

Norway: Government restricts non-standard employment.

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Last year, the Norwegian labour party government imposed significant restrictions on fixed-term contracts. It made it clear that open-ended jobs are a fundamental principle in the Norwegian working life. Permanent employment gives the individual worker security and predictability regarding future work situation and income. A high share of permanent staff can also contribute to more productive and competitive businesses. A working life characterised by safe, permanent working conditions benefits both workers, companies, and society.

The objective is also to contribute to a more productive and competitive society, to foster recruitment of more young people and greater investment in employee skills. Workers will be considered permanent if they have been employed on a temporary basis for more than three years.

Now, restrictions on agency work will be put in place. Without a written agreement from a shop steward, employers may not use agency workers except to cover for individual leaves etc. The aim is to promote more direct employment between employer and worker. In South-Eastern Norway, all use of agency work will be prohibited in the building industry. Norway's largest union in the private sector, Fellesforbundet, is preparing quite an organisational job to make sure that the changes are understood and correctly implemented in their sectors.

Also in the case of part-time work, Norwegian employers must justify the need for this kind of atypical employment and obtain the consent of local union representatives. Part-time workers have special rights to get full-time jobs in their companies or longer shifts.

Edited by industriAll Europe.