

The Changing Face of the Global Job Market: Working and Unworking Patterns

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Abstracts

The main factor that will impact the job market over the forecast period will be the pace of economic recovery. Job creation lags economic growth, so unemployment is likely to get worse before it gets better.

There were early signs of economic recovery by mid-2009, fuelled by government stimulus packages and central bank policies. However, the effects of the crisis will be felt for many years to come, as government budget deficits and debt levels have soared to record levels.

As the financial crisis has caused companies to cut costs more quickly than they might have in an ordinary recession, the loss in value of assets and the excess of debt means that eventual recovery is likely to be too weak to create jobs rapidly.

When demand does pick up again, the structure of the job market will be different. Export-orientated economies, such as China and Germany, will have to rely more on domestic spending, and employees will need to find very different lines of work.

In most countries, unemployment is expected to peak in 2010, and although it may remain high for some years, it will begin to come down towards the end of the forecast period.

In the long term, governments will need to make their labour markets more flexible. This will mean abolishing job subsidy programmes, taking away protected workers' privileges and making it easier for businesses to restructure by laying people off.

As the global population continues to age and life expectancy increases, the workforce

will age too. The pensions crisis and changing legislation will force many people to work for longer, while many retirees will want to supplement meagre pensions with part-time work.

Several governments are in the process of incrementally increasing the age at which both men and women can receive public pensions, in some cases to as high as 68 over the longer term.

Migration will play an increasingly important part in the global economic landscape in the long term, as labour markets become more flexible and some countries with low population growth and ageing populations will rely on immigration to replenish the workforce.

In the short term, migration is likely to slow, due to more restrictive immigration policies and poor job prospects, which are deterring would-be migrants from entering countries that were previously considered lands of opportunity, such as the US, the UK and Spain.

Having risen strongly over the long term, it is unlikely that the women's participation rate in the workforce will increase to a much greater extent over the forecast period. However, women may see their incomes rise due to stricter discrimination laws.

Workers will continue to strive for a better work-life balance, and will be aided by the efforts of governments and employers to introduce more flexible working arrangements, including flexi-hours, part-time jobs, childcare facilities and the opportunity to work more from home.

The concept of teleworking will be facilitated by continuous improvements in information and telecommunications technology, which will enable people to network from anywhere and at any time.

Euromonitor International's Changing Face of the Household: Global Trends and Forecasts to 2015 Strategy Briefings is a series of reports that alert you to global trends predicted to influence consumer markets. They offer insight to changing market conditions and the opportunities and challenges companies need to consider to maintain a competitive advantage.

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