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European Foundation  
for the Improvement  
of Living and Working  
Conditions

The tripartite EU Agency providing knowledge  
to assist in the development of better social,  
employment and work-related policies

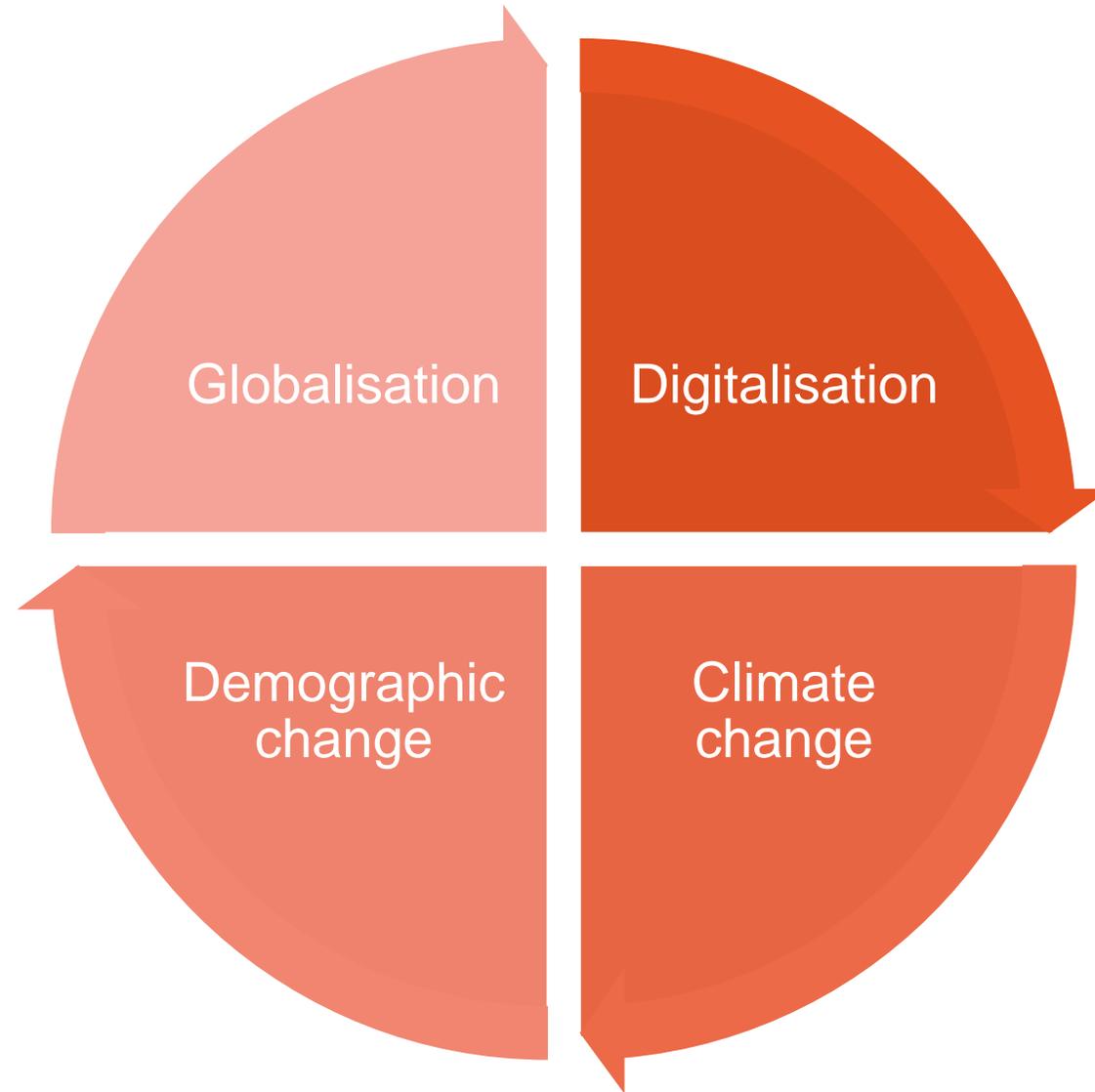
THE FUTURE IS HERE: AN OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH  
PERSPECTIVE

# Working in Tomorrow's Europe

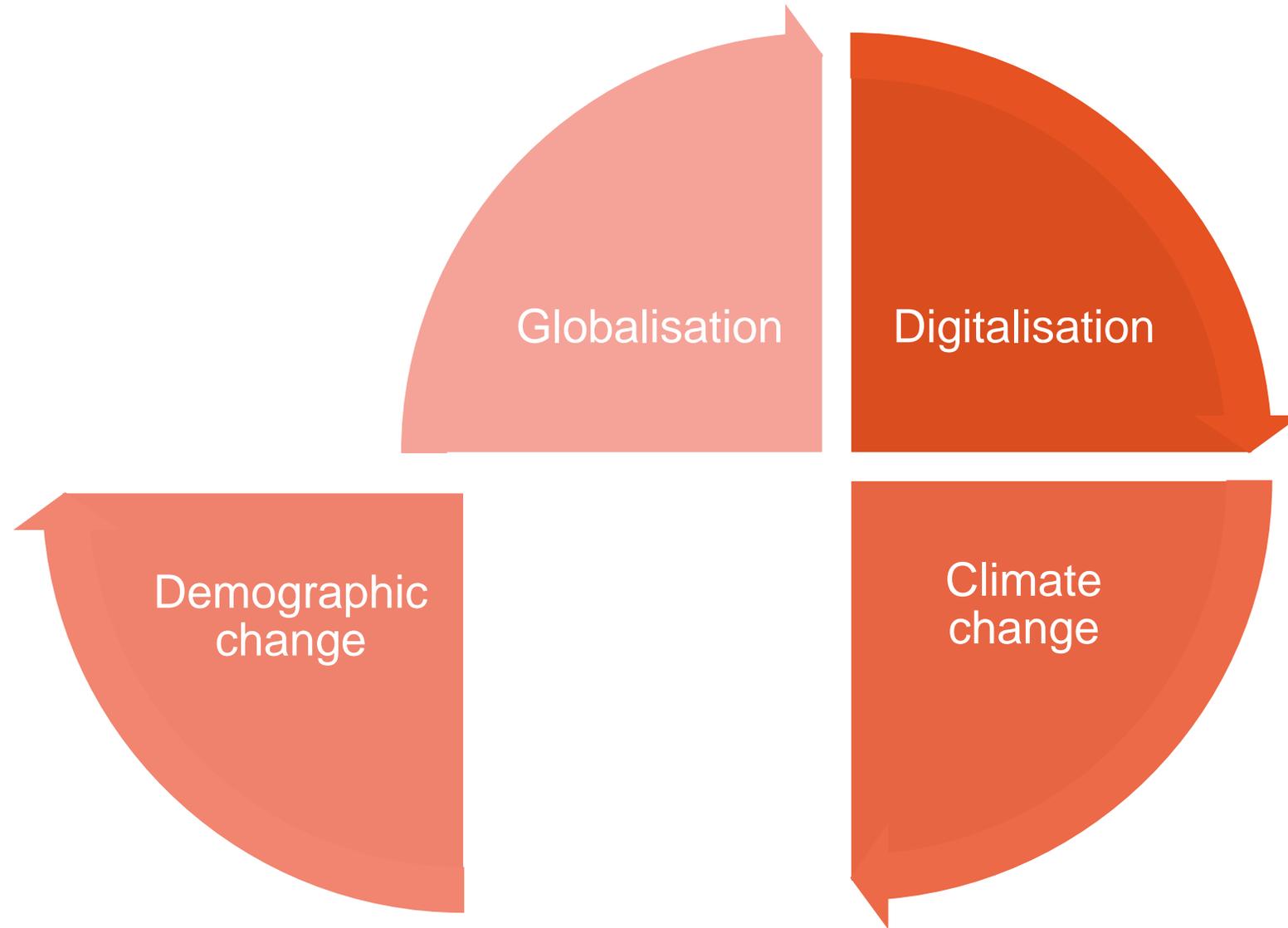
Barbara Gerstenberger, Eurofound

1 December 2022

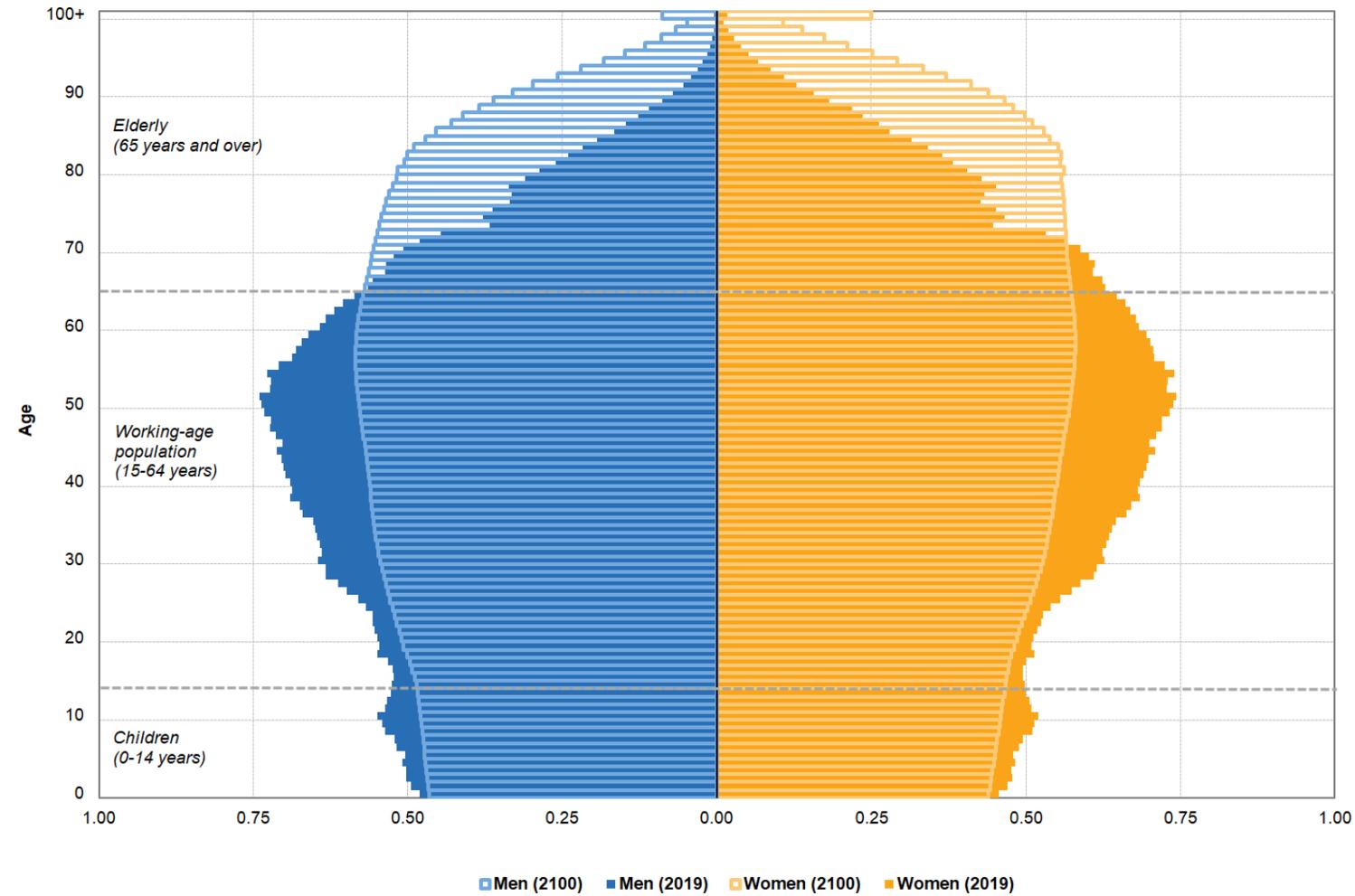
# Megatrends influencing the world of work



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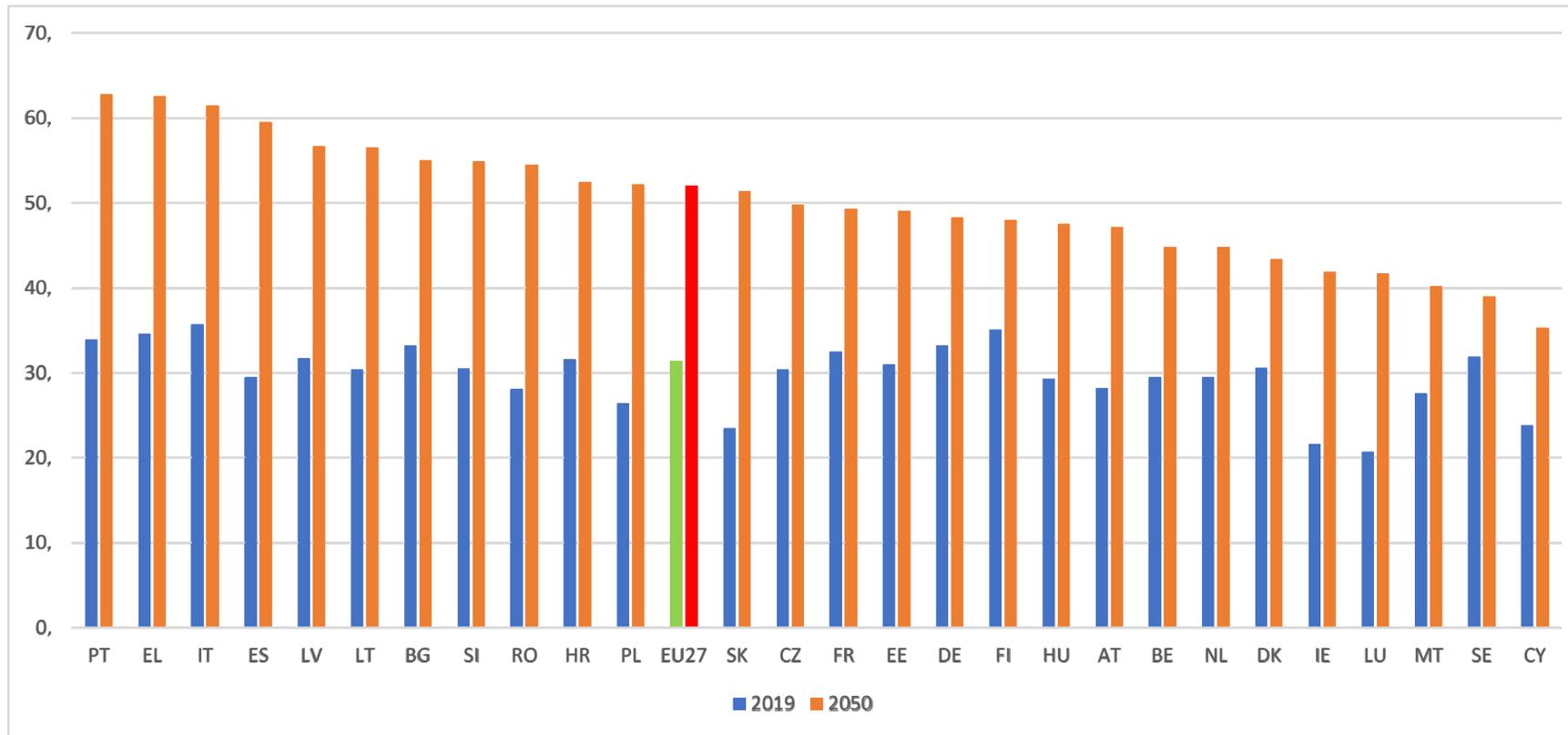


## Population pyramids, EU-27, 2019 and 2100 (% of total population)



Source: Eurostat (online data code: proj\_19np)

# Projected old-age dependency ratio



Source: Eurostat

**Sustainable work over the life course** means that

*working and living conditions are such that they support people in **engaging** and **remaining in work** throughout an extended working life.*

*Eurofound (2015) Sustainable work over the life course – concept paper*

# Seven dimensions of job quality



## Physical environment

Posture-related (ergonomic)  
Ambient (vibration, noise  
temperature)  
Biological and chemical

## Social environment

Adverse social behaviour  
Social support  
Management quality



## Work intensity

Quantitative demands  
Pace determinants and  
interdependency  
Emotional demands

## Skills and discretion

Cognitive dimension  
Decision latitude  
Organisational participation  
Training



## Working time quality

Duration  
Atypical working time  
Working time arrangements  
Flexibility

## Prospects

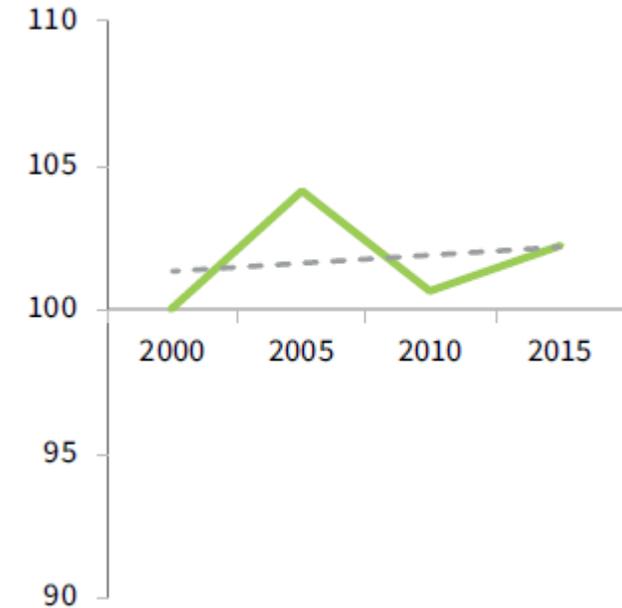
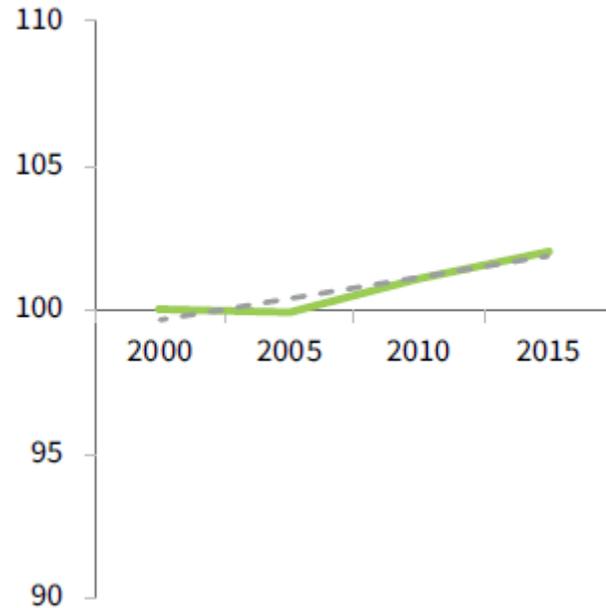
Employment status  
Career prospects  
Job security  
Downsizing



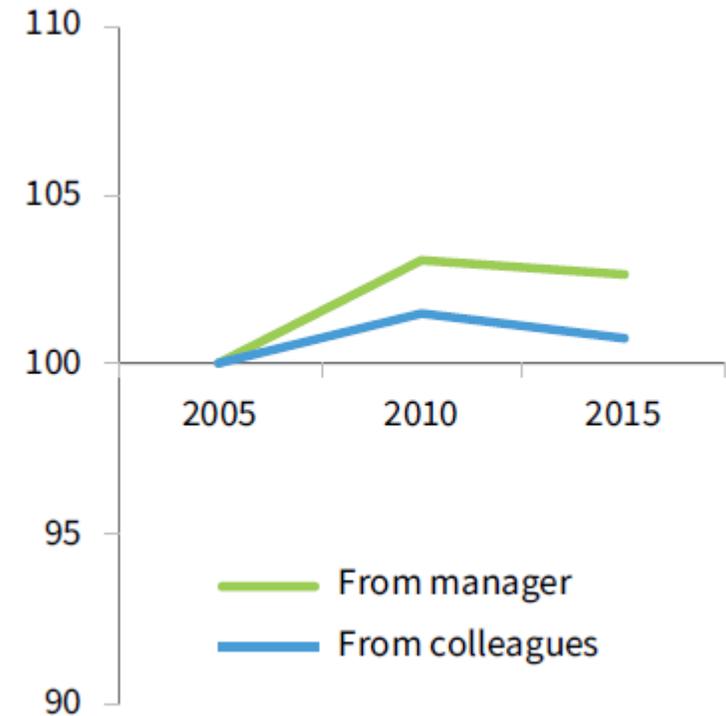
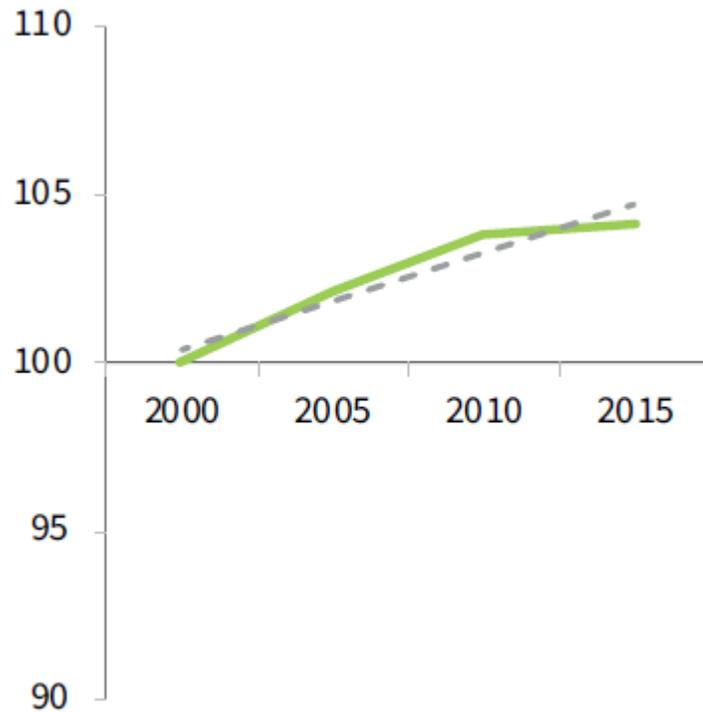
## Earnings



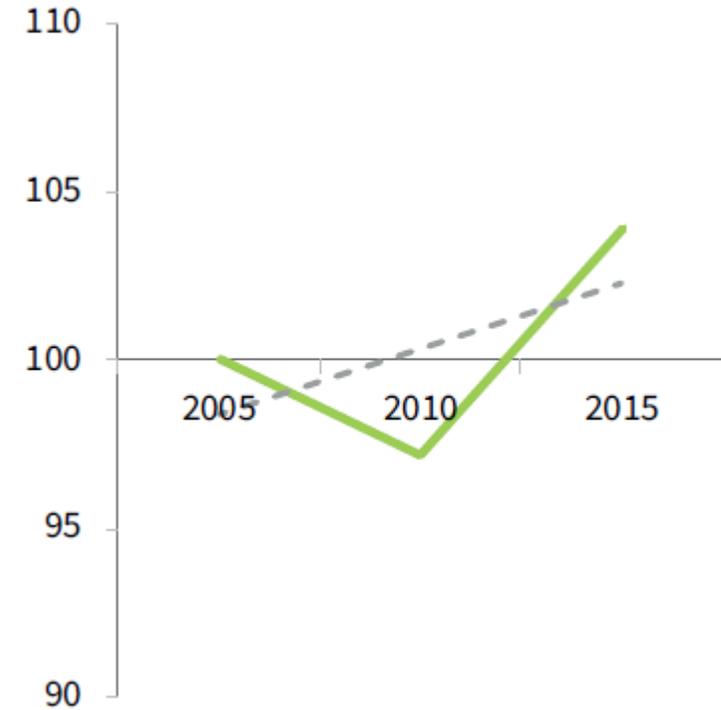
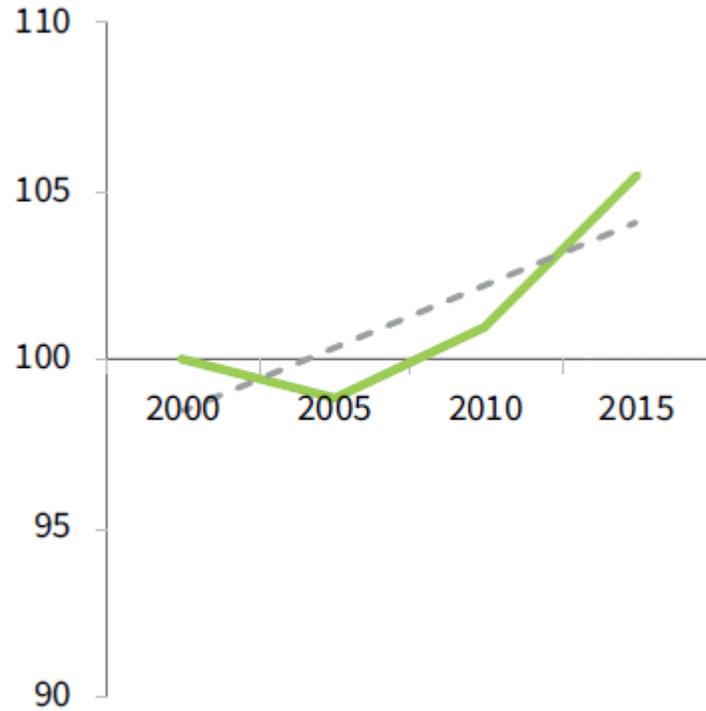
# Change in job quality indices, EU27 and the UK, 2000–2015



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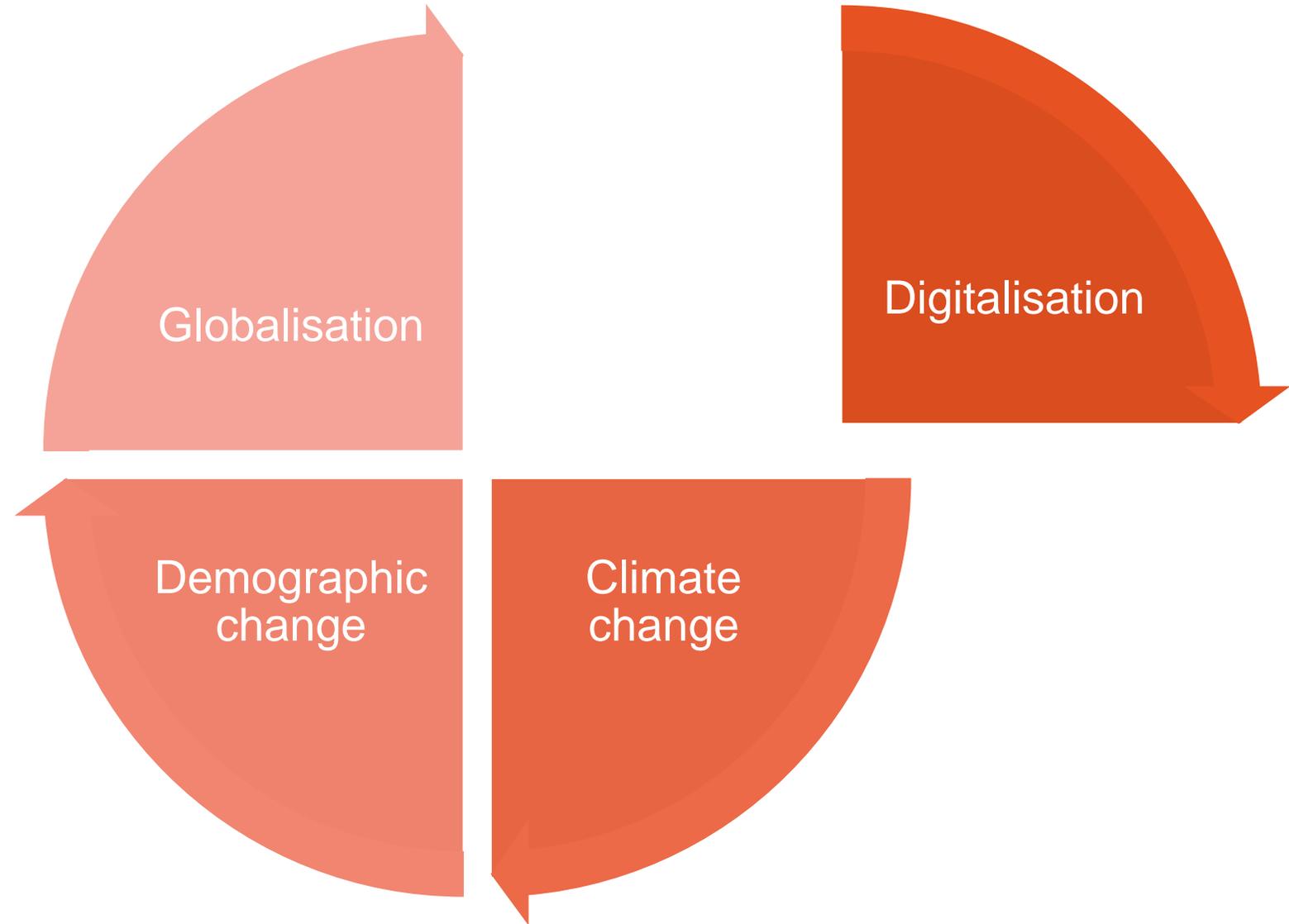
# Change in job quality indices, EU27 and the UK, 2000–2015



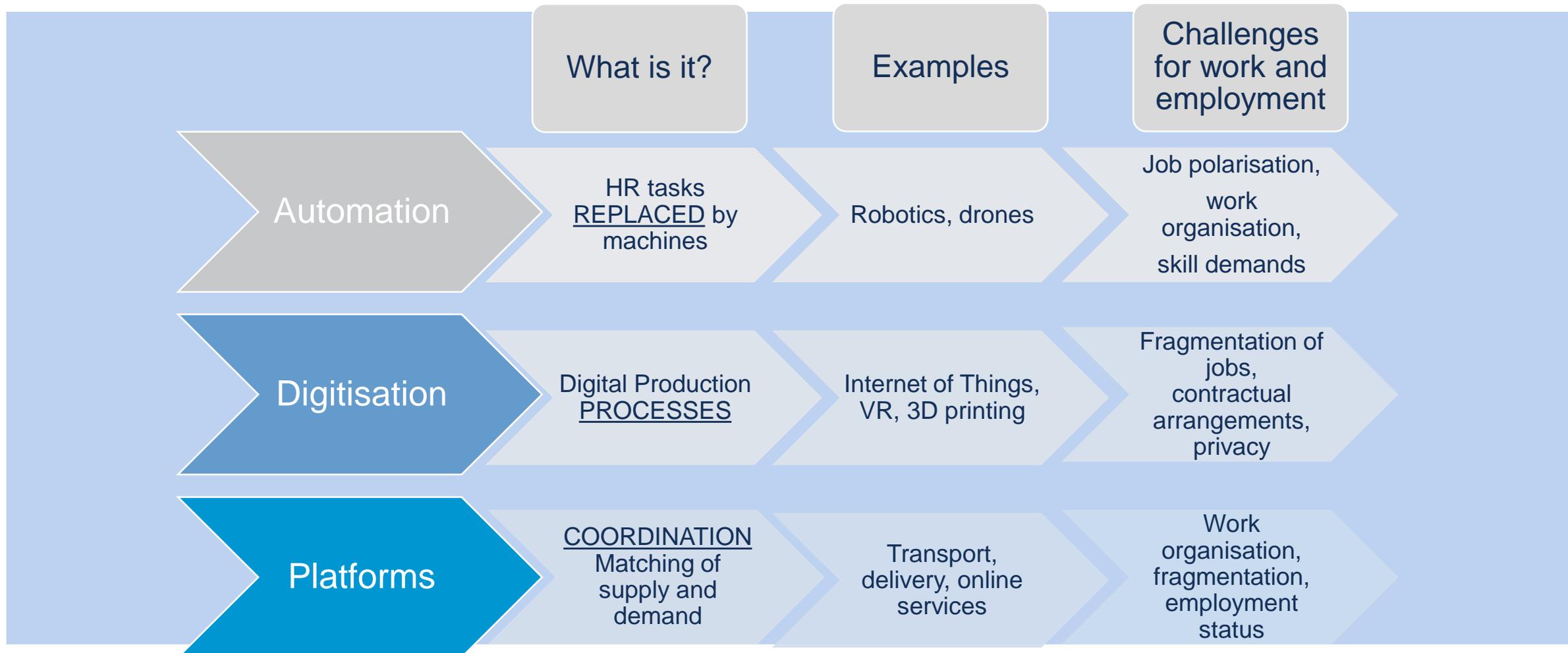
# Convergence patterns in the dimensions of working conditions

	Characterisation	Countries behind weak convergence		Characterisation	Countries behind weak convergence
 <p>Physical environment</p>	Weak upward convergence	DK, PL	 <p>Social environment</p>	Weak upward convergence	AT, CZ, DK, DE, EL, LV, NL, PL, SK, SL, SE, UK
 <p>Work intensity</p>	Weak upward convergence	BG, HR, CY, FR, EL, HU, IE, LT, LU, PL, RO, UK	 <p>Skills and discretion</p>	Weak upward convergence	BG, HR, CY, CZ, DK, DE, EL, HU, IT, LV, NL, PT, SE, UK
 <p>Working time quality</p>	Weak upward convergence	DK, FI, FR, IE, LU, MT, NL, ES, UK	 <p>Prospects</p>	Weak upward divergence	IT, PT, ES

# Megatrends influencing the world of work



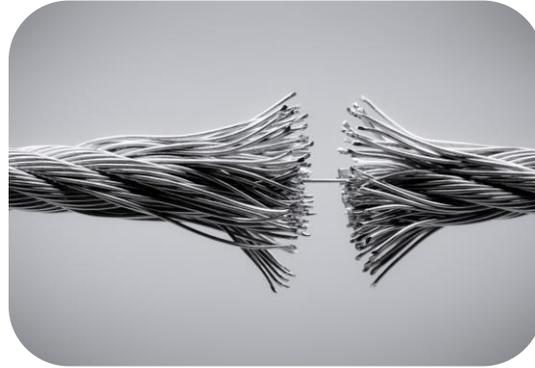
# Impact of digitalisation on work and employment



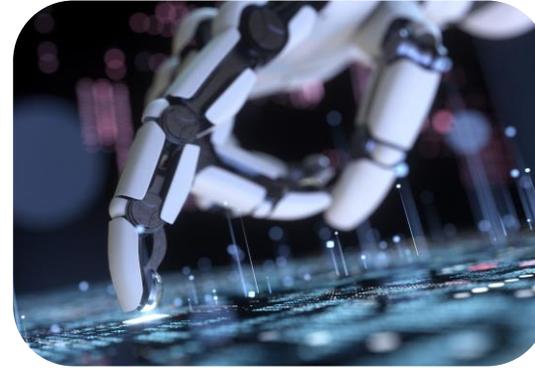
# Advanced robotics in the workplace: what impacts?



Shift from manual towards intellectual skills



Lower physical strain but greater risks of negative psychosocial effects



Human–robot interaction, increased complexity



Less autonomy due to increased monitoring

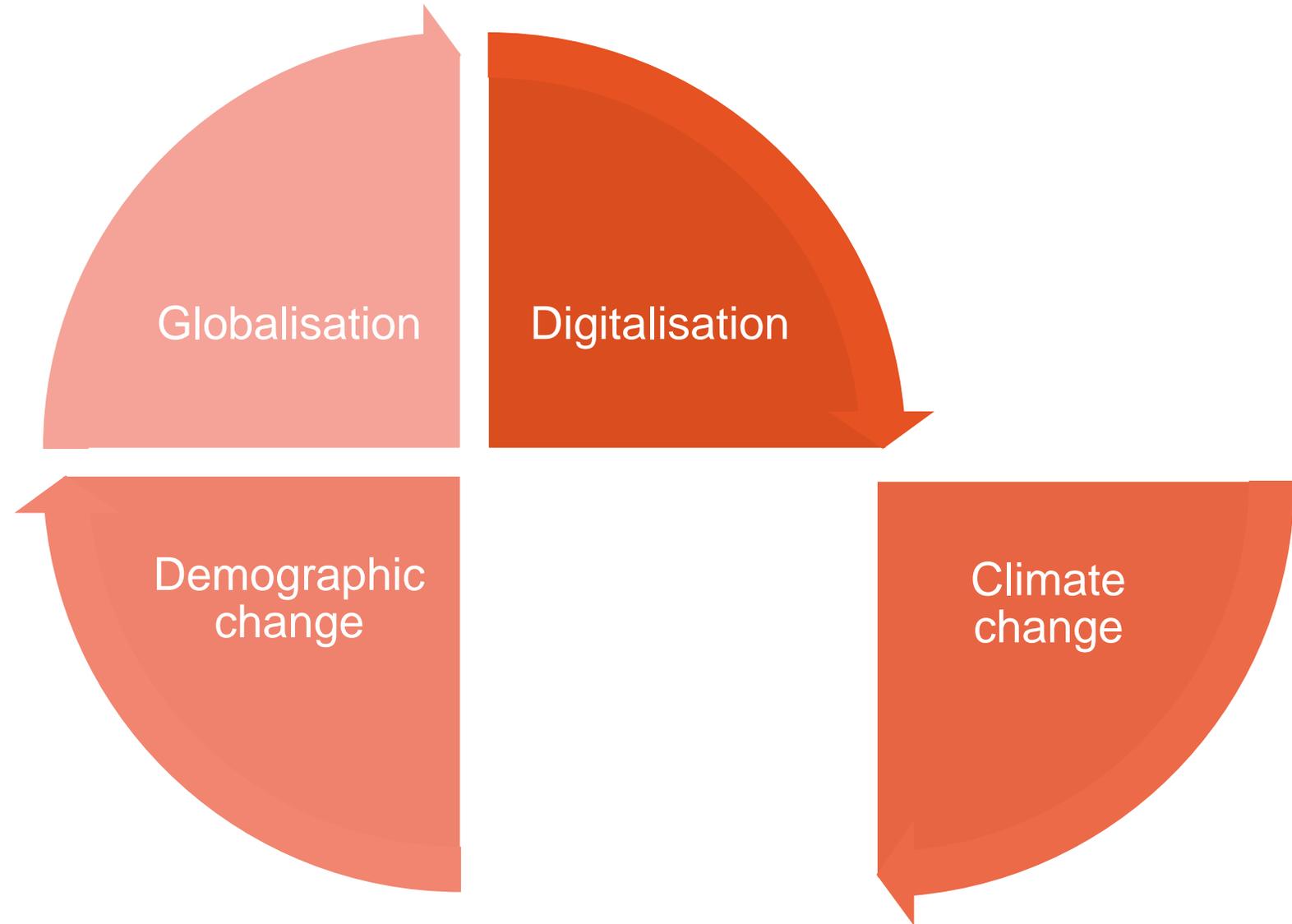
# Algorithmic management in platform work

Algorithmic management automate work by:



1. Exacerbating the negative effects of platform work (e.g. limited or no discretion over task execution)
2. Potential discriminatory or unfair employment decisions, with limited or no options for appeal
3. Issues around collection and use of workers' data (what safeguards to preserve workers' data protection and privacy rights?)

# Megatrends influencing the world of work



# Energy scenario – Employment implications of the Paris Climate Agreement

- The impact of a transition to a low-carbon economy is positive for the EU as a whole
- Employment growth of 0.5% up to 2030 (compared to a ‘business as usual’ baseline forecast)
- Jobs lost in fossil fuel extraction and processing, but gained in construction and manufacturing of renewable and energy efficient equipment
- Much of employment created at the bottom and middle of the wage distribution
- Filled by lower-educated employees and involve performance of less advanced tasks

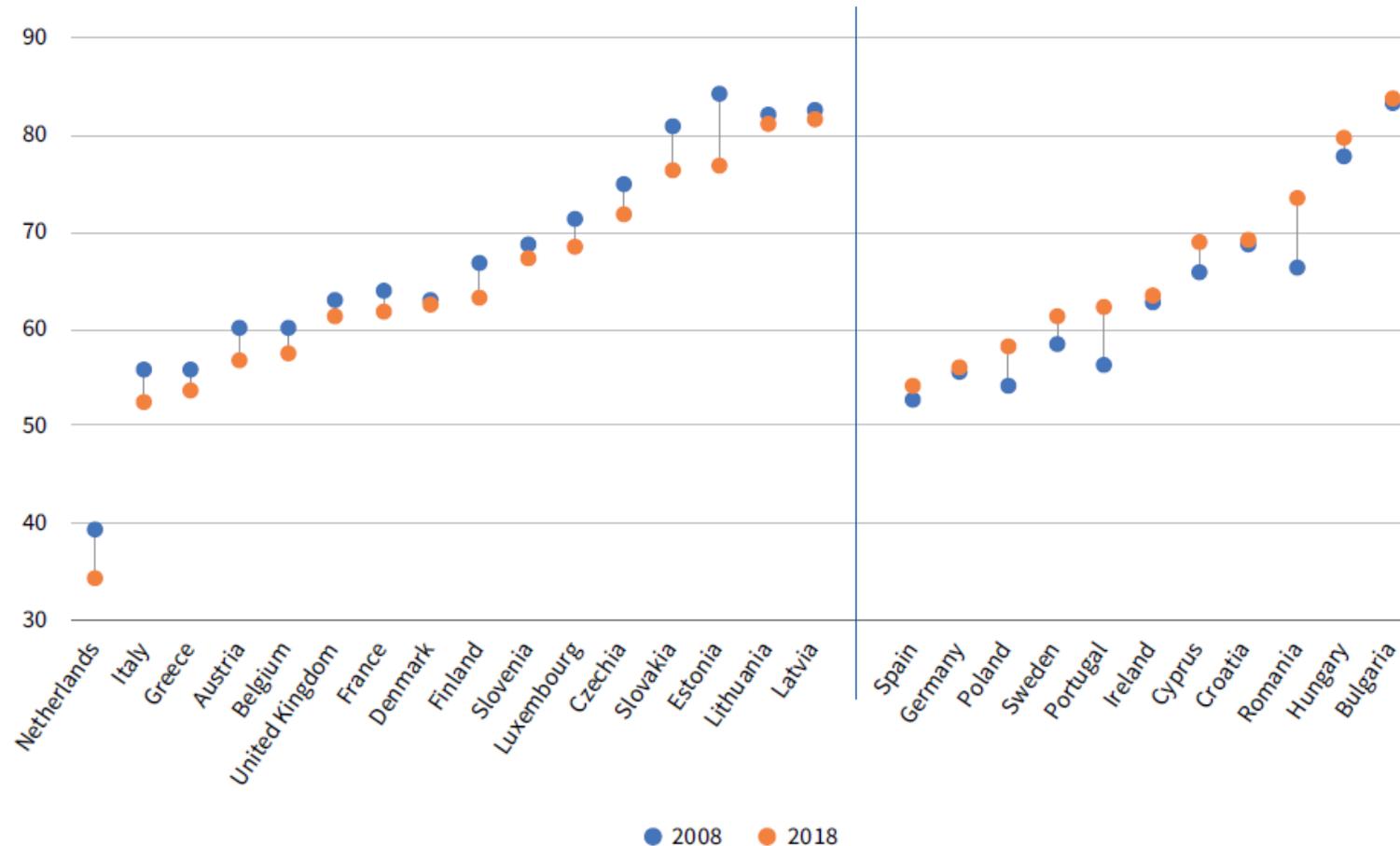
Note: Model assumes no labour market frictions and no barriers in accessing the finance necessary for the transition

# Working in tomorrow's Europe – In a fragmented and polarised labour market?



# Fragmentation of work

## Standard employment share, 2008–2018, EU Member States and the UK (%)



Notes: Malta is excluded as EU-LFS data were not available for 2008. The countries where the standard employment share declined are on the left of the graph, and those where the share increased are on the right.  
Source: EU-LFS

# Net employment change, by contract and employment status, 2011–2016, EU Member States and the UK (000s)



# Take aways

## Working in tomorrow's Europe

- will require work to be sustainable over an extended working life to counterbalance the effects of demographic change
- will see the use of advanced digital technologies in the workplace – but the impact in the workplace – good or bad - is not pre-determined
- will include more 'green' jobs, the quality of which will be varied but could include more low-skilled tasks
- could take place in a more fragmented and polarised labour market



**HVALA**  
**THANK YOU**