

How Precarious Is Contingent Work?

– Non-salary Aspects of the Employment Relationship of Contingent Employees in Denmark

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Abstract

Contingent employment is generally considered a risk factor in the employment relations literature, although not all agree. This study focuses on a number of non-pay conditions for contingent employees, compared to permanent staff, under the assumption that these conditions are cumulatively negative. The article is based on utilizes a survey of app. 4,900 employees (response rate 57%), asking questions concerning rights and opportunities in the job. The analyses (based on logit modelling, multivariate logistic regression) clearly show that contingent employment (e.g. as a temp) is a risk condition, not only because of the stipulated end of the employment period, but also because it implies a clearly lower chance of obtaining a number of the rights and opportunities that are normally connected to an employment relationship.

Keywords: contingent work, precarious employment, labour rights, temporary employment, labour market rights, labour market pension, staff development interview, working hours, in-job training, the precariat

1. Introduction

Precarious work, or work with more aspects of employment risk than is usual in the open-ended employment contract, has become a major issue both among employment relations researchers and among policymakers in the latter years. In EU policy, *e.g.*, there is a quite strong emphasis on securing equal rights in the labour market for such groups as part-time, agency and fixed-term employees. These rights are concerned not only with equal rights in terms of remuneration, but also in terms of other rights related to the employment relationship, such as labour market pension rights. The usual assumption is that precarious work is often connected with the lack of or a lower level of rights in these areas, although not everyone agrees.

In this article, we will analyse some non-pay-related aspects of the employment relationship for precarious employees in Denmark in order to map the extent of discrimination or lack of equal rights towards this segment of the labour market. The article will proceed as follows: Section 2 investigates why companies may choose contingent employment for parts of their workforce, section 3 discusses a number of theoretical and empirical analyses from this field, section 4 explains which features of the employment relationship have been selected for this analysis, section 5 defines and operationalizes contingent work in the context of this article, section 6 reports the analyses of the consequences of contingent employment and section 7 concludes.

In Denmark – as in a number of Anglo-Saxon countries – companies have the advantage of quite flexible labour markets, *i.e.* a quite low level of employment protection. Laying off employees is relatively easy (European Foundation 2007: 13, 29), and therefore hiring also comes more easily, and this should minimize the prevalence of atypical workers. Given this, the Scandinavian and the Anglo-Saxon countries on the one hand differ from much of Continental Europe on the other. This should be beneficial for business, and in Scandinavia – with generous compensation levels of unemployment benefits and an active labour market policy – it should also be beneficial for employees (*cf.*, *e.g.*, Ibsen 2011, Kongshøj Madsen 2004, 2006, Klindt 2008, Strøby Jensen 2007, 2010, 2011, Svalund 2013, Thörnquist and Engstrand 2011).

Consequently, the need for firms to hire employees on non-standard or contingent terms in a country like Denmark should be limited compared to countries with stricter employment protection legislation. This, however, is only to some extent the case. Looking at the proportion of temps (fixed-term workers) in a number of Western European countries (*cf.* Table 1), Denmark is admittedly (at 8.8% of all employees) in the low end of the scale, and in fact the list – which is rank-ordered by the share of temps in 2011 – does show that countries with strict employment protection regimes (*e.g.* Spain, Portugal, France and Germany) are in the high to medium level, but in Denmark there is still a substantial share of employees who are temps. Looking at the trends, one can say that the overall picture is a slightly increasing share of temps from 13.9 to 14.4%, but in the individual countries we find both increases (as in as in the Netherlands, Italy, Ireland, Portugal and Sweden) and decreases (as in Spain, Greece, Denmark and the UK). The variation between the European countries does seem to be declining, though. In Denmark, the decline in the use of temps seems consistent, and it comes from an even higher level before the year 2000.

Table 1. Temps in the European labour market. Percentage of labour force with a fixed-term contract of 13 Western European countries. 2000, 2005, 2009, and 2011. Rank-ordered by share of temps in 2011

	Year					Difference
	2000	2005	2009	2011		2000-2011
Spain	32,1	33,3	25,4	25,3		-6,8
Portugal	20,4	19,5	22,0	22,2		1,8
Netherlands	14,0	15,5	18,3	18,4		4,4
Sweden	15,2	15,8	15,3	16,4		1,2
Finland	16,5	16,6	14,6	15,7		-0,8
France	15,5	14,1	13,5	15,3		-0,2
Germany	12,7	14,2	14,5	14,7		2,0
Italy	10,1	12,3	12,5	13,4		3,3
Greece	13,1	11,8	12,1	11,6		-1,5
Ireland	4,7	3,7	8,5	9,9		5,2
Belgium	9,0	8,9	8,2	9,0		0,0
Denmark	10,2	9,8	8,9	8,8		-1,4
United Kingdom	6,8	5,8	5,7	6,2		-0,6
Mean (simple)	13,9	13,9	13,8	14,4		0,5
Standard deviation	6.9	7.3	5.6	5.5		

Source: OECD (stats.oecd.org), retrieved 28/4/2014

Despite the decline in Denmark, one may still ask why contingent work still exists to this extent, flexibility being so high. In the UK, only 6% are temps and in the US (not shown in Table 1), only app. 4%. Furthermore, and more importantly, one needs to ask whether this represents a discriminatory practice, i.e. whether contingent employees' rights and benefits lie significantly below those of the ordinary workforce.

2. Why Do Companies Choose Precarious Employment?

Work is a core activity in our society, and having a job is central to the individual, not just because it provides us with an income and livelihood, but also because it is an important part of our identity, it develops our skills, it occupies a significant portion of our waking hours, it puts us in touch with other people, and it positions us in the social system. Against this background, it is obvious that the experience of a degree of uncertainty related to one's work is fundamental to our quality of life, and in recent decades, a number of economic, technological, political and social factors – not least the increasing labour market flexibility through the deregulation taking place in many countries – have fostered an increasing sense of work being more vulnerable and insecure, i.e. risky. While increased flexibility no doubt favours companies and institutions, who can better adjust their labour force to changing

economic conditions, from the perspective of the employee this stands in a much less positive light. We are seeing ‘socially produced uncertainties’ (Beck 1992, 2000), i.e. more or less unintended outcomes of the way the total employment structure is designed. Employment relations – including temporary employment – are social constructions, but they have real consequences for those involved in or exposed to them (Lukes 2008).

A main factor of uncertainty is the risk of being laid off, but this analysis will focus on a number of more subtle elements of the employment relationship, elements that affect those who have a job that does not live up to what applies in more normal forms of employment. These uncertainty or risk factors are the possible discriminatory aspects of the employment contract or relationship itself. Uncertainty or risk is thus a relative term, and the increased uncertainty or precariousness will be viewed as an aspect of the social differentiation of the labour market (Kalleberg 2009, 2011; Kalleberg *et al.* 1997; Marsden 2004; Standing 2011, 2014).

Viewed from the vantage point of the company, situations may call for contingent employment, even this is not HRM textbook matter. In some instances, they have the desire and wish to free themselves from what is considered the normal, permanent, full-time employment, *e.g.* when sickness among permanent staff creates short-term openings, when an increase in demand is considered short-term or when – in a recruitment situation – the company wishes to try out a particular candidate for the job. These reasons can be completely legitimate, but companies may misuse *e.g.* fixed-term contracts to move some of the risk away from the company on to certain groups of employees, who then do not enjoy the safeguards and rights, *ex- or implicit*, which apply in the normal employment relationship. This reflects a shift of risk from companies onto employees or rather onto certain groups of employees. While deregulation and intensified international competition may be legitimate causes for this, observers, including the EU, have been increasingly aware of the extent to which precarious employment does not endow employees with the same rights as employees who occupy full-time, open-ended employment contracts (European Commission, 2006, 2007a, 2007b). Looking at more general demand-side factors, companies are favoured by declining governmental labor market regulation, by the ascendance of neo-liberalism and the transcendence of individualistic culture over an ethos of collective responsibility, by diminished union power, by the increasingly finance-driven character of the economy and the pressures it has created for management to focus on short-run profits, reduce labor costs, and avoid investing in human resources, by globalization and the explosion of outsourcing and off-shoring, and by technological innovations that have boosted productivity (Kalleberg 2011). Indeed, in some cases trade unions have accepted this outsourcing, since it may appear to increase the security of permanent staff who are union members (Palier and Thelen 2010), creating a conflict of interest between the permanent staff and the temps. In some cases, unions are rediscovering their role and extending the frames of representation to reverse this trend (Heery and Conley 2007).

In some cases, companies and organizations make use of flexible rules regarding hiring and firing, and thus seek to evade some of the obligations arising out of the normal or typical employment precisely through the use of contingent employment. In this way a split arises between the ‘real’ employees, the core labour force of the company on the one hand and the peripheral temporary labour force on the other. Here, the advantage for the company is that it is both formally and informally less committed to the contingent, peripheral labour force. Formally, the obligation may be less if you can escape some of the legal and collective-agreement based rights that apply to permanent employees; informally, if it applies that the permanent employees do not perceive the contingent employees as part of those covered by employee solidarity, and as employees trade union representatives should therefore also represent and help protect. The temp, in this conception, is not really ‘one of us’, and studies show that some degree of social exclusion is certainly sensed by contingent employees (Gundert and Hohendanner 2013).

3. Some Received Insights

Research of precarious employment does not point in one direction: some studies point out that conditions are indeed worse for the contingent employees, while others make the point that the differences between the contingent and the non-contingent employee are due to other qualities or features of the contingent employee (*e.g.*, lower educational level, younger age, employment in particular industries), and that these other qualities or features are the main cause of the lesser quality of their employment relationship. It is therefore important not only to document the differences in employment conditions, but also attempt to determine whether these differences may be due to factors other than the non-standard employment. In the following, we discuss some important theoretical insights and research results in the field.

In some countries, the extent of contingent employment has been growing over the last 20-30 years. Sometimes this has been described as an increase in the ‘flexible workforce’ that companies and organizations increasingly need, also sometimes labelled the ‘precariat’ (Aronsson *et al.* 2002, *cf.* also Atkinson 1984, Edwards 1979; Standing 2011).

There are various types of contingent employees who are primarily used to help companies to adapt to short-term changes in demand and production process, including coping with absenteeism due to illness, maternity leave, etc. among core employees. Given management concepts such as 'Just in Time' and 'Lean', the requirement becomes that the core labour force becomes more flexible (functional flexibility) and that companies may draw on different types of more loosely affiliated employees (numerical flexibility, Atkinson 1984). This is nothing wrong with this in itself, especially if contingent employment can be seen as a step towards open-ended employment. Much of the discussion has, therefore, centred on how separate the two segments are and how different the conditions of work between the two segments. Denmark probably has a less segmented labour market than, say, Belgium, France, Spain and even Sweden, where employment protection is significantly higher, and therefore it may be difficult for the individual to traverse the divide between the contingent and non-contingent employment, i.e. becoming core staff (Svalund 2013). Yet even if the segmentation is perhaps less distinctive in Denmark than in other European countries, the analytical question nevertheless remains: how much does it mean in practice for those who do belong to the contingent workforce and what are the consequences of this for our understanding of the labour market.

Whether temporary employment or temporary work in itself is a negative terms depends enough that the individual wants and needs, but there is a clear risk that the persons who do not belong to the core, do not share in some of the objects core employees are given so that the contingent employees worse conditions combined. On the one hand, it follows from general laws, etc. the labour market, that companies are not allowed to discriminate in relation to employees, e.g., if they are part-time or in fixed-term employment, but on the other hand, one cannot escape the fact that much of the legislation and collective agreements provisions directed towards the core labour force, thus leaving out or consciously ignoring the legitimate needs of contingent employees. In this study, we examine the real consequences for contingent employees, and will initially be looking at some results from international research.

In two articles, Addison and Surfield (2007, 2009) examine various aspects of contingent employment in the United States. The first article examines pay, and the authors conclude that the remuneration of the non-standard workers is not inferior to other workers when you take into account other demographic characteristics, including gender. It turns out that for men, there is a significant negative wage effect from being a temp, but a positive effect from being a consultant, i.e. under a contract (job-specific temporary employment), while for women there is a (somewhat weaker) positive wage effect of being a temp, but a negative one of being on contract. Here, the situation of the contingent employees comes out as more positive than in many other studies, but the authors emphasize that they have only looked at wages, not other parts of the compensation package, such as coverage of health insurance. In the second article, the authors analyze long-term effects of unemployed persons taking a contingent job instead of continuing their job search until they find a permanent one. Here, it turns out that those leaving unemployment to take up contingent employment will have a larger aggregate employment over their lifespan than those who continue the job search, but that those who take up contingent employment have a greater risk of remaining contingent, rather than crossing the border to a permanent job.

Green *et al.* (2010) analyze the situation of contract workers in Australia, and they discuss both wages and the more general terms about the work, such as the possibility of training, adding self-reported job satisfaction. Their analysis shows that contract workers are a case of lower employment relationship standards, and the authors note that the growth of contingent employment has increased uncertainty, and that many of the contract workers are dissatisfied with the lack of job security and (for part-time staff members) with the inability to move to full-time employment. Also in Australia, Aletraris (2010) investigates factors influencing job satisfaction and job rewards for temporary agency workers. She finds that temps clearly report lower levels of job satisfaction and that this is caused, *inter alia*, by lower levels of autonomy and control.

Broschak and Davis-Blake (2006) examine the attitudes of nonstandard employees to work and to their company in relation to the employees in standard employment in the U.S. They conclude that, as expected, employees from temporary work agencies have more negative attitudes to their business than those who were employed directly by the company itself, especially since the latter had greater opportunities to become permanent than temporary workers from temporary agencies.

Galais and Moser (2009) study organizational commitment and well-being of temps in a longitudinal study in Germany. They find that commitment declines when temps are reallocated to another client, implying that organizational commitment has a beneficial as well as a dysfunctional effect on the well-being of temps.

Aronsson *et al.* (2002) illustrate the working environment and health conditions of temps, and they conclude that there are clear differences to the detriment of contingent employees in terms of control over the work situation as

regards the possibility of training and in terms of support from senior staff and from colleagues. Medical and health conditions also showed that contingent employees were in a worse position.

Olsen's study (2006) shows that contingent employees clearly have lower standards, in terms of pay, autonomy, career development and job security, but that they are nevertheless not much less satisfied than permanent staff. Finally, Olsen interestingly finds that contingent employees perceive it as easy, or at least easier than among permanent job holders, to find an alternative to their current job. Neergaard (2006, see also Neergaard and Stokke 1996) demonstrates that it is especially in terms of courses and training that temporary workers have lower standards, but in most other areas they have the same rights as the permanent staff.

In recent literature, several interesting insights have been added. It has been argued that there has been a change in the conception of the standard employment relationship to encompass temporary or agency work, if one *e.g.* considers temporary work as a stepping stone to non-temporary employment (cf. Adams and Deakin 2014). This argument is, however, contradicted by Mooi-Reci and Dekker, who show on the basis of Dutch panel data that being a temp clearly increases the risk of subsequent unemployment. Temporary employment in this way becomes more of a dead end than a stepping stone Mooi-Reci and Dekker (2015: 124-9). The increases in the uses of flexible work is outlined also by Stone (2013) for the U.S., and by Raess and Burgoon for Europe. In the latter article, the authors show how external flexibility has clearly increased due to increased labour migration in Europe (Raess and Burgoon 2015: 102-6).

As one can see, the results from these examples from the research point in different directions, something that may to some extent derive from the fact that the empirical analyses were conducted in different countries with different labour market institutions and traditions (Hyman 2001, Mahoney and Thelen 2010, Streeck and Thelen 2005), and there are differences in methodology and theoretical approach. Most studies have demonstrated that the contingent employees in various areas obtain less privileged and less secure conditions than permanent staff, and this will be the point of departure for this investigation. More specifically, the question is how large the differences between contingent and non-contingent employees really are, and whether these differences are robust when we include a number of other possible explanatory factors or variables. Finally, one further question is what the aggregate conditions of risk are, *i.e.* are the differences cumulatively negative for contingent workers.

4. Investigating Features of the Contingent Employment Relationship

To investigate this, we have chosen to highlight a number of features of the employment relationship, features addressing conditions in work itself, aspects of working life, which have obtained more emphasis in the last 20 years. These features are:

- Employer contributions to Labour Market Pension (LMP) scheme (LMP is a part of virtually all collective bargaining agreements), assuming fewer contingent employees have such contributions.
- The presence of highly variable work schedules, assuming higher presence for contingent employees
- Fewer holiday entitlements for contingent employees: Absence of the sixth holiday week
- Less possibility of participation in in-job courses and training for contingent employees
- Fewer contingent employees have the option of participation in individual staff development interviews (SDI)

Pension contributions based on the employment relationship (LMP) has been around for several decades in Denmark: civil servant's pension plans for public employees scholars have been around since the late 1960s as have collective company pension arrangements for certain high status groups or in certain companies, covering about a third of all employees. The introduction of LMP in the collective agreements for the majority of the labour market was – based on a proposal from the Danish LO – first agreed upon in 1989 and it was established on the majority agreement areas in 1993, and in subsequent approximately 20 years pension contributions gradually increased to generally 12% (employer paid 8% employee paid 4%) for most major groups (Due and Madsen 2003, Scheuer 2007: 245). Pension schemes (with employer contributions) will undoubtedly have significant long term implications for the individual's well-being and opportunities after retirement, which is why the lack of provision of it constitutes a significant discriminatory factor at work, even if these consequences may lie well into the future.

There are relatively obvious reasons to expect lower pension coverage for contingent employees: The employment relationship is often more brief and pension fund rules may contain qualifying periods of three to six months thus preventing enrolment for very short term temps, and collective bargaining agreements often do not cover temps. By

implication, social differentiation between employees in standard and non-standard work will extend well into retirement.

Highly variable work schedules are a condition of work expressing the weaker position of contingent employees in the labour market. They may truly be a burden on people's private and family lives, and if this condition especially follows the contingent employees, this is a significant negative condition.

Holiday entitlements: Historically, some companies in Denmark have had a tradition of an extra week of holiday as a special fringe benefit. Extra holidays as a more generalized benefit on the labour market first came up in connection with the collective bargaining agreement in the private sector in 1998, followed by the four-year agreement reached in 2000, where the number of extra days of vacation was gradually expanded to a total of five. The agreements in the public sector followed this pattern. In this manner, the extra week of holiday has moved from being a particular fringe benefit for certain employees in certain companies to become a more evenly distributed good that most employees have the right to, either directly because of collective bargaining coverage or – in non-covered companies – due to the knock-on (spill-over) effect. But did the extended entitlements knock on to contingent employees? The assumption is: to a much lesser extent.

The opportunity to participate in in-job courses, training and other educational activities and the opportunity to partake in a staff development interview (SDI) has to do with developing oneself at work and thus securing oneself the chance of obtaining a better job in the future and to keep up with the increasing qualification demands in the labour market. When companies to a lesser extent can guarantee lifelong employment, they should support employees in obtaining, upholding and improving their employability. This aspect of the employment relationship has become more prevalent with the introduction of Human Resource Management, HRM and in general the more individualized relations at work (*cf. e.g.* Holt Larsen 2010; Lawler 2000; Purcell 1997). The need to upgrade one's qualifications at work has certainly not diminished, and courses and training are important factors, if they are available for the individual employee. The SDI in turn reflects the ability of individual employees in a one-on-one situation to communicate with his or her immediate superior concerning his or her present performance and future opportunities and development. Unfortunately, we may reasonably expect that both course and training opportunities and the SDI will be less frequent among contingent employees.

5. What Is Contingent Work? Definitions, Themes, Sampling and Data

The analyses presented in this article are based on data from a major representative survey study among Danish employees, a study that includes permanent as well as temporary workers, full-time and part-time employees, agency workers, free agents etc.

Typically, employment as an employee is defined as full-time work performed for an employer, and where the employment contract is characterized by being open-ended, i.e. it has no predefined date of expiry (see Kalleberg *et al.* 1997, see also Kalleberg 2009).

In the international research literature, precarious work, non-standard work and contingent employment are defined as contracts which have a specified end-date, which are part-time, or which are completed via an agency or bureau.

- Temporary workers (temps): a company hires an employee to perform a job function for a specified period of time (time-limited).
- Temporary workers (temps): a company hires for the time to complete a specific task (task-limited).
- Temporary agency workers: a company hires an employee through an agency in order to do one of the above (time- or task-limited).
- Multi-jobbers who do more jobs than one (*e.g.* two part-time jobs).

In the present study it was a clear wish to obtain the most detailed and comprehensive picture of the contingent agents as possible. It can be difficult to obtain a completely accurate picture, both because official statistics are not equipped to collect and record non-standard employment, and because respondents in different studies may also have a tendency not to say that the example of the temporary staff whose not asked very specifically to do just that. These difficulties are generally accepted in the international research (see Burchell *et al.* 1999, Winch 2010).

5.1 Data Set and Data Collection

The survey universe is defined as a simple random sample of all employees in Denmark aged 18 to 69 years. The data collection was conducted by the market research and opinion polling institute Epinion Ltd., a well-respected market research and political polling institute in Denmark. The aim was to achieve a deep and generally

comprehensive coverage of the conditions of contingent employees and to be able to compare these conditions to those in standard employment. The questionnaire was developed in collaboration between the researchers and Epinion. A preliminary version of the questionnaire was tested in a pilot study. The survey was financed by the LO, The Danish Confederation of Trade Unions (*cf.* Scheuer 2011).

The data collection was carried out as CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interviewing) between 25 March and 16 May 2010. During this period, reminders were administered to the sample of prospective respondents. A total of 8,633 invited to participate in the study, and 4,881 persons chose to respond. This corresponds to a response rate of 57%, which is satisfactory for this type of study.

Data analysis was carried out as multivariate logistical regression (logit analysis), with the aim of controlling any significant variance between contingent and non-contingent employees in multivariate modelling to minimize the effect of other variables (conditions) that might explain this variance.

6. Results: Consequences of Precarious Employment

In this section, the main results of the analyses of precarious employment will be reported under the headings of labour market pensions, highly fluctuating working hours, holiday entitlements, in-job training and participation in the staff development interview.

6.1 Employer Contributions to Labour Market Pensions

The first aspect of this analysis is whether contingent employees receive employer contributions to a labour market pensions (LMP). An LMP scheme with employer contribution may take different forms and shapes, since it may be a pension based on a collective agreement, it may be a company-based pension and it may be based on an individual agreement between the company and the employee. All these types of schemes are included below, as long as there is an employer contribution to it. Self-financed savings for retirement are not included in the Table 2 below. LMP schemes with employer contributions undoubtedly have important implications for the individual's well-being and opportunities after retirement, so the lack of access to it clearly constitutes a discriminatory factor at work. Contributions to LMP (or the lack thereof) have real and tangible consequences, even if for some well into the future.

The main reason one must expect lower LMP coverage for contingent employees is that the employment relationship is often quite brief and many pension funds have regulations stipulating a minimum waiting period before admission, something that may often prevent enrolment for contingent employees.

Table 2 shows the proportion reporting having savings to LMP, broken down by type of employment, gender, age, job status, sector, annual income, collective bargaining coverage, weekly working hours, industry and type of union affiliation (or non-affiliation) and it reports the results of a multivariate logistic analysis investigating the impact of these explanatory factors. The purpose of this analysis is to see whether the differences between contingent and non-contingent employees may be explained by other factors than type of employment itself, such as *e.g.* industrial sector, gender, collective bargaining coverage or age.

Table 2. Labour market pension with employer contribution: Factors influencing the occurrence. Multivariate logistic analysis, percentages and odds ratios, 2010

Variable	Pct.	Odds ratio	N
<i>Constant</i>		***25,1	
Type of employment			
<i>Contingent</i>	45	***0,0	621
<i>Non-contingent (baseline)</i>	97	1,0	3.583
Gender			
<i>Male (baseline)</i>	88	1,0	2.095
<i>Female</i>	90	*1,4	2.108
Age			
<i>Under 30</i>	76	0,6	266
<i>30 - 39 years (baseline)</i>	89	1,0	845

<i>40 - 49 years</i>	92	1,1	1.261
<i>50 - 59 years</i>	90	0,7	1.328
<i>60+ years</i>	86	0,7	504
Job status			
<i>Managers</i>	94	**2,4	903
<i>Professionals</i>	89	***4,3	680
<i>Technicians and semi-professionals</i>	93	***3,4	1.156
<i>Clerical employees</i>	92	***4,1	437
<i>Craft workers (baseline)</i>	72	1,0	239
<i>Process workers and operators</i>	90	0,7	325
<i>Sale and service employees</i>	92	1,2	191
<i>Other workers</i>	65	1,0	273
Sector			
<i>Private (baseline)</i>	88	1,0	2.569
<i>Public</i>	90	***0,4	1.635
Annual income (in DKK)			
<i>Under 200,000</i>	79	0,7	530
<i>200,000 to 299,999 (baseline)</i>	87	1,0	638
<i>300,000 to 399,999</i>	93	1,5	1.346
<i>400,000+</i>	90	1,0	1.690
Collective bargaining coverage			
<i>Covered (baseline)</i>	93	1,0	3.075
<i>Possibly covered</i>	75	*0,4	108
<i>Not covered</i>	78	***0,1	1021
Weekly working hours			
<i>Less than 37 hours</i>	81	*0,4	688
<i>37 - 38 hours (baseline)</i>	93	1,0	1.264
<i>39+ hours</i>	89	*0,7	2.252
Industrial sector			
<i>Primary sector</i>	92	***8,3	290
<i>Manufacturing</i>	94	**3,9	937
<i>Building and construction, trade (baseline)</i>	67	1,0	46
<i>Transport</i>	95	**5,5	279
<i>Finance</i>	87	*3,8	261
<i>Education</i>	93	*3,9	418
<i>Public administration</i>	88	*2,7	1.218
<i>Other service</i>	81	2,2	755
Education	NS		
<i>All</i>	87		4.204

Source: The Precarious Work Survey, March to May 2010.

Table 2 first shows that 87% of all Danish employees have some form of LMP. Indeed, it shows that there is a remarkably high difference between contingent and non-contingent employees in this regard: where more than 19 out of 20 in non-contingent employment (97%) report having some form of LMP, this applies to less than half of the contingent employees (45%).

Looking at this difference in combination with other possible explanatory factors, we can see that job status is quite important (some of the manual occupations are less well covered) and that collective bargaining significantly increases LMP coverage. Against this, gender has a very low significance ratio (in the women's favour) and age is not significant at all. So, even if other factors clearly do impinge on the likelihood of having an LMP scheme, contingent employment is clearly a very strong factor: Contingent employment simply halves the percent covered, a considerable difference.

6.2 Highly Fluctuating Working Hours

Fixed or variable work schedules is also a key aspect of quality of work. Most people presumably prefer fixed and predictable working hours, especially when you have family and children to cater for and friends to meet. This is all made harder to handle if you are constantly exposed to unpredictable changes in your working hours and working schedules. Highly variable work schedules are not desirable, but it is something that may define groups as having a weak attachment to the labour market.

In this study, we have asked one main question: "I have quite variable weekly working hours" and we have also asked about various aspects of this: Flexitime, fixed evening or night shifts, weekend work, attending to work before 7am or leaving work later than 18pm.

Table 3 shows the results from the multivariate analysis of this aspect of contingent work.

Table 3. Highly fluctuating working hours: factors influencing the occurrence. Multivariate logistic analysis, percentages and odds ratios, 2010

Category	Pct.	Odds ratio	N
Constant		0,1***	
Type of employment			
Contingent	55	3,3***	708
Non-contingent (baseline)	28	1	3.708
Gender			
Male (baseline)	36	1	2.207
Female	29	0,8*	2.209
Age			
Under 30	36	1,3	283
30 - 39 years (baseline)	29	1	883
40 - 49 years	30	1	1.319
50 - 59 years	35	1,2	1.405
60+ years	38	1,2	526
Job status			
Managers	41	2,0***	935
Professionals	38	1,6**	718
Technicians and semi-professionals	32	1,6**	121
Clerical employees	13	0,6*	457
Craft workers (baseline)	44	2,0***	274
Process workers and operators	18	1	340
Sale and service employees	31	1,9**	196
Other workers	35	1,2	286
Sector			
Private (baseline)	30	1	2.735

Public	38	1,3**	1.681
Annual income (in DKK)			
Under 200,000	31	1,2	561
200,000 to 299,999 (baseline)	26	1,0	675
300,000 to 399,999	27	1,1	1.402
400,000+	41	1,7***	1.778
Weekly working hours			
Less than 37 hours	31	1,7***	735
37 - 38 hours (baseline)	19	1	1.315
39+ hours	41	2,6***	2.366
Industrial sector			
Primary sector	52	1,8	298
Manufacturing	19	0,5*	972
Building and construction, trade (baseline)	39	1	56
Transport	22	0,6	291
Finance	31	0,9	288
Education	28	0,7	423
Public administration	42	1,2	1.269
Other service	34	0,9	819
All	33		4.416

Source: The Precarious Work Survey, March to May 2010.

Again, it first turns out that contingent work is connected to a much higher risk of strongly fluctuating working hours than non-contingent work is: overall, every third employee (33%) reported this condition, but this covers 28% of the non-contingent and more than half (55%) of contingent employees. Again, this is a sizeable difference, and it shows that the flexibility offered by contingent work probably reflects a very large share of overall flexibility, or – to put it in other words – working time flexibility is largely borne by those at the margins of the labour market. This would appear to show that companies use contingent work to fill gaps caused by illness, maternity leave etc. and that this increased flexibility is purely temporal, and disproportionately falls on contingent employees, whose job security is already diminished.

This time, multivariate analysis turns up other risk factors besides being a contingent employee: in particular managers and employees in sales, service and care have significantly higher frequencies of fluctuating working hours, and also high income (of more than 400,000 DKK – or GBP 45,000 – *pro annum*). Sector-wise, the condition of fluctuating hours applies mainly to the primary sector, and to people with longer and shorter working hours (than the normal working of 37 hours/week). These differences contribute to the prevalence of fluctuating working hours, but after this it remains that contingent employees are almost twice as likely to have highly variable working hours, compared to the non-contingent employees.

This implies that contingent employment effectively also involves a greater risk to have work schedules that do not correspond to the smooth operation of the majority of the labour market.

6.3 Holiday Entitlements

Holiday entitlements have been shown to be influenced by collective bargaining presence (union recognition), in the same way as working hours have (Green 1997; Scheuer 1999). Since contingent employees may or may not locally be viewed as covered by the union, there is a substantial risk that some may not have the same entitlements as permanent employees.

As mentioned above, the extra, sixth week of holiday has moved from being a particular fringe benefit for certain employees of certain companies to be more evenly or democratically distributed good that most employees have the right to, either directly because of their collective agreement or due to the knock-on effect. A 2002 study showed that 75 % of all private sector employees at that time were entitled to these special holidays (Scheuer, 2004: 61, 64). In other words, at this time 25% of private sector employees were not entitled to special holidays (largely because they were not covered by collective agreements), and the interesting question is therefore whether this in any great extent

applicable to the contingent employees. In this study, we look at both private and public sector, and the proportion that has special holidays generally can be expected to be somewhat higher than the 75% from the 2002 survey.

Table 4. The sixth holiday week: factors influencing the occurrence. Multivariate logistic analysis, percentages and odds ratios, 2010

Category	Pct.	Odds ratio	Konf. int.	N
<i>Constant</i>		5,7***	2,4 - 13,5	
Type of employment				
<i>Contingent</i>	43	0,1***	0,1 - 0,1	572
<i>Non-contingent (baseline)</i>	92	1		3.635
Job status				
<i>Managers</i>	87	1,1	0,7 - 1,7	921
<i>Professionals</i>	83	1,8*	1,1 - 2,9	677
<i>Technicians and semi-professionals</i>	88	1,9**	1,2 - 2,9	117
<i>Clerical employees</i>	88	1,8*	1,1 - 3	441
<i>Craft workers (baseline)</i>	72	1,1	0,7 - 1,9	240
<i>Process workers and operators</i>	87	1		322
<i>Sale and service employees</i>	89	0,8	0,4 - 1,5	188
<i>Other workers</i>	68	0,9	0,5 - 1,5	248
Annual income (in DKK)				
<i>Under 200,000</i>	77	0,9	0,6 - 1,2	502
<i>200,000 to 299,999 (baseline)</i>	82	1		631
<i>300,000 to 399,999</i>	89	1,5*	1,1 - 2	1.344
<i>400,000+</i>	85	1,3	1 - 1,8	173
Collective bargaining coverage				
<i>Covered (baseline)</i>	89	1		3.028
<i>Possibly covered</i>	74	0,6	0,3 - 1,2	93
<i>Not covered</i>	76	0,4***	0,3 - 0,5	1086
Industrial sector				
<i>Primary sector</i>	87	2,9*	1,3 - 6,8	285
<i>Manufacturing</i>	91	3**	1,4 - 6,4	951
<i>Building and construction, trade (baseline)</i>	66	1		50
<i>Transport</i>	89	2,1	0,9 - 4,9	281
<i>Finance</i>	85	2,8*	1,2 - 6,3	273
<i>Education</i>	92	2,7*	1,1 - 6,2	408
<i>Public administration</i>	82	1,3	0,6 - 2,8	1.188
<i>Other service</i>	77	1,6	0,7 - 3,3	771
Age	NS			
Sector	NS			
Education	NS			
Gender	NS			
Weekly working hours	NS			
<i>All</i>	85			4.204

Source: The Precarious Work Survey, March to May 2010.

Table 4 shows that nine out of ten in non-contingent employment (92%) indicate that they are entitled to special holiday allowance, compared to only about half of the contingent employees (43%). In the multivariate analysis, we then look at other explanatory factors affecting the prevalence of the sixth week of holidays.

Very few factors other than being a contingent employee seem to influence the incidence of holidays are: collective bargaining coverage, which has a clear and positive influence, industrial sector, where manufacturing, finance, and public administration have higher probabilities than, *e.g.*, Construction. Contingent employment is, however, by far the strongest factor, since contingent employees only have a probability of 0.1 compared to typical employees, even when the other factors are taken into account.

6.4 The Opportunity of Participating in In-job Courses and Training

We now turn to another important aspect of the employment relationship, namely the opportunity for the employee to safeguard his or her employability and master novel competences by partaking in job-relevant courses and in-job training. Work and working conditions are moving in a direction where permanent and lifelong employment are becoming less prevalent, and employees are forced constantly to improve their competences in order to retain their employability. This applies to everyone, but of course especially to contingent employees who, by virtue of their more peripheral attachment to the company where they work, are always at risk. Therefore, contingent employees need to stay employable even more than employees with open-ended contracts, *i.e.* they need to attend courses and training, and their wants and needs in relation to work should be heard at least as much (*cf.* Holt Larsen 2010). Clearly, however, contingent employees are particularly vulnerable here, as companies often will not see why they should invest in short-term employees. Is this the case?

Table 5. Opportunity of in-job courses or training: Factors influencing the occurrence. Multivariate logistic analysis, percentages and odds ratios, 2010

Category	Pct.	Odds ratio	N
<i>Constant</i>		**3,0	
Type of employment			
<i>Contingent</i>	40	***0,1	708
<i>Non-contingent (baseline)</i>	90	1,0	3.708
Job status			
<i>Managers</i>	91	**1,9	935
<i>Professionals</i>	83	**2,3	718
<i>Technicians and semi-professionals</i>	86	*1,7	121
<i>Clerical employees</i>	78	1,0	457
<i>Craft workers (baseline)</i>	62	0,8	274
<i>Process workers and operators</i>	82	1,0	340
<i>Sale and service employees</i>	79	0,8	196
<i>Other workers</i>	61	0,8	286
Annual income (in DKK)			
<i>Under 200,000</i>	70	1,0	561
<i>200,000 to 299,999 (baseline)</i>	74	1,0	675
<i>300,000 to 399,999</i>	86	***1,7	1.402
<i>400,000+</i>	86	***1,9	1.778
Education			
<i>Basic schooling only</i>	75	**0,5	276
<i>High school (gymnasium)</i>	74	**0,6	350
<i>Craft or skilled (baseline)</i>	85	1,0	1.099
<i>Semi-professional (bachelor)</i>	84	**0,6	199
<i>Professional (master)</i>	80	*0,6	701
Collective bargaining coverage			

<i>Covered (baseline)</i>	86	1,0	3.165
<i>Possibly covered</i>	64	0,8	115
<i>Not covered</i>	75	***0,5	1136
Weekly working hours			
<i>Less than 37 hours</i>	72	0,8	735
<i>37 - 38 hours(baseline)</i>	82	1,0	1.315
<i>39+ hours</i>	86	*1,3	2.366
Industrial sector			
<i>Primary sector</i>	82	**3,0	298
<i>Manufacturing</i>	85	*2,2	972
<i>Building and construction, trade (baseline)</i>	57	1,0	56
<i>Transport</i>	87	1,7	291
<i>Finance</i>	74	***5,8	288
<i>Education</i>	92	*2,3	423
<i>Public administration</i>	82	**2,9	1.269
<i>Other service</i>	78	**3,1	819
<i>All</i>	82		4.413

Source: The Precarious Work Survey, March to May 2010.

Table 5 shows that four out of five employees (82%) are offered the opportunity of in-job courses or training, but there is – again – a considerable difference between contingent and non-contingent employees: nine out of ten non-contingent employees (90%) have this option, while this is the case for a considerably smaller proportion of contingent workforce, less than half of them (40%). When looking at the other explanatory factors we find that among these factors we find high income, collective bargaining coverage, both have a strong and positive effect, and also job status as a manager or professional. When it comes to industrial sector, Construction and Trade are low and Public administration is very high.

Again, we thus find that contingent employment is a very strong risk factor when it comes to opportunities to develop oneself at work and retain one's employability: Odds for the contingent employees is about a tenth of the odds of the typical employees, and certainly means that employers simply do not invest in contingent employees relatively to in the more in their non-contingent staff. This is perhaps understandable seen from the company viewpoint, but if this is a permanent factor for contingent employees, it will over time exclude this group from good jobs in the future.

6.5 Participation in Staff Development Interviews (SDI)

Individualized employee appraisals in the form of, *inter alia*, the SDI have come to occupy a central role in personnel policies and in present-day HRM. Seen from the company perspective, the SDI represents the ability to acquire an insight into the individual staff member's situation, efforts, attitudes and desires for future development, while the manager can simultaneously convey the demands of the company to the individual, recent changes in these demands and explain how the individual staff member can contribute to the overall goals of the company, thus linking the overall needs of the company (department) to the goals for the individual (Beardwell and Claydon 2007, Holt Larsen 2010). It is also a chance to update the 'psychological contract' and the implicit effort bargain, since it is a good opportunity to talk about the goal-setting for the individual staff members (*cf.* Latham 2012, Locke and Latham 1990, Marsden 2004, Rousseau 1995). From the staff member's perspective, the appraisal interview an opportunity to express their preferences with regard to their own opportunities within the company, including requests for training, for changing to a part time / full time work schedule, for a change to tasks and job content, or to get a more responsible or enriched job. These things can often be difficult to put forward in the daily buzz of company life, and it therefore has some importance for both parties to have the opportunity. It is also an opportunity to make the manager aware of any perceived breaches to the psychological contract which may lead to dissatisfaction in the longer run. While this type of interviews, perhaps by other names (*e.g.* employee appraisals), have existed for certain categories of staff (senior or executive staff) and in certain industries, in the last ten to 20 years it has become a part of good HRM policy and practice in Denmark that – aligned with the general individualization of the employment relationship inherent in the HRM concept – to conduct this type of interviews with all members of staff. Inviting the staff member to the SDI may also be seen as an indication of how the company views and values the individual: If the company, *i.e.* the manager, is

willing to invest his or her time in this, the implication is that it is more of a 'lasting relationship' and if not, employees may think their position is more precarious and peripheral.

Table 6. Staff Development Interview: factors influencing the occurrence. Multivariate logistic analysis, percentages and odds ratios, 2010

Variable	Pct.	Odds ratio	Konf. int.	N
<i>Constant</i>		0,7	0,4 - 1,3	
Type of employment				
<i>Contingent</i>	22	0,1***	0,1 - 0,1	708
<i>Non-contingent (baseline)</i>	73	1		3.708
Gender				
<i>Male (baseline)</i>	62	1		2.207
<i>Female</i>	66	1,2	1,0 - 1,4	2.209
Job status				
<i>Managers</i>	70	2,6***	1,9 - 3,4	935
<i>Professionals</i>	70	4,3***	3,1 - 5,8	718
<i>Technicians and semi-professionals</i>	70	3,6***	2,7 - 4,8	121
<i>Clerical employees</i>	70	3,1***	2,2 - 4,3	457
<i>Craft workers (baseline)</i>	46	2,1***	1,5 - 3,1	274
<i>Process workers and operators</i>	49	1		340
<i>Sale and service employees</i>	55	1,2	0,8 - 1,8	196
<i>Other workers</i>	42	1,6*	1,1 - 2,3	286
Collective bargaining coverage				
<i>Covered (baseline)</i>	66	1		3.165
<i>Possibly covered</i>	50	0,9	0,6 - 1,1	115
<i>Not covered</i>	61	0,7***	0,6 - 0,9	1136
Weekly working hours				
<i>Less than 37 hours</i>	54	0,6***	0,5 - 0,8	735
<i>37 - 38 hours (baseline)</i>	67	1		1.315
<i>39+ hours</i>	66	0,9	0,8 - 1,1	2.366
Industrial sector				
<i>Primary sector</i>	55	1,6	0,8 - 3	298
<i>Manufacturing</i>	72	2,7**	1,4 - 4,9	972
<i>Building and construction, trade (baseline)</i>	41	1		56
<i>Transport</i>	63	1,6	0,8 - 3,0	291
<i>Finance</i>	61	1,9	1,0 - 3,6	288
<i>Public administration</i>	75	2,5**	1,3 - 4,7	423
<i>Education</i>	60	1,5	0,8 - 2,7	1.269
<i>Other service</i>	63	2,2*	1,2 - 4,0	819
Sector	NS			
Gender	NS			
Education	NS			
Age	NS			
Annual income (in DKK)	NS			
<i>All</i>	64			4.416

Source: The Precarious Work Survey, March to May 2010.

In Table 6, we now look at contingent versus non-contingent employees and SDI-participation. The table shows that almost two thirds (64%) of all employees have participated in an SDI within the last year or so, and it also immediately appears that we find a marked difference between contingent and non-contingent employees: among non-contingent employees almost three-quarters (73%) have been taking part, while among contingent ones we find only 22%. If participation in the appraisal interview may be seen as an indication of how the company values its employees, i.e. how much time it wants to invest in them, contingent employees certainly have a much lower priority from management.

Which other factors have an effect? It is here evident that, *inter alia*, job status is important (salaried employees have higher frequency, while craft and manual work is lower), some industrial sectors have higher frequencies (especially manufacturing and public administration). Interestingly, and perhaps surprisingly, collective bargaining coverage has a significant positive effect. Contingent employment is, however, yet again the strongest factor.

7. Conclusion

How precarious is precarious work actually, when we look at some of the non-monetary aspects of the employment relationship? In summary, one can point out that the above analyses show that in all of the above five non-monetary dimensions precarious work is really precarious:

- Far fewer contingent employees have LMP with employer contributions: only 45 against 97%
- A much higher prevalence of highly variable work schedules: 55 against 28%
- Far fewer have the sixth holiday week: 43 against 92%
- A much lower possibility of participation in in-job courses and training: 40 against 90%
- A much lower participation in individual staff development interviews (SDI): only 22 against 73%

Compared to the existing research on contingent work, it is perhaps not so remarkable that there is difference between contingent and non-contingent employees. It is, however, quite remarkable that the differences are so substantial shown here. There seems to be an accumulation of inferior conditions.

As a general conclusion, one can say that contingent employment is clearly risk employment. Companies (employers) outsource the risk of the employment relationship not just to manpower agencies but to the individual contingent employees. The buffering against market fluctuations that companies execute for their core workforce does not apply to the contingent workforce. The investment by companies in their employees' training and courses excludes contingent employees, who may need it even more, since they have to change jobs much more often.

The differences themselves are not such a big surprise. What is surprising is how stark they are. This study supplies a picture of temporary contingent employment that clearly documents how general standards of work are eroded by the conditions of contingent employees.

Theoretically, models of the employment relationship in the HRM and OB literature should pay much more attention to (1) the mere existence of contingent employment, why and when it is utilized etc., and (2) the fact that systematic long-term utilization of contingent employment in companies is clearly to the detriment of those employees working under these conditions, especially if they do so for long periods of time. HRM theories might speculate how companies can possibly compensate for this detriment.

What can be done? It is unlikely that all contingent work can be transformed into core employment. But there is a need to increase the awareness of the extent of contingent employment in society generally and locally in companies and public organizations becomes transparent and comes to the surface, so that the management increasingly forced to justify this scale, i.e. to make the invisible more visible. Also, the creation of more documentation and transparency of the terms of the contingent employees in the workplace and in employment is certainly warranted, in order that the differences cannot simply be swept under the carpet, but must be justified openly. Finally, legislation and collective agreements must become more closely attuned to the fact that contingent and precarious employment exists, and that some of the risk that is a special conditions of these employees can be alleviated.

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