market participation in which income from benefits and paid employment varies over time.<sup>58</sup> However, CSW is *probably not suitable for everyone*: individuals lacking the generic skills outlined in Sections 3.1 and 3.2 are unlikely to be successful operating in a freelance capacity, even if they have specialist specific skills and their socio-economic and household context is compatible with freelancing.

Nevertheless, CSW may offer opportunities to build *work experience* (with buyers as potential referees for future job applications), to *'brush up' existing skills* through practice, to *uncover latent skills*, and to *develop specialist skills* (albeit at the workers' expense) which may lead to other employment – including in sectors and in roles where individuals may have had no previous direct employment experience. Hence *CSW can be a means of enhancing employability* for individuals already in employment and for those on out-of-work benefits – *if* they have (latent) skills to sell *and* are interested and committed to doing so. To be successful CSW sellers need to be proactive in seeking work, responsive to demands of buyers, and to have good organisational, time management and planning skills, self-discipline and communication skills (to liaise with buyers and pitch for work). Such *generic skills* are *transferable* to other employment (and non-employment) settings. CSW may offer opportunities to learn new skills, as well as develop specialist, generic and/or latent skills. These skills are often transferable to other settings and may in some instances encourage individuals to engage in further learning and training. CSW may offer the opportunity to undertake different and more challenging work than has been available to workers hitherto.

#### 4.1.2. Crowdfunding

The *relationship between equity-based crowdfunding and employment* is perhaps more evident than is case for reward-based crowdfunding. The former can lead to self-employment and to the creation of new jobs if a business with growth potential is successful. There may be other benefits such as those derived from the relationship built between investors and entrepreneurs. This could lead to expertise sharing, mentoring and building networks, although previous experience and what individuals can bring to the relationship might vary. However, the risks associated with entrepreneurship are high and a larger proportion of businesses fail than rather than succeed. On the other hand, through reward-based crowdfunding fundraisers put into practice employability skills and tap into already-available attributes such as having a well-developed network of contacts.

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<sup>58</sup> The introduction of Universal Credit in Great Britain is designed to top up income, so facilitating such fragmented forms of working.

A key feature of CSF is drive and motivation to make a project or business idea happen. Employability skills (e.g. digital, communication and problem solving skills) are deployed and developed in this process. Moreover, to achieve their aims fundraisers and entrepreneurs must use and develop a range of resources (including raising funds and developing their networks) which can also be seen as relevant to employment and employability.

CSF is suitable for individuals with a project in mind and that is well-developed before deciding to run a crowdfunding campaign. Individuals lacking skills in the use of digital social media and without an initial community of backers and a convincing project will struggle to make a reward-based campaign successful. On the other hand, equity-based crowdfunding requires entrepreneurial and business skills.

#### **4.1.3. Crowdsourcing for volunteering**

The Do-it case study and supporting survey statistics<sup>59</sup> indicate that particularly young people (15-25 year olds) often embark on volunteering because they *want to develop and practice their skills<sup>60</sup> and become more employable*. A good match between the volunteering opportunity and the job(s) the person is interested in can enhance the person's employability further. The volunteering experience featured in young volunteers' CVs, particularly in cases where they had not yet gained any other work experience as they are still in education or have not long ago completed their initial education. It was reported that employers take note of it as the volunteering motivation and experience can be a conversation topic at job interviews.

In the case study the online volunteers interviewed already had good IT literacy allowing them to engage in online volunteering without the need for IT training. More generally, skills that the volunteers honed or developed depended on their volunteering role and included writing clearly in an online context that is devoid of non-verbal clues, interpersonal skills and skills in specific areas associated with their role. As a result of their online volunteering and also the training they received for their role some have become more confident – and this was mirrored in the assessment of representatives from the online charity. However, other roles, such as online research, may not offer much if any scope for skill development.

While face-to-face volunteering roles may offer other benefits, such as direct personal contact and the development of a wider range of skills, the greater flexibility of the online volunteering role helped some to continue volunteering at a time when personal circumstances changed or called for a reduction of the time commitment the person is able to give.

#### **4.1.4. Crowdsourcing for volunteering – exchange rings**

It is important to see CSV exchange rings, as captured in the case study, mainly as a means to create local networks and provide neighbourhood help. Employability effects are merely a by-product of these voluntarily-organised exchange rings.

Similarly to CSW and CSF, the skills needed to participate in exchange rings are generic and practical. These skills are transferable to employment, and in some cases, there were ways in which members and/ or activists have learned new skills through participation in an exchange ring. The

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<sup>59</sup> See Di Antonio, E. (2012) *Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2012*. <http://www.YouthNet.org/2012/11/volunteer-satisfaction-survey-2012/>

[The survey results \(covering all volunteers\) showed that about half of all respondents reported that they had developed their skills and gained experience, and about a third thought they had become more employable. These proportions were higher for young people than other age groups.](#)

<sup>60</sup> This does not mean to say that there is a lack of training services for young people, but rather a lack of work experience/ opportunities to demonstrate skills.

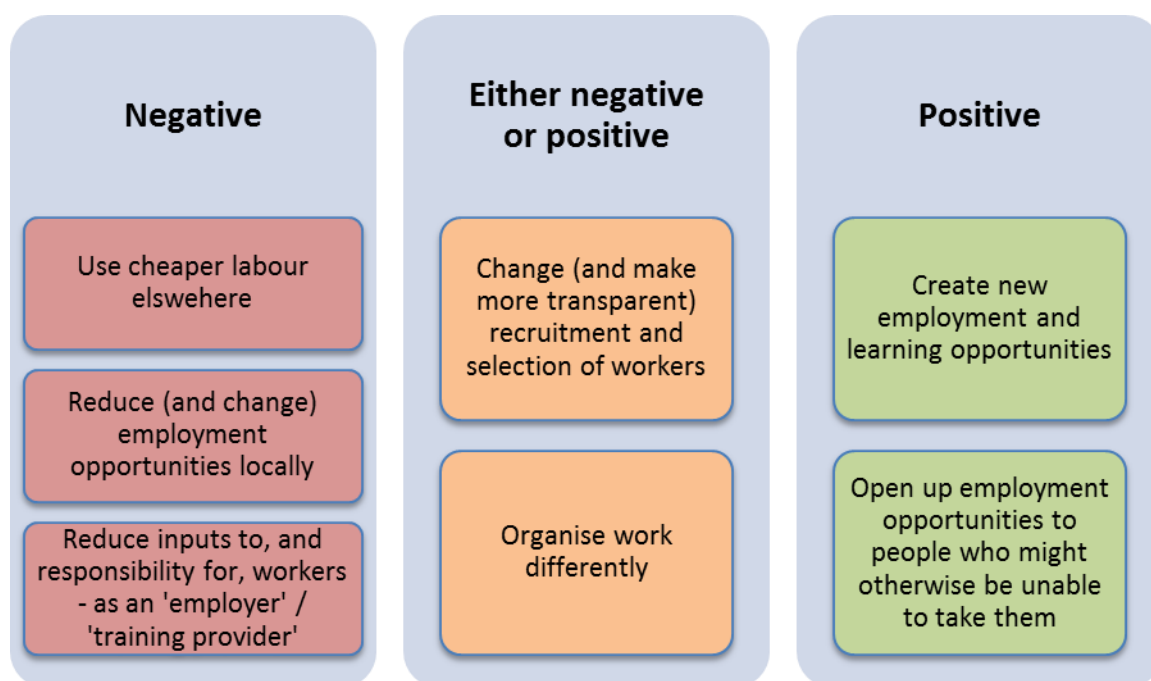
supportive context offered by reciprocal exchange rings is an important factor here, but individuals in need of specialist support to find this in a voluntarily organised exchange ring.

Exchange rings are valuable in broadening social networks, which in turn may be useful in finding openings for formal employment.

#### 4.1.5. Overview

The internet-enabled platforms discussed in the case studies both help change the landscape of employment opportunities (negatively and positively) and also provide an environment in which employability skills may be further developed. The way in which buyers'/ employers' use of CSW platforms impacts on employments and skills development opportunities for sellers/ workers is illustrated in Figure 4.1 according to a 'traffic light' system. This shows that changes may be negative (in terms of quality and quantity of employment and opportunities for employer-provided training), positive (in terms of provision of new employment and skills development opportunities) or either negative or positive (in terms of changing practices and work organisation).

**Figure 4.1: Summary of how buyers/ employers use of crowdsourcing platforms may impinge on the landscape of employment and employability (with particular reference to CSW)**



#### 4.2. Addressing gaps in use of internet-enabled exchanges: barriers and challenges

There are three key gaps that need to be addressed in order to achieve greater use of internet-enabled exchanges:

- Access to the internet;
- A minimum threshold level of, and confidence in using, ICT skills; and
- Awareness of platforms and the opportunities they offer.

The most fundamental gap in use of internet-enabled exchanges is *access to the internet*. To engage in CSW, CSF and online CSV users need to be able to access the internet at any time; (hence

home access to the internet is necessary in order to take full advantage of opportunities presented by internet-enabled exchanges.

Secondly, as highlighted in Chapter 3, users need a *threshold level of ICT skills* in order to use internet-enabled exchanges to full advantage. The Slivers of Time case study revealed that some users (particularly older people) were reluctant to use internet-enabled systems to their full potential, but intermediary organisations felt that the number of such individuals would decline over time. While essential, a threshold level of ICT skills is a prerequisite, the evidence suggests that to successfully engage in crowdsourcing, and in CSW and CSF in particular, individuals need to possess a *range of employability attributes and skills* at the outset on which they can build.

A third key gap in use of internet-enabled exchanges is *awareness raising of the existence of platforms*; it seems likely that there are many potential users who are unaware of crowdsourcing in general and of opportunities for CSW, CSF and CSV, in particular. Currently there is a lack of information on how platforms engage with other institutional support initiatives. Following on from awareness raising of the existence of platforms, is *raising awareness of how to use them*. The support needed is likely to vary in accordance with individuals' interest in and confidence in using ICT, as well as with existing employability attributes and skills.

Hence, it is possible to categorise potential users of internet-enabled exchanges into one of four types:

- *Unaware* – for whom lack of awareness is their key gap;
- *Unready* – here lack of experience is a key gap, and this might be addressed by facilitating access to ICT, training and confidence building;
- *Uninterested* – this group would likely be in need of the types of support outlined above; and
- *Unable* – these individuals would be likely to need personalised support to engage with internet-enabled platforms.

Other key issues affecting use of internet-enabled exchanges are:

- Social networks;
- The geographical distribution of (non virtual) opportunities;
- National regulatory regimes, institutional factors and legal frameworks – in relation to participation in activities associated with internet-enabled exchanges; and

The case study research from CSW, CSF and CSV highlighted the importance of *social networks*, which may both encourage participation in internet-enabled exchanges and be developed further as a consequence of such participation. Those without social networks find it difficult to engage successfully with crowdsourcing activities. This suggests policy makers need to pay attention to initiatives that attempt to build and utilise social networks alongside other awareness raising and skills development activities.

Although internet-enabled exchanges may help overcome *geographical barriers* by enabling exchanges to take place at a distance, it remains the case that individuals in densely populated urban areas are likely to have more opportunities to engage in the full range of opportunities afforded by crowdsourcing, especially of the types undertaken by many users of Slivers of Time, CSV and exchange rings.

National *regulatory regimes* may make participation in CSW easier or harder in some countries than in others. In the case of the UK, case study evidence suggested that labour market regulation (including social protection) and tax rules did not impact in a negative way on PPH or Slivers of Time, although the welfare regime may militate against encouraging the long-term workless to engage in flexible work, given concerns with sustainable employment. There is scope for changes in welfare regimes and institutional factors to impact on CSW. In the case of CSW a factor of potential relevance is how the education and training system is organised, and whether it is geared to the needs of individuals engaged in CSW. Given that in the case of PeoplePerHour buyers do not pay for training of sellers how the training system is funded, and how costs impact on individuals, may be an important issue in enabling or hindering sellers from developing their skills.

*Institutional factors and legal frameworks* may also impact on CSF. Equity-based crowdfunding is limited by national laws in relation to lending money in exchange for profit or a share of the revenue. SociosInversores, however, circumvents this limitation by not collecting or distributing money from investors or entrepreneurs. This leads to some disadvantages and shapes the role of the platform in the business relationships it facilitates.

### **4.3. The role of platforms in facilitating a shift to internet-enabled activity – with particular reference to employability and employment**

#### **4.3.1. Platforms as ‘supporting tools’ and ‘launch pads’ to employability and employment**

It is clear from section 4.2 that crowdsourcing platforms are ‘*supporting tools*’ only: individuals need to bring *existing skills and networks* to use them effectively. But it is also clear that individuals can use platforms as a *launch pad for broadening skills and networks*, or for *changing career*. The ‘unaware’ would likely need minimal support in using platforms to utilise existing skills and practise new ones, using self-help and ‘good practice’ guides available on the platforms themselves (for instance, PeoplePerHour has guides, blog posts and news items designed to help users). The ‘unready’ would likely need more support – perhaps in terms of focused bite-sized workshops on particular topics – in order to learn new skills. In general, CSV and exchange rings are likely to provide a more supportive context for such training and skills development than CSW and CSF. The platforms themselves are unlikely to be a suitable tool, at least in the first instance, for facilitating a general shift to internet-enabled activity for the ‘uninterested’<sup>61</sup> and the ‘unable’.

*Platforms as enabling factors in facilitating a shift to internet-enabled activity* – Arguably, PPH and Slivers of Time are internet-enabled platforms operating as enabling factors in facilitating a shift to internet-enabled activity, and specifically matching supply and demand. Currently, other mainstream labour market intermediaries and support agencies play a limited role in promoting CSW, although the role of professional associations in hosting internet-based platforms in facilitating and regulating work opportunities for their members should not be overlooked, even though they might not be thought of ‘crowdsourcing’.

Mainstream intermediaries and agencies could support and promote CSW by ensuring greater access to ICT skills provision and access to ICT hardware and software, and also ensuring that existing training programmes meet needs of CSW sellers (and buyers), as well as raising awareness of specific CSW platforms.

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<sup>61</sup> At least without an element of compulsion – for instance, through benefit sanctions.

#### **4.3.2. The importance of understanding motivations to engage in internet-enabled activity**

The case study evidence indicated that sellers (or workers) were generally keen to engage in the labour market using this approach; some turned to CSW out of interest, while others faced a lack of alternative employment options. However, for some individuals motivations changed over time, as a result of increased confidence, the development of new skills, and changes in their personal circumstances (i.e. changing financial commitments, caring responsibilities etc.). It should be noted, also, that not all platforms are suitable for all types of work and all workers/sellers.

For many of the sellers and workers interviewed, work-life balance was a key influencer in the motivation to engage in this form of work. For the majority, this form of employment was their main source of income. In the case of Slivers of Time individuals spoke about finding work that fitted around other obligations, but all demonstrated high levels of commitment to this work. Due to the ease of use and the flexibility of the platforms, the majority of sellers and workers spoke of continuing this way of working in the medium to longer term. The flexibility afforded by this form of working is likely to help drive future growth of CSW.

#### **4.3.3. Making connections**

From a CSF perspective, investor users of SociosInversores may use the platform to find a business in which they can invest and collaborate at the same time, thus generating self-employment activity for themselves. These cases highlighted as one of the results of the economic crisis where people may have lost their jobs and are looking for an alternative investment option that does not involve the banking system. This willingness to participate in a business with an up to now unknown partner and business suggests a high degree of adaptability and the establishment of mutual trust. In the case of CSF, reward-based crowdfunding provides an example of individuals mobilising their communities and gathering their support to achieve an aim. Communication and organisation skills are deployed and developed in this process. These employability skills could become useful in an employment situation, although the link is not directly established.

In general, internet-enabled exchanges can facilitate the interaction and connection between those seeking resources and those with resources to donate or invest. This brokerage can be a *continuous service* or *one-off support* in the sense that once the resources and needs are matched the broker no longer needs to play a role or its role will diminish. SociosInversores and Do-It are two examples of one-off brokering. The latter is an online broker for organisations seeking to recruit volunteers and volunteers seeking suitable opportunities; as for SociosInversores, it helps investors find suitable investment opportunities and entrepreneurs find funding for their business ideas. Once the two parties have established contact, the broker no longer needs to play a part, although there may be some monitoring.

Platforms such as PPH, Slivers of Time and exchange ring LoWi e.V. offer a more continuous service which users may access again and again. These platforms provide a more complex matching service which also includes virtual space where sellers and buyer or members can continue to interact. This gives rise to elements meant to mediate these interactions. These elements – not present in one-off platforms – may include an exchange system or a rating system associated to the maintenance of personal profiles. Maintaining a ‘good’ profile allows some users to stand out and be successful at using the platform or, as in the case of exchange rings, facilitates integration to the community. In this sense the platform can be an enabling support factor which provides some access to employment, albeit this possibility is not always realised.

#### **4.3.4. Bringing resources to platforms ... and using other resources alongside them**

The strength of platforms rests on the number of users that can potentially be accessed and the consequently increased probability of finding a match for one’s needs or resources. However, as the results from the case studies suggest, successful use of internet-enabled exchanges largely depends on the resources that users bring to the table including social, cultural and economic

capital. Moreover, internet-enabled platforms are often used alongside other resources (e.g. Do-it users interviewed may have found about their volunteering opportunities through other channels such as their social networks rather than directly through the website). This suggests platforms are a key part of the 'mix' in facilitating a shift to internet-enabled activity of relevance to employability and employment, but alone they are not a 'fix'.

#### **4.4. Concluding remarks**

Ten key conclusions from the case studies are summarised below:

1. Crowdsourcing is not only about the young generation who have grown up in the digital age; rather to operate effectively with internet-enabled platforms skills, confidence and experience are important.
2. The skills and attributes individuals bring to crowdsourcing are important; self-efficacy, self-motivation and confidence, as well as relevant job-specific skills, may be more crucial to operate in a crowdsourcing environment than in many conventional jobs.
3. The social networks users bring with them are important in accessing opportunities. Moreover, crowdsourcing can help activate and invigorate existing networks for users' advantage.
4. In crowdsourcing for work the onus is on individuals to develop their own skills, while volunteers might find organisations to invest in their skills development.
5. Crowdsourcing has relevance not only for paid work, but also unpaid work and organisations that use volunteers.
6. Internet-enabled platforms are opening up new ways of raising capital, finding clients and subcontractors, and balancing paid and unpaid work – so enabling new ways of working.
7. Crowdsourcing offers new pathways to learning and practising skills, while building the networks necessary to operate in this environment, and can offer new social support.
8. Crowdsourcing is associated with increased flexibility for all parties involved, but at the costs of uncertainty.
9. The global and the local matters: while globalisation is a feature of some sorts of work, other aspects of this environment are very much about reshaping local communities and labour markets through local connections.
10. Crowdsourcing is diverse and dynamic. This poses challenges from a policy perspective and means that a 'one size fits all' policy, whether in terms of supporting users or in terms of regulation, is unlikely to be effective.

As noted above, *flexibility* is a key feature of crowdsourcing, and also a tenet of employability. So, for instance, CSW offers flexibility for sellers (if successful) to exercise some choice about how, when and what to work on. Those PPH sellers interviewed who became freelancers (even if through necessity rather than through positive choice) could not foresee giving up freelancing for an employee position – partly because they valued the flexibility afforded to them by CSW. But sellers also have to be flexible to respond to employers' demands. This raises the question of '*whose flexibility*' (i.e. the buyer or the seller) predominates (ideally it would be for both parties, with a 'win-win' situation prevailing). The evidence suggests that sellers are on a continuum in this



respect, with novice sellers (i.e. those entering the marketplace) having to be particularly responsive at the behest of buyers. At the negative end of the continuum, there are policy concerns about (self-)exploitation, insecurity, low pay and lack of rights associated with conventional employment relationships. In some circumstances there may also be issues regarding intellectual property rights – including whether students are paying others to prepare assessed work on their behalf.

Internet-enabled exchanges facilitate the combination or joining up of paid and unpaid opportunities, and this has implications for *tax and benefit systems*. From a legal perspective there are policy issues relating to whether and *how crowdsourcing activity is recorded* and how, and whether, tax is paid. Crowdsourcing opens up the opportunity for fraud in terms of undeclared income. For some platforms work is recorded on booking systems (as in the case of Slivers of Time), while in other instances (e.g. for PPH) the onus is on the seller to declare their earnings to the tax authorities. There are other legal issues which may be difficult to police, including use of software packages in accordance with licensing agreements; regulation may play a role in preventing what may be termed ‘immoral crowdsourcing’.<sup>62</sup>

Although some internet-enabled exchanges offer *training* for users, in other instances the onus of responsibility for training falls on the individual rather than the buyer/ employer. This has implications for training costs and delivery models.

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<sup>62</sup> Covering issues of fraud or cheating in other ways (e.g. students paying for academic assignments to be completed by others, production of illegal copies of software, etc).

## 5. LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: DIVERSITY AND DYNAMISM

In this section the importance of widening and deepening the existing evidence base is outlined, with particular emphasis on larger case studies, consideration of more platforms, the potential value of longitudinal perspectives and the need for a more detailed focus on employment quality (Section 5.1). Drivers and dependencies are highlighted (Section 5.2) and the challenge of quantification is discussed (Section 5.3).

### 5.1. Widening and deepening the evidence base

The qualitative case study research reported here is relatively small scale but through focusing on the dynamics of the case study platforms, and especially the experiences of selected individuals using the platforms, it provides important insights into the diversity and dynamism of contemporary crowdsourcing. It has provided information on the operation of platforms, motivations of buyers/ investors and sellers/ workers to engage in crowdsourcing, the prerequisites for successful engagement in crowdsourcing and associated implications for employment and employability.

To deepen and widen the evidence base, there is a need for larger scale studies of more platforms. There is also a need to examine crowdsourcing in a greater range of national and local contexts<sup>63</sup> and macro and institutional circumstances, in order to learn whether, how and to what extent such factors impinge on take up and experience of crowdsourcing. For instance:

- Do individuals engage in CSW as a result of limited local employment opportunities in some institutional contexts but not others?
- Are some individuals in some places more likely than others to engage in CSV to gain experience and develop skills that may subsequently be beneficial for sustainable employment?
- Do institutional and regulatory contexts in some countries pose more constraints on the development of crowdsourcing than in others?

In addition to deepening understanding of crowdsourcing platforms and their operation for individuals, there is a need to understand the impact of crowdsourcing on individuals' employability over the longer term. Individuals' employability develops over time and is influenced by many environmental and contextual factors. This study has captured a snapshot of individuals' current situations, with some reflections on past activities and experiences. There would be merit in a longitudinal study of individual trajectories, looking at those using platforms at a particular point in time and whether/ how they move on.<sup>64</sup> To provide a counterfactual of what would have happened in the absence of CSF, CSW, and CSV it would be necessary to examine trajectories of non-users.

It is possible that engagement in crowdsourcing may have a greater impact on employability than evidenced in the current study. Skills developed through engagement in crowdsourcing may influence and impact on individual careers by leading to new opportunities or different career directions. Through a longitudinal study it would be possible to trace the experiences of those who 'drop out' of CSW/ CSV/ CSF after a short period and compare them with those who use platforms over a more sustained period.

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<sup>63</sup> A Eurofound study on *New Ways of Working* will provide some insights into crowdsourcing in selected European countries.

<sup>64</sup> This could include individuals who have tried and rejected crowdsourcing.

Further research is needed to find out about the impact of CSW on the *quality of employment* experienced by sellers and the quality of work purchased by buyers. In particular, how do CSW sellers' wages compare with wages for employees undertaking similar tasks?

## **5.2. Dependencies and drivers**

As outlined in section 4, two essentials for users to participate in internet-enabled exchanges are *access* to information and communications technologies and a threshold level of *IT skills*. To partake fully in CSW on-demand access is required, whereas for reciprocal exchange rings and other CSV the barriers to entry to crowdsourcing are somewhat lower.

The evidence from the case studies and the temporal conjunction of *advances in technology* with *economic crisis* suggests that these two drivers have worked together to reinforce participation in crowdsourcing. Some users who might not otherwise have done so have turned to CSW/ CSF and CSV in the face of a relative lack of alternative opportunities (for labour market participation and in some instances for investment). The evidence suggests that such participation in crowdsourcing activities often takes place alongside conventional economic exchanges. At the same time, platform owners have endeavoured to keep abreast of technological advances in delivery of crowdsourcing services. This has been motivated by both economic imperatives and developments in *users' preferences*.

These drivers and dependencies are likely to remain important in the future development of crowdsourcing, with the *regulatory framework* playing a shaping role. Depending on the nature and extent of future regulation developments in crowdsourcing could be enabled or stifled.

## **5.3. Quantifying the impact**

While providing insights into experiences of crowdsourcing, the case studies undertaken for the CrowdEmploy project *do not and cannot quantify the impact of crowdsourcing*. In order to assess the importance of, and trends in, crowdsourcing quantification is necessary, but there is no comprehensive evidence base currently available. Some data are collected by platforms owners on, for example, the number of registered users, types of engagement, demographic profiles, time and frequency of engagement, etc. However, this is often presented as marketing information to promote the platform in terms of numbers of registered users, paid and unpaid activities posted, users responding and income exchanged or funds raised. Evidence that may be available from different platforms cannot be aggregated as it is not comparable. The collection of these data cannot be considered reliable and may not be a true reflection of the number of users who engage in crowdsourcing and for how long. There is no reason or regulation for platform owners to share this information; indeed some data may be commercially confidential.

Collection of data on crowdsourcing directly from users is also difficult. There is no common understanding of what constitutes crowdsourcing and so some individuals who are engaged in crowdsourcing activities may not recognise themselves as doing so. Conventional household surveys (such as the European Labour Force Survey) use standard definitions of economic activity, whereas individuals engaged in crowdsourcing may be undertaking this activity as a minor element in a more complex patchwork of other economic activities (i.e. alongside employee or self-employed activities, while unemployed or economically inactive, etc.).

Similarly it is difficult to measure accurately earnings/ income from crowdsourcing. In some instances, quantifying CSF may be easiest, as the number of projects that receive funds and how much could be available. However, platforms are unlikely to publish these data unless significant numbers of projects were successful and large amounts of income raised.

Defining CSW and CSV is complex, so quantifying it and collating numbers engaged in CSW and CSV would be complicated and would very much depend on methodology. There would appear to be scope for pilot studies to test various approaches to collecting quantifiable data in order to help develop a more robust evidence base in the medium-term.

## ANNEX 1: Crowdeploy Case Studies (yellow shading highlights issues of particular relevance to the crowdsourcing for paid work case studies)

Enabling support factors							
Role of labour market intermediaries and support agencies in public, private and voluntary sectors, trades unions, national and local employer associations / business organisations, local / regional authorities, and sectoral and professional bodies, education institutions (schools, colleges and universities) in:							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>providing support to individuals on the employability pathway<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>pre-employment preparation</li><li>training provision/ signposting to specialist provision</li><li>signposting/ referral to non-employment/ training support services (e.g. health, housing, care, etc.)</li></ul></li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>CV preparation</li><li>interview practice</li><li>job search advice and support</li><li>access to ICT skills provision</li><li>access to ICT hardware and software</li><li>job broking (including technology)</li><li>job matching (including technology)</li><li>post-employment support</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>providing support to employers in facilitating aspects of employment:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>pre-employment and in work training</li><li>recruitment and selection</li><li>off-the-job and on-the-job training</li><li>helping ensure employee voice and buy-in</li><li>legal advice (e.g. on employment regulations)</li></ul></li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>influencing local training/ skills policy<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>to address national and local labour market needs</li><li>adapting existing training programmes to meet local needs</li><li>through facilitating opportunities for business and employee voice</li></ul></li></ul>	
Individual factors		Individual circumstances	Employer/ organisational practices	Local contextual factors	Macro level factors		
<b>Demographic characteristics</b> (could be the basis for discrimination) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>age</li><li>gender</li><li>nationality</li><li>country of origin</li><li>time in host country</li><li>ethnic group</li><li>religious affiliation</li><li>name</li></ul>	<b>Disposition to enhancing employability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>attitudes to education and training<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>commitment to lifelong learning</li></ul></li><li>engagement in CPD</li><li>engagement in networking to extend human/ social/ cultural capital</li><li>attitudes to paid employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship</li><li>attitudes to taking up unpaid/marginally paid work</li><li>volunteering</li><li>internships</li></ul>	<b>Household circumstances</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>direct caring responsibilities</li><li>other family and caring responsibilities</li><li>other aspects of individual's contribution to household (economic or otherwise)</li><li>other household circumstances</li></ul>	<b>Organisational culture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>commitment to training / skills development and skills utilisation <sup>1</sup></li><li>whether have a training budget</li><li>whether have a training plan</li><li>whether support (and fund) on-the-job/ off-the-job training (including e-learning)</li><li>whether offer work experience/ work placements</li><li>whether adopt high performance work practices</li><li>whether provide opportunities for employee voice</li><li>trades union recognition</li></ul>	<b>Features of local employment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>quantity of jobs (vis-à-vis number of people seeking employment) in the local labour market</li><li>quality of jobs<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>occupation/ skill level</li><li>full-time/ part-time</li><li>permanent/ temporary</li><li>pay</li></ul></li><li>location of jobs (vis-à-vis residences and local transport networks)</li></ul>	<b>Regulatory regime</b> (mainly nationally-specific but some factors at EU level) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>rules determining labour market access</li><li>migration policy</li><li>equalities policy / anti-discrimination policy</li><li>formal education system, curricula and training policy (including funding regimes)</li></ul>		

<p><i>Health and well-being</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– physical</li> <li>– mental</li> </ul> </li> <li>• disability</li> </ul>	<p><i>Labour market and Job seeking knowledge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment/ work knowledge base (including work experience and general work skills)</li> <li>• awareness of labour market opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- knowledge of employers' recruitment practices<sup>2</sup></li> <li>– knowledge and use of formal and informal information sources</li> </ul> </li> <li>• ability to fill in a CV, perform effectively at interview</li> <li>• realistic approach to job targeting</li> </ul>	<p><i>Household work culture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether other household members are in employment</li> <li>• existence of a culture in which work and skills development is (not) encouraged</li> </ul>	<p><i>Recruitment and selection practices</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how and where jobs are advertised (i.e. methods used) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- formal</li> <li>- informal</li> <li>- internet/ e-based</li> </ul> </li> <li>• how successful applicants are selected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– manual</li> <li>– e-screening/ e-selection</li> </ul> </li> <li>• (non) discriminatory practices</li> </ul>	<p><i>Local work culture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether neighbourhood has high levels of employment/ non-employment</li> <li>• local norms/ aspirations regarding education/ training/ employment</li> </ul>	<p><i>Welfare regime and institutional factors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benefits system</li> <li>• active labour market policy</li> <li>• role of public employment service</li> <li>• role of trades unions</li> <li>• ICT policy</li> <li>– public service delivery</li> </ul>
<p><i>Economic position</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (currently) in employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>full-time employee</li> <li>part-time employee</li> <li>– self-employed (with or without employees)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• (currently) unemployed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>duration</li> </ul> </li> <li>• (currently) economically inactive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reason</li> <li>duration</li> </ul> </li> <li>• overall work history</li> </ul>	<p><i>Adaptability and mobility</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• career management and adaptability</li> <li>• functional mobility</li> <li>• occupational mobility</li> <li>• geographical mobility</li> <li>• wage flexibility (and reservation wage)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Access to resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to transport</li> <li>• access to financial capital</li> <li>• access to social capital (including for job search)</li> <li>• access to cultural capital (to ease entry into employment and to maintain employment)</li> <li>• access to ICT</li> </ul>	<p><i>Working practices</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether adopt flexible working practices (and for whom)<sup>3</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>part-time working</li> <li>term-time hours</li> <li>compressed hours</li> <li>annual hours</li> <li>job sharing</li> <li>flexi-time</li> <li>teleworking</li> </ul> </li> <li>• working from home on a regular basis</li> </ul>	<p><i>Local labour market operation and norms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recruitment norms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- how/where jobs are advertised locally</li> <li>- role of employment agencies in local labour market (and occupational/ sectoral labour markets locally)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• role and strength of different actors in the local labour markets (e.g. key employers, local authorities, trades unions, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Employment policy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work incentives (for individuals)</li> <li>• access to education and training when on benefits</li> <li>• incentives for employers to recruit / take on individuals for work experience, and for skills development</li> </ul>

<p><i>Employability skills and attributes/ characteristics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• essential attributes</li> <li>- basic social skills</li> <li>- honesty and integrity</li> <li>- personal presentation</li> <li>- reliability</li> <li>- willingness to work</li> <li>- understanding of actions and consequences</li> <li>- positive attitude to work</li> <li>- responsibility</li> <li>- self-discipline</li> <li>• personal competencies</li> <li>- proactivity</li> <li>- diligence</li> <li>- (self-)motivation</li> <li>- judgement</li> <li>- initiative</li> <li>- assertiveness</li> <li>- confidence</li> <li>- self-esteem</li> <li>- self-efficacy</li> <li>- perceived employability</li> <li>• basic transferable skills</li> <li>- literacy</li> <li>- writing</li> <li>- numeracy</li> <li>- verbal presentation</li> <li>- basic ICT skills</li> <li>- new basic skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• key transferable skills</li> <li>- problem solving</li> <li>- work process management</li> <li>- team working</li> <li>- personal task and time management</li> <li>- e-skills</li> <li>- interpersonal and communication skills</li> <li>- emotional intelligence</li> <li>- aesthetic customer service skills</li> <li>• high level transferable skills</li> <li>- team working</li> <li>- business thinking</li> <li>- commercial awareness</li> <li>- vision</li> <li>- job-specific skills</li> <li>- enterprise skills</li> <li>- creativity</li> <li>• qualifications (and where obtained)</li> <li>- academic</li> <li>- vocational</li> <li>- job-specific</li> </ul>				<p><i>Macroeconomic factors (at national and supra-national scales)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aggregate demand for labour</li> <li>- unemployment levels</li> <li>- vacancy levels</li> <li>- employment profile</li> <li>• employer/ consumer confidence</li> </ul>
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Notes:

1. These are affected negatively.
2. Such practices are more transparent with CSW.
3. A key feature of much CSW is the very flexible working practices.

## ANNEX 2: Crowdfemploy Case Studies (green shading highlights issues of particular relevance to the crowdsourcing for funding case studies)

Enabling support factors							
Role of labour market intermediaries and support agencies in public, private and voluntary sectors, trades unions, national and local employer associations / business organisations, local / regional authorities, and sectoral and professional bodies, education institutions (schools, colleges and universities) in:							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>providing support to individuals on the employability pathway<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>pre-employment preparation</li></ul></li><li>training provision/ signposting to specialist provision</li><li>signposting/ referral to non-employment/ training support services (e.g. health, housing, care, etc.)</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>CV preparation</li><li>interview practice</li><li>job search advice and support</li><li>access to ICT skills provision</li><li>access to ICT hardware and software</li><li>job broking (including technology)</li><li>job matching (including technology)</li><li>post-employment support</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>providing support to employers in facilitating aspects of employment:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>pre-employment and in work training</li><li>recruitment and selection</li><li>off-the-job and on-the-job training</li><li>helping ensure employee voice and buy-in</li></ul></li><li>legal advice (e.g. on employment regulations)</li></ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>influencing local training/ skills policy<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>to address national and local labour market needs</li><li>adapting existing training programmes to meet local needs</li><li>through facilitating opportunities for business and employee voice</li></ul></li></ul>	
Individual factors		Individual circumstances	Employer/ organisational practices	Local contextual factors	Macro level factors		
<i>Demographic characteristics</i> (could be the basis for discrimination) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>age</li><li>gender</li><li>nationality</li><li>country of origin</li><li>time in host country</li><li>ethnic group</li><li>religious affiliation</li><li>name</li></ul>	<i>Disposition to enhancing employability</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>attitudes to education and training<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>commitment to lifelong learning</li></ul></li><li>engagement in CPD</li><li>engagement in networking to extend human/social/cultural capital</li><li>attitudes to paid employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship</li><li>attitudes to taking up unpaid/marginally paid work</li><li>volunteering internships</li></ul>	<i>Household circumstances</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>direct caring responsibilities</li><li>other family and caring responsibilities</li><li>other aspects of individual's contribution to household (economic or otherwise)</li><li>other household circumstances</li></ul>	<i>Organisational culture</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>commitment to training / skills development and skills utilisation (and for whom)</li><li>whether have a training budget</li><li>whether have a training plan</li><li>whether support (and fund) on-the-job/ off-the-job training (including e-learning)</li><li>whether offer work experience/ work placements</li><li>whether adopt high performance work practices</li><li>whether provide opportunities for employee voice</li><li>trades union recognition</li></ul>	<i>Features of local employment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>quantity of jobs (vis-à-vis number of people seeking employment) in the local labour market</li><li>quality of jobs<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>occupation/ skill level</li><li>full-time/ part-time</li><li>permanent/ temporary</li><li>pay</li></ul></li><li>location of jobs (vis-à-vis residences and local transport networks)</li></ul>	<i>Regulatory regime</i> (mainly nationally-specific but some factors at EU level) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>rules determining labour market access<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>migration policy</li><li>equalities policy / anti-discrimination policy</li></ul></li><li>formal education system, curricula and training policy (including funding regimes)</li></ul>		

<p><i>Health and well-being</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– physical</li> <li>– mental</li> </ul> </li> <li>• disability</li> </ul>	<p><i>Labour market and Job seeking knowledge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment/ work knowledge base (including work experience and general work skills)</li> <li>• awareness of labour market opportunities</li> <li>- knowledge of employers' recruitment practices</li> <li>– knowledge and use of formal and informal information sources</li> <li>• ability to fill in a CV, perform effectively at interview</li> <li>• realistic approach to job targeting</li> </ul>	<p><i>Household work culture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether other household members are in employment</li> <li>• existence of a culture in which work and skills development is (not) encouraged</li> </ul>	<p><i>Recruitment and selection practices</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how and where jobs are advertised (i.e. methods used) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- formal</li> <li>- informal</li> <li>- internet/ e-based</li> </ul> </li> <li>• how successful applicants are selected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– manual</li> <li>– e-screening/ e-selection</li> </ul> </li> <li>• (non) discriminatory practices</li> </ul>	<p><i>Local work culture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether neighbourhood has high levels of employment/ non-employment</li> <li>• local norms/ aspirations regarding education/ training/ employment</li> </ul>	<p><i>Welfare regime and institutional factors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benefits system</li> <li>• active labour market policy</li> <li>• role of public employment service</li> <li>• role of trades unions</li> <li>• ICT policy</li> <li>– public service delivery</li> </ul>
<p><i>Economic position</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (currently) in employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>full-time employee</li> <li>part-time employee</li> </ul> </li> <li>– self-employed (with or without employees)</li> <li>• (currently) unemployed duration</li> <li>• (currently) economically inactive reason duration</li> <li>• overall work history</li> </ul>	<p><i>Adaptability and mobility</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• career management and adaptability</li> <li>• functional mobility</li> <li>• occupational mobility</li> <li>• geographical mobility</li> <li>• wage flexibility (and reservation wage)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Access to resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to transport</li> <li>• access to financial capital</li> <li>• access to social capital (including for job search)</li> <li>• access to cultural capital (to ease entry into employment and to maintain employment)</li> <li>• access to ICT</li> </ul>	<p><i>Working practices</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether adopt flexible working practices (and for whom) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>part-time working</li> <li>term-time hours</li> <li>compressed hours</li> <li>annual hours</li> <li>job sharing</li> <li>flexi-time</li> <li>teleworking</li> </ul> </li> <li>• working from home on a regular basis</li> </ul>	<p><i>Local labour market operation and norms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recruitment norms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- how/where jobs are advertised locally</li> <li>- role of employment agencies in local labour market (and occupational/ sectoral labour markets locally)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• role and strength of different actors in the local labour markets (e.g. key employers, local authorities, trades unions, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Employment policy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work incentives (for individuals)</li> <li>• access to education and training when on benefits</li> <li>• incentives for employers to recruit / take on individuals for work experience, and for skills development</li> </ul>



<p><i>Employability skills and attributes/ characteristics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• essential attributes</li> <li>- basic social skills</li> <li>- honesty and integrity</li> <li>- personal presentation</li> <li>- reliability</li> <li>- willingness to work</li> <li>- understanding of actions and consequences</li> <li>- positive attitude to work</li> <li>- responsibility</li> <li>- self-discipline</li> <li>• personal competencies</li> <li>- proactivity</li> <li>- diligence</li> <li>- (self-)motivation</li> <li>- judgement</li> <li>- initiative</li> <li>- assertiveness</li> <li>- confidence</li> <li>- self-esteem</li> <li>- self-efficacy</li> <li>- perceived employability</li> <li>• basic transferable skills</li> <li>- literacy</li> <li>- writing</li> <li>- numeracy</li> <li>- verbal presentation</li> <li>- basic ICT skills</li> <li>- new basic skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• key transferable skills</li> <li>- problem solving</li> <li>- work process management</li> <li>- team working</li> <li>- personal task and time management</li> <li>- e-skills</li> <li>- interpersonal and communication skills</li> <li>- emotional intelligence</li> <li>- aesthetic customer service skills</li> <li>• high level transferable skills</li> <li>- team working</li> <li>- business thinking</li> <li>- commercial awareness</li> <li>- vision</li> <li>- job-specific skills</li> <li>- enterprise skills</li> <li>- creativity</li> <li>• qualifications (and where obtained)</li> <li>- academic</li> <li>- vocational</li> <li>- job-specific</li> </ul>				<p><i>Macroeconomic factors (at national and supra-national scales)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aggregate demand for labour</li> <li>- unemployment levels</li> <li>- vacancy levels</li> <li>- employment profile</li> <li>• employer/ consumer confidence</li> </ul>
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**ANNEX 3: Crowdfemploy Case Studies (blue shading highlights issues of particular relevance to the online crowdsourcing for unpaid work – online volunteering case study)**

Enabling support factors					
Role of labour market intermediaries and support agencies in public, private and voluntary sectors, trades unions, national and local employer associations / business organisations, local / regional authorities, and sectoral and professional bodies, education institutions (schools, colleges and universities) in:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>providing support to individuals on the employability pathway</li> <li>– pre-employment preparation</li> <li>– training provision/ signposting to specialist provision</li> <li>– signposting/ referral to non-employment/ training support services (e.g. health, housing, care, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– CV preparation</li> <li>– interview practice</li> <li>– job search advice and support</li> <li>– access to ICT skills provision</li> <li>– access to ICT hardware and software</li> <li>– job broking (including technology)</li> <li>– job matching (including technology)</li> <li>– post-employment support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>providing support to employers in facilitating aspects of employment:</li> <li>– pre-employment and in work training</li> <li>– recruitment and selection</li> <li>– off-the-job and on-the-job training</li> <li>– helping ensure employee voice and buy-in</li> <li>– legal advice (e.g. on employment regulations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>influencing local training/ skills policy</li> <li>– to address national and local labour market needs</li> <li>– adapting existing training programmes to meet local needs</li> <li>– through facilitating opportunities for business and employee voice</li> </ul>		
Individual factors		Individual circumstances	Employer/ organisational practices	Local contextual factors	Macro level factors
<p><i>Demographic characteristics</i> (could be the basis for discrimination)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>age</li> <li>gender</li> <li>nationality</li> <li>country of origin</li> <li>time in host country</li> <li>ethnic group</li> <li>religious affiliation</li> <li>name</li> </ul>	<p><i>Disposition to enhancing employability</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attitudes to education and training</li> <li>– commitment to lifelong learning</li> <li>– engagement in CPD</li> <li>• engagement in networking to extend human/social/cultural capital</li> <li>attitudes to paid employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship</li> <li>• attitudes to taking up unpaid/marginally paid work</li> <li>volunteering internships</li> </ul>	<p><i>Household circumstances</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>direct caring responsibilities</li> <li>other family and caring responsibilities</li> <li>other aspects of individual's contribution to household (economic or otherwise)</li> <li>other household circumstances</li> </ul>	<p><i>Organisational culture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• commitment to training / skills development and skills utilisation (and for whom)</li> <li>– whether have a training budget</li> <li>– whether have a training plan</li> <li>– whether support (and fund) on-the-job/ off-the-job training (including e-learning)</li> <li>– whether offer work experience/ work placements</li> <li>• whether adopt high performance work practices</li> <li>– whether provide opportunities for employee voice</li> <li>• trades union recognition</li> </ul>	<p><i>Features of local employment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quantity of jobs (vis-à-vis number of people seeking employment) in the local labour market</li> <li>• quality of jobs</li> <li>– occupation/ skill level</li> <li>– full-time/ part-time</li> <li>– permanent/ temporary</li> <li>– pay</li> <li>• location of jobs (vis-à-vis residences and local transport networks)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Regulatory regime</i> (mainly nationally-specific but some factors at EU level)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rules determining labour market access</li> <li>– migration policy</li> <li>– equalities policy / anti-discrimination policy</li> <li>• formal education system, curricula and training policy (including funding regimes)</li> </ul>

<p><i>Health and well-being</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– physical</li> <li>– mental</li> </ul> </li> <li>• disability</li> </ul>	<p><i>Labour market and Job seeking knowledge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment/ work knowledge base (including work experience and general work skills)</li> <li>• awareness of labour market opportunities</li> <li>– knowledge of employers' recruitment practices</li> <li>– knowledge and use of formal and informal information sources</li> <li>• ability to fill in a CV, perform effectively at interview</li> <li>• realistic approach to job targeting</li> </ul>	<p><i>Household work culture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether other household members are in employment</li> <li>• existence of a culture in which work and skills development is (not) encouraged</li> </ul>	<p><i>Recruitment and selection practices</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how and where jobs are advertised (i.e. methods used) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– formal</li> <li>– informal</li> <li>– internet/ e-based</li> </ul> </li> <li>• how successful applicants are selected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– manual</li> <li>– e-screening/ e-selection</li> </ul> </li> <li>• (non) discriminatory practices</li> </ul>	<p><i>Local work culture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether neighbourhood has high levels of employment/ non-employment</li> <li>• local norms/ aspirations regarding education/ training/ employment</li> </ul>	<p><i>Welfare regime and institutional factors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benefits system</li> <li>• active labour market policy</li> <li>• role of public employment service</li> <li>• role of trades unions</li> <li>• ICT policy</li> <li>– public service delivery</li> </ul>
<p><i>Economic position</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (currently) in employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>full-time employee</li> <li>part-time employee</li> </ul> </li> <li>– self-employed (with or without employees)</li> <li>• (currently) unemployed duration</li> <li>• (currently) economically inactive reason duration</li> <li>• overall work history</li> </ul>	<p><i>Adaptability and mobility</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• career management and adaptability</li> <li>• functional mobility</li> <li>• occupational mobility</li> <li>• geographical mobility</li> <li>• wage flexibility (and reservation wage)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Access to resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to transport</li> <li>• access to financial capital</li> <li>• access to social capital (including for job search)</li> <li>• access to cultural capital (to ease entry into employment and to maintain employment)</li> <li>• access to ICT</li> </ul>	<p><i>Working practices</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether adopt flexible working practices (and for whom) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>part-time working</li> <li>term-time hours</li> <li>compressed hours</li> <li>annual hours</li> <li>job sharing</li> <li>flexi-time</li> <li>teleworking</li> </ul> </li> <li>• working from home on a regular basis</li> </ul>	<p><i>Local labour market operation and norms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recruitment norms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– how/where jobs are advertised locally</li> <li>– role of employment agencies in local labour market (and occupational/ sectoral labour markets locally)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• role and strength of different actors in the local labour markets (e.g. key employers, local authorities, trades unions, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Employment policy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work incentives (for individuals)</li> <li>• access to education and training when on benefits</li> <li>• incentives for employers to recruit / take on individuals for work experience, and for skills development</li> </ul>

<p><i>Employability skills and attributes/ characteristics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• essential attributes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- basic social skills</li> <li>- honesty and integrity</li> <li>- personal presentation</li> <li>- reliability</li> <li>- willingness to work</li> <li>- understanding of actions and consequences</li> <li>- positive attitude to work</li> <li>- responsibility</li> <li>- self-discipline</li> </ul> </li> <li>• personal competencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- proactivity</li> <li>- diligence</li> <li>- (self-)motivation</li> <li>- judgement</li> <li>- initiative</li> <li>- assertiveness</li> <li>- confidence</li> <li>- self-esteem</li> <li>- self-efficacy</li> <li>- perceived employability</li> </ul> </li> <li>• basic transferable skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- literacy</li> <li>- writing</li> <li>- numeracy</li> <li>- verbal presentation</li> <li>- basic ICT skills</li> <li>- new basic skills</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• key transferable skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- problem solving</li> <li>- work process management</li> <li>- team working</li> </ul> </li> <li>- personal task and time management</li> <li>- e-skills</li> <li>- interpersonal and communication skills</li> <li>- emotional intelligence</li> <li>- aesthetic customer service skills</li> <li>• high level transferable skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- team working</li> <li>- business thinking</li> <li>- commercial awareness</li> <li>- vision</li> </ul> </li> <li>- job-specific skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- enterprise skills</li> <li>- creativity</li> </ul> </li> <li>• qualifications (and where obtained) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- academic</li> <li>- vocational</li> <li>- job-specific</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				<p><i>Macroeconomic factors (at national and supra-national scales)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aggregate demand for labour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- unemployment levels</li> <li>- vacancy levels</li> <li>- employment profile</li> </ul> </li> <li>• employer/ consumer confidence</li> </ul>
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**ANNEX 4: Crowdfemploy Case Studies (pink shading highlights issues of particular relevance to the crowdsourcing for unpaid work - exchange ring case study)**

Enabling support factors					
Role of labour market intermediaries and support agencies in public, private and voluntary sectors, trades unions, national and local employer associations / business organisations, local / regional authorities, and sectoral and professional bodies, education institutions (schools, colleges and universities) in:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing support to individuals on the employability pathway</li> <li>– pre-employment preparation</li> <li>– training provision/ signposting to specialist provision</li> <li>– signposting/ referral to non-employment/ training support services (e.g. health, housing, care, etc.)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– CV preparation</li> <li>– interview practice</li> <li>– job search advice and support</li> <li>– access to ICT skills provision</li> <li>– access to ICT hardware and software</li> <li>– job broking (including technology)</li> <li>– job matching (including technology)</li> <li>– post-employment support</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing support to employers in facilitating aspects of employment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– pre-employment and in work training</li> <li>– recruitment and selection</li> <li>– off-the-job and on-the-job training</li> <li>– helping ensure employee voice and buy-in</li> <li>– legal advice (e.g. on employment regulations)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• influencing local training/ skills policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– to address national and local labour market needs</li> <li>– adapting existing training programmes to meet local needs</li> <li>– through facilitating opportunities for business and employee voice</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
Individual factors		Individual circumstances	Employer/ organisational practices	Local contextual factors	Macro level factors
<p><i>Demographic characteristics</i> (could be the basis for discrimination)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• age</li> <li>• gender</li> <li>• nationality</li> <li>• country of origin</li> <li>• time in host country</li> <li>• ethnic group</li> <li>• religious affiliation</li> <li>• name</li> </ul>	<p><i>Disposition to enhancing employability</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attitudes to education and training</li> <li>– commitment to lifelong learning</li> <li>– engagement in CPD</li> <li>• engagement in networking to extend human/social/cultural capital</li> <li>• attitudes to paid employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship</li> <li>• attitudes to taking up unpaid/marginally paid work</li> <li>– volunteering</li> <li>– internships</li> </ul>	<p><i>Household circumstances</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• direct caring responsibilities</li> <li>• other family and caring responsibilities</li> <li>• other aspects of individual's contribution to household (economic or otherwise)</li> <li>• other household circumstances</li> </ul>	<p><i>Organisational culture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• commitment to training / skills development and skills utilisation (and for whom)</li> <li>– whether have a training budget</li> <li>– whether have a training plan</li> <li>– whether support (and fund) on-the-job/ off-the-job training (including e-learning)</li> <li>– whether offer work experience/ work placements</li> <li>• whether adopt high performance work practices</li> <li>– whether provide opportunities for employee voice</li> <li>• trades union recognition</li> </ul>	<p><i>Features of local employment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quantity of jobs (vis-à-vis number of people seeking employment) in the local labour market</li> <li>• quality of jobs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– occupation/ skill level</li> <li>– full-time/ part-time</li> <li>– permanent/ temporary</li> <li>– pay</li> </ul> </li> <li>• location of jobs (vis-à-vis residences and local transport networks)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Regulatory regime</i> (mainly nationally-specific but some factors at EU level)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rules determining labour market access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– migration policy</li> <li>– equalities policy / anti-discrimination policy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• formal education system, curricula and training policy (including funding regimes)</li> </ul>

<p><i>Health and well-being</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– physical</li> <li>– mental</li> </ul> </li> <li>• disability</li> </ul>	<p><i>Labour market and Job seeking knowledge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• employment/ work knowledge base (including work experience and general work skills)</li> <li>• awareness of labour market opportunities</li> <li>– knowledge of employers' recruitment practices</li> <li>– knowledge and use of formal and informal information sources</li> <li>• ability to fill in a CV, perform effectively at interview</li> <li>• realistic approach to job targeting</li> </ul>	<p><i>Household work culture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether other household members are in employment</li> <li>• existence of a culture in which work and skills development is (not) encouraged</li> </ul>	<p><i>Recruitment and selection practices</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how and where jobs are advertised (i.e. methods used) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– formal</li> <li>– informal</li> <li>– internet/ e-based</li> </ul> </li> <li>• how successful applicants are selected <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– manual</li> <li>– e-screening/ e-selection</li> </ul> </li> <li>• (non) discriminatory practices</li> </ul>	<p><i>Local work culture</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether neighbourhood has high levels of employment/ non-employment</li> <li>• local norms/ aspirations regarding education/ training/ employment</li> </ul>	<p><i>Welfare regime and institutional factors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benefits system</li> <li>• active labour market policy</li> <li>• role of public employment service</li> <li>• role of trades unions</li> <li>• ICT policy</li> <li>– public service delivery</li> </ul>
<p><i>Economic position</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (currently) in employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– full-time employee</li> <li>– part-time employee</li> <li>– self-employed (with or without employees)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• (currently) unemployed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– duration</li> </ul> </li> <li>• (currently) economically inactive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– reason</li> <li>– duration</li> </ul> </li> <li>• overall work history</li> </ul>	<p><i>Adaptability and mobility</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• career management and adaptability</li> <li>• functional mobility</li> <li>• occupational mobility</li> <li>• geographical mobility</li> <li>• wage flexibility (and reservation wage)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Access to resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to transport</li> <li>• access to financial capital</li> <li>• access to social capital (including for job search)</li> <li>• access to cultural capital (to ease entry into employment and to maintain employment)</li> <li>• access to ICT</li> </ul>	<p><i>Working practices</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• whether adopt flexible working practices (and for whom) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– part-time working</li> <li>– term-time hours</li> <li>– compressed hours</li> <li>– annual hours</li> <li>– job sharing</li> <li>– flexi-time</li> <li>– teleworking</li> </ul> </li> <li>• working from home on a regular basis</li> </ul>	<p><i>Local labour market operation and norms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recruitment norms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– how/where jobs are advertised locally</li> <li>– role of employment agencies in local labour market (and occupational/ sectoral labour markets locally)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• role and strength of different actors in the local labour markets (e.g. key employers, local authorities, trades unions, etc.)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Employment policy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work incentives (for individuals)</li> <li>• access to education and training when on benefits</li> <li>• incentives for employers to recruit / take on individuals for work experience, and for skills development</li> </ul>

<p><i>Employability skills and attributes/ characteristics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• essential attributes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- basic social skills</li> <li>- honesty and integrity</li> <li>- personal presentation</li> <li>- reliability</li> <li>- willingness to work</li> <li>- understanding of actions and consequences</li> <li>- positive attitude to work</li> <li>- responsibility</li> <li>- self-discipline</li> </ul> </li> <li>• personal competencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- proactivity</li> <li>- diligence</li> <li>- (self-)motivation</li> <li>- judgement</li> <li>- initiative</li> <li>- assertiveness</li> <li>- confidence</li> <li>- self-esteem</li> <li>- self-efficacy</li> <li>- perceived employability</li> </ul> </li> <li>• basic transferable skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- literacy</li> <li>- writing</li> <li>- numeracy</li> <li>- verbal presentation</li> <li>- basic ICT skills</li> <li>- new basic skills</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• key transferable skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- problem solving</li> <li>- work process management</li> <li>- team working</li> <li>- personal task and time management</li> <li>- e-skills</li> <li>- interpersonal and communication skills</li> <li>- emotional intelligence</li> <li>- aesthetic customer service skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>• high level transferable skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- team working</li> <li>- business thinking</li> <li>- commercial awareness</li> <li>- vision</li> <li>- job-specific skills</li> <li>- enterprise skills</li> <li>- creativity</li> </ul> </li> <li>• qualifications (and where obtained) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- academic</li> <li>- vocational</li> <li>- job-specific</li> </ul> </li> </ul>				<p><i>Macroeconomic factors (at national and supra-national scales)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• aggregate demand for labour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– unemployment levels</li> <li>– vacancy levels</li> <li>– employment profile</li> </ul> </li> <li>• employer/ consumer confidence</li> </ul>
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EUR 26423 – Joint Research Centre – Institute for Prospective Technological Studies

Title: Exploratory research on Internet-enabled work exchanges and employability: Analysis and synthesis of qualitative evidence on crowdsourcing for work, funding and volunteers

Authors: Anne Green, Maria de Hoyos, Sally-Anne Barnes, Beate Baldauf and Heike Behle

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#### Abstract

In the current economic context where a key policy emphasis is on employment, this project aims to inform policy of new forms of work and ways to enhance employability mediated by ICTs. New ICT applications are continually changing the practices and possibilities of work: the way that tasks are executed and organised; labour markets – how human capital is contracted, exploited and developed; and the ways and places that people are able and choose to work and develop their working lives.

The report provides synthesis and analysis of the findings of six in-depth case studies on crowdfunding, online work exchanges, and systems of exchange and recruitment of unpaid work conducted in 2013. It also provides information on the operation of platforms, motivations of buyers/ investors and sellers/ workers to engage in crowdsourcing, the prerequisites for successful engagement in crowdsourcing. It examines these from the perspective of employability at the level of individuals, employers and employment intermediaries, examining the conditions under which they are used, and the skills and competences required to use them. The conclusions will have relevance for policy in the fields of employment and employability primarily, but they also provide evidence relevant to skills and training in entrepreneurship, finance (crowdfunding), and volunteer policy. The report offers recommendations for future qualitative and quantitative research.

As the Commission's in-house science service, the Joint Research Centre's mission is to provide EU policies with independent, evidence-based scientific and technical support throughout the whole policy cycle.

Working in close cooperation with policy Directorates-General, the JRC addresses key societal challenges while stimulating innovation through developing new standards, methods and tools, and sharing and transferring its know-how to the Member States and international community.

Key policy areas include: environment and climate change; energy and transport; agriculture and food security; health and consumer protection; information society and digital agenda; safety and security including nuclear; all supported through a cross-cutting and multi-disciplinary approach.



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