

# FLEXIBILITY AND SECURITY, MICRO PERSPECTIVES ON DEALING WITH FLEXICURITY

Which social regulation forms inside  
inter-organizational partnerships?

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# Observations and question

Our observations:

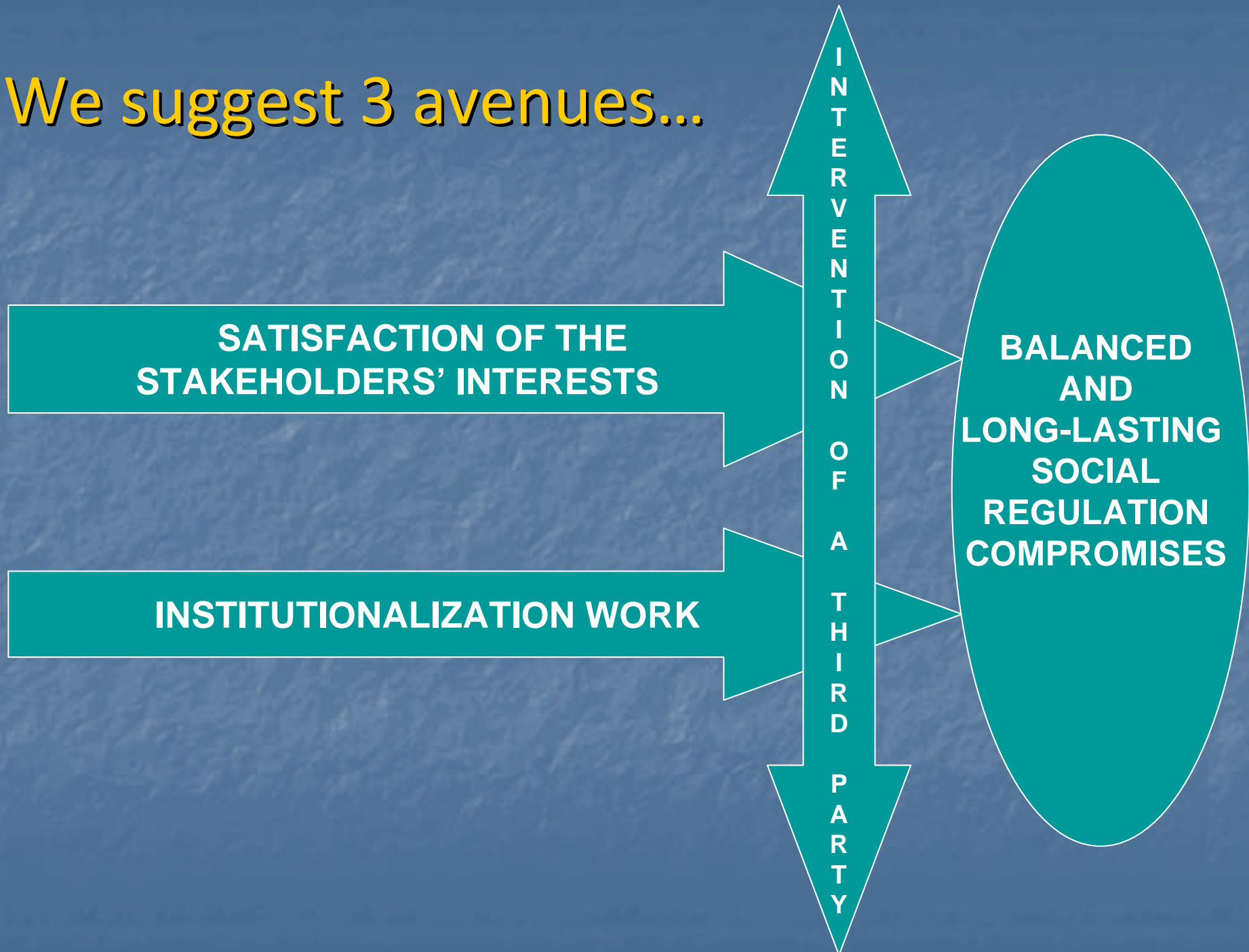
- Innovative solutions to the needs for flexibility and security expressed by both employers and their employees, frequently set up on an intercompany basis  
*Examples: umbrella companies, skill pooling, employers associations, jobpools, flexpools, etc.*
- Some of these are on the borders of the existing legal framework; some are described as balanced and satisfying for all their stakeholders, other are unbalanced, unsatisfying, unsustainable

Our question:



**Under which conditions is it possible to find flexicurity compromises able to preserve the general interest at the inter-organizational level?**

**We suggest 3 avenues...**



# The satisfaction of the stakeholders' interests

- The social regulation area requires that the institutionalized compromises are also « desirable »
  - necessity for a joint satisfaction of the diverging interests
- The issues at stake concern
  - The identification of the stakeholders
  - The dynamic grasping of the interests system
  - The actor competency to identify his/her interest and the way to satisfy it

# The satisfaction of the stakeholder's interests

- Intervention of a third-party in order to
  - Mobilize and enrol the stakeholders
  - Identify the various interests and the power relations, in a dynamic and systemic perspective
  - Allow the actor's reflexivity
  - Create a common problematization

= the third-party as a « **translator** » (actor-network theory)

# An institutionalization work

- The stakeholder's satisfaction is always contingent
  - perpetuation through an institutionalization work
- The issues at stake concern
  - The legitimacy of the compromise
  - The formalization of the compromise
  - The regulation of the compromise
  - The coherence of the compromise with the other social regulation levels

# An institutionalization work

- Intervention of a third-party in order to
- Produce a theorization to justify the agreement
  - Set up a governance system
  - Integrate the compromise inside the global social regulation system

= the third-party as an « **institutional entrepreneur** » (neo-institutionalist theory)

# Avenues put at the test of the field

- Action-research granted by the ESF (EU)
- Methodology
  - **Critical:** a positioning different for the flexicurity research mainstream (focus on the micro level and the emergent practices)
  - **Experimental:** testing the implementation and perpetuation modes for new flexicurity practices at the micro level (companies partnerships, labour market area, territory, ...) through pilot projects
  - **Participative:** mobilization and involvement of labour market stakeholders in the experimental, analytic and theoretical work
  - **Abductive:** iterative process between field and theory to give sense to the field observations



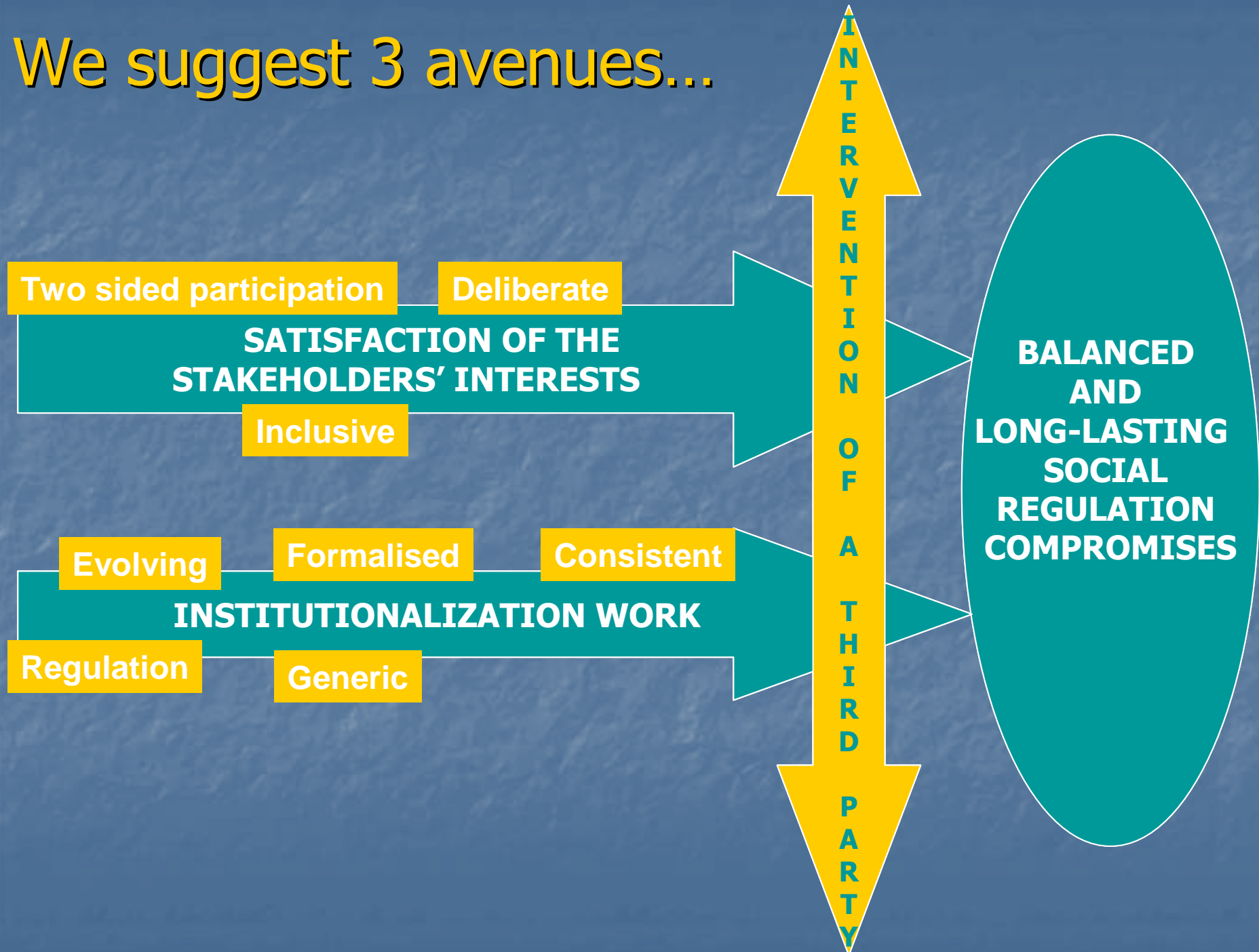
# Evaluation criteria of the compromises

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
Deliberate/ Emerging	Voluntary negotiation, with explicit reference to requirements expressed and accepted by the stakeholders <i>vs.</i> gradual or iterative adjustments, with reference to requirements that appear as time goes by
Two-sided participation	Extent of respect for the principle of voluntary commitment to the implementation of the compromise for each stakeholder
Inclusive/ Selective	Involvement of all the stakeholders in the employment relationship at all stages of the process leading to the compromise <i>vs.</i> reduced and/or selective involvement
With/Without intervention of a third party	Level and modes of participation of a third party in the process of designing the compromise (advice, cognitive supervision, mobilization, guidance, regulation) and in its governance

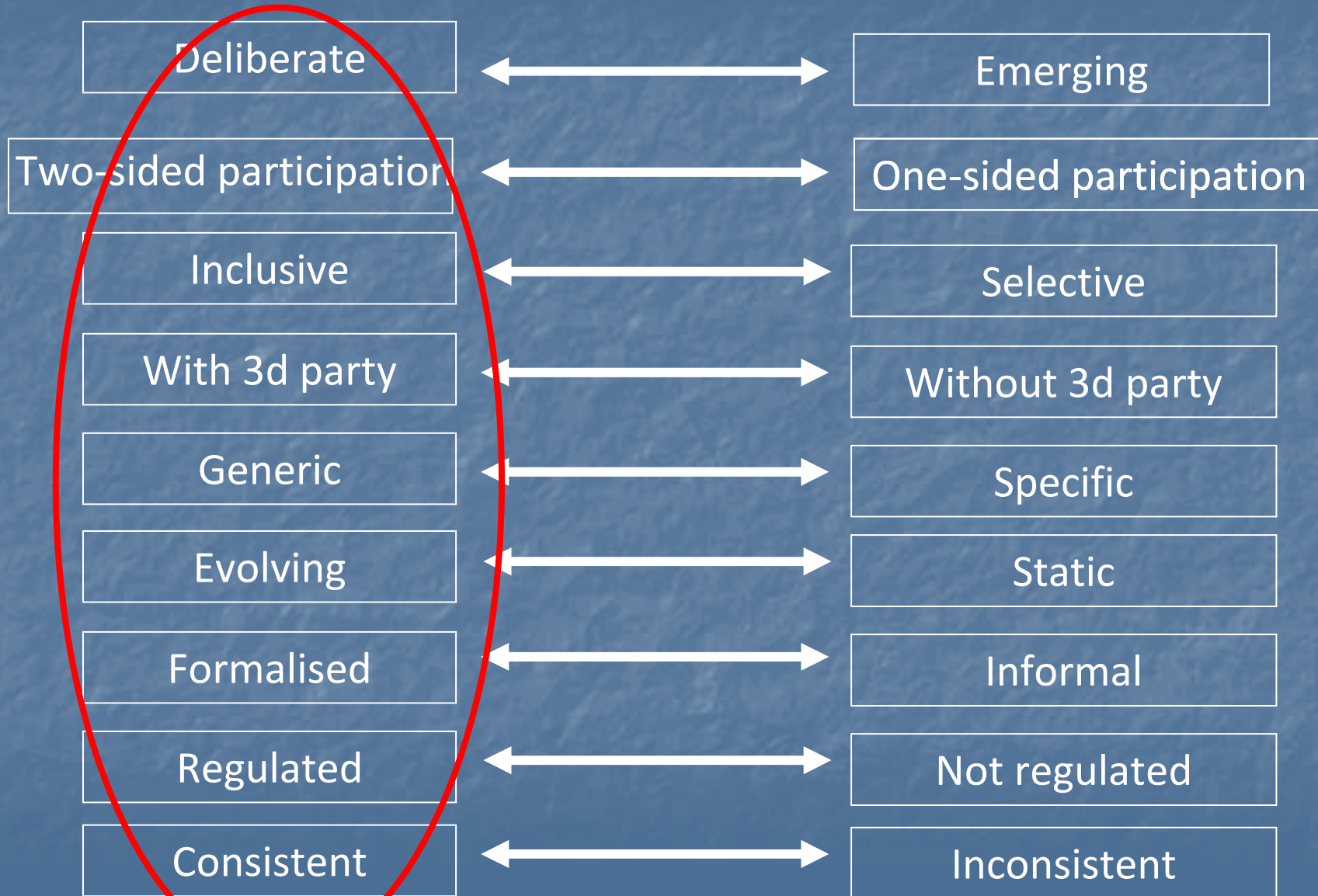
## Evaluation criteria of the compromises (#2)

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
Generic/ Specific	Uniform application to all members of one of the groups that is a party to the negotiations <i>vs.</i> compromise satisfying specific issues expressed by an individual or restricted group.
Evolving/ Static	Possibility to adapt and enrich the compromise throughout its existence <i>vs.</i> rigidity of the compromise negotiated
Formalised/ Informal	Compromise based on an official agreement between stakeholders (explicit, documented, accessible) <i>vs.</i> informal agreement.
Means of regulation	Existence or not of a system for controlling and penalizing, linked to the compromise (cultural norms, interdependence of the partners, collective bargaining agreements, laws and regulations).
Consistent/ Inconsistent	Consistency of the content of the compromise with existing regulation at higher levels

# We suggest 3 avenues...

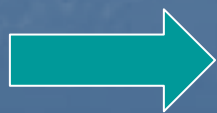


# Towards balanced and long-lasting compromises



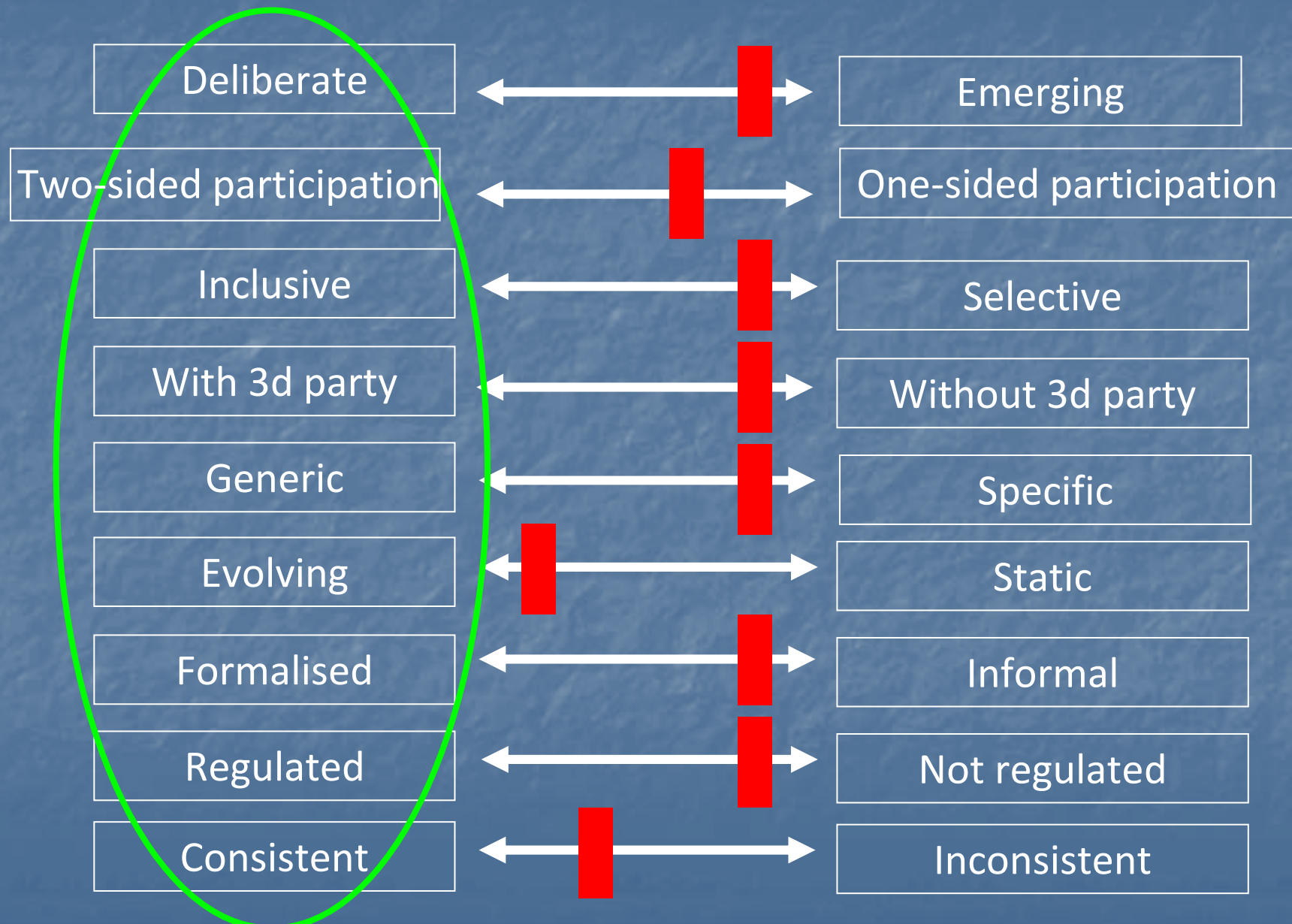
# Case study: polyactivity in the logistics sector

- Starting point: packers at the Trilogi company (air freight express transportation) working part-time (20h/week) at night (0-4 am)
  - insecure situation for the workers in terms of income
- Workers are tacking initiatives to complement their income: part-time in another company (during the day of the night, self-employment, moonlighting, etc.)
  - insecure situation
    - For the workers, to coordinate the various activities and in terms of work life balance
    - For the employers, in terms of workers flexibility and security at work



**How can we « qualify » the existing compromises?  
How can we make them balanced and long-lasting?**

# Case study: polyactivity in the logistics sector



# Outputs and further research...

- Outputs

- Heuristic criteria

- allowing to describe and evaluate flexibility/security reconciliation practices emerging at the micro level

- Guidelines for action

- allowing to frame the design and implementation of balanced and long lasting flexicurity compromises inside inter-organizational partnerships

- Further research

- Deepening the **third party intervention**:

- Identity? Attributes? Individual or collective process? Roles?  
Necessary at the inter-organizational level?

- Questioning the **consistency issue**:

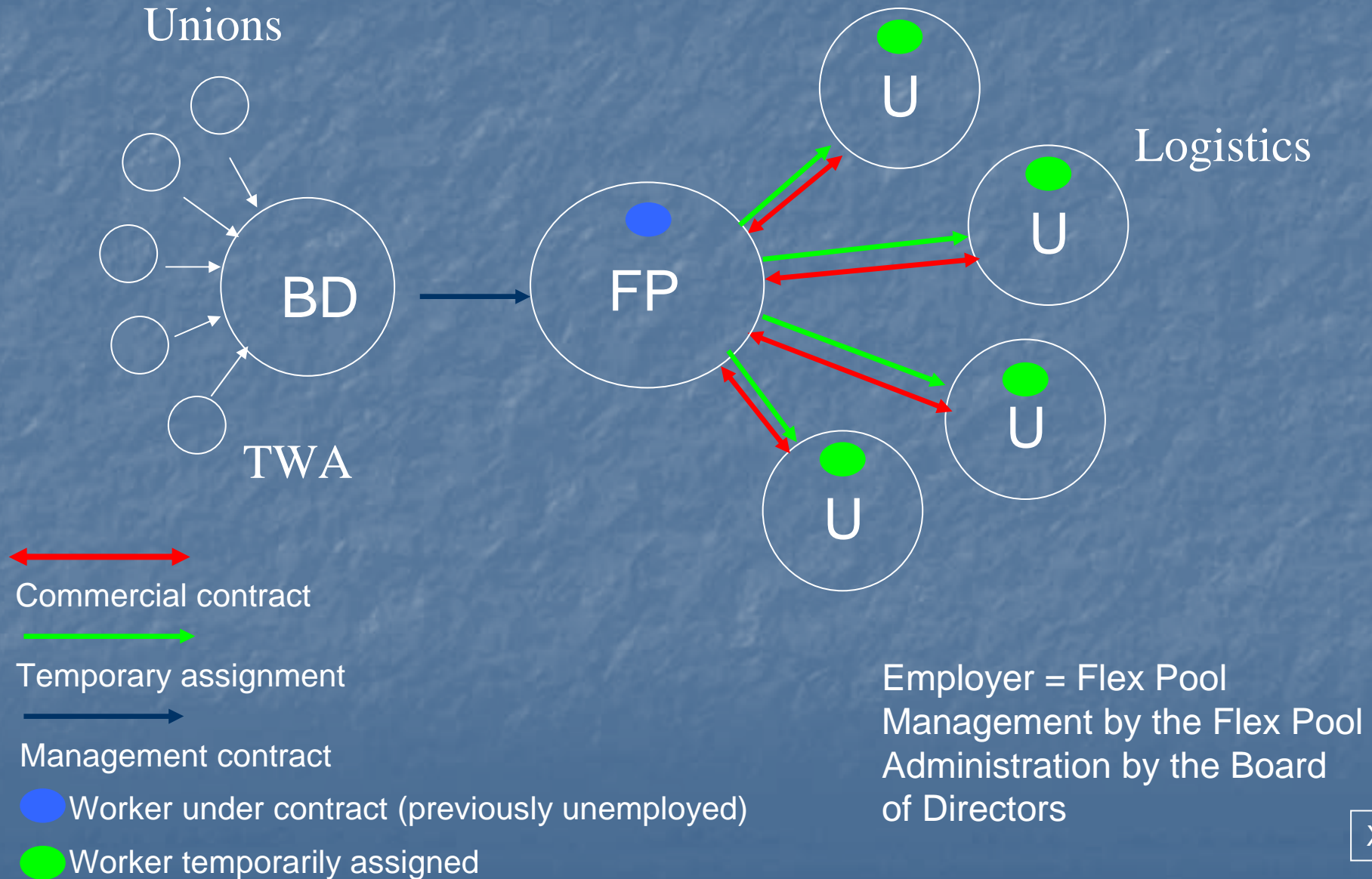
- Necessary for the institutionalization process? Interaction between various regulation systems?

■ **Thank you for your attention!**

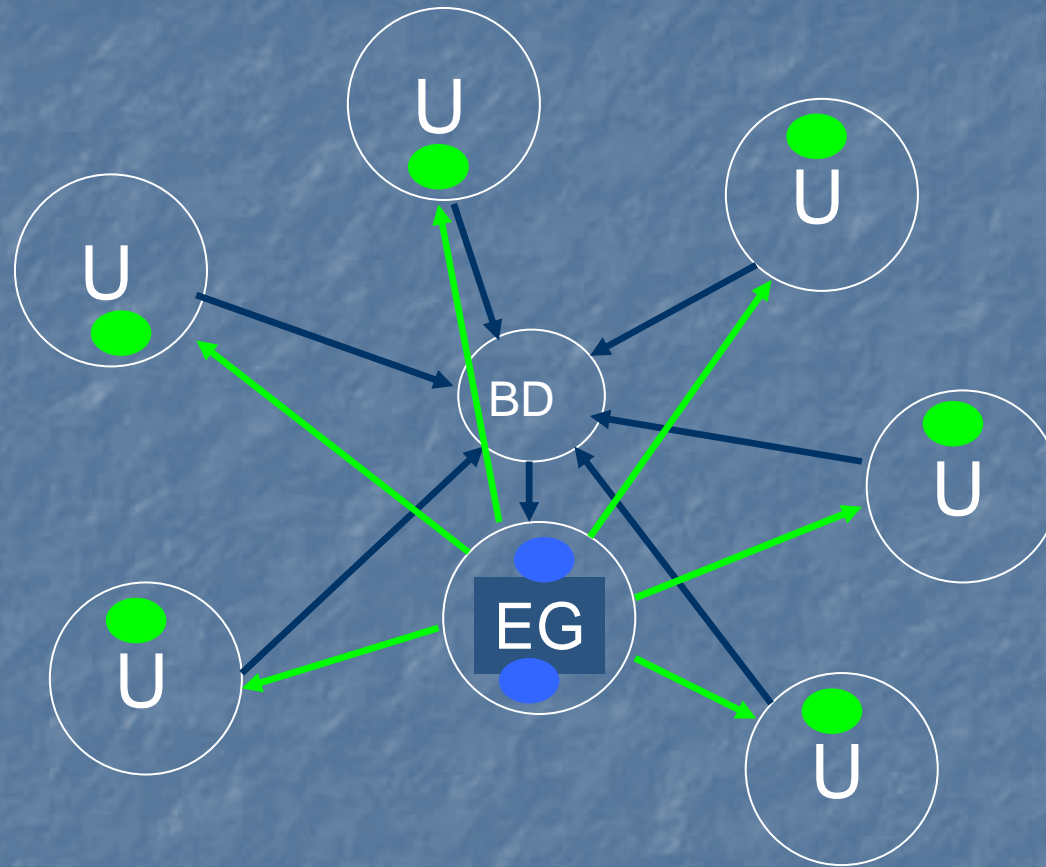
- For more information...
- [V.xhaufclair@ulg.ac.be](mailto:V.xhaufclair@ulg.ac.be)
- [www.flexicurity.org](http://www.flexicurity.org)



# Flex Pools (N & D)



# Employers Groups (F & B)



→ Temporary assignment

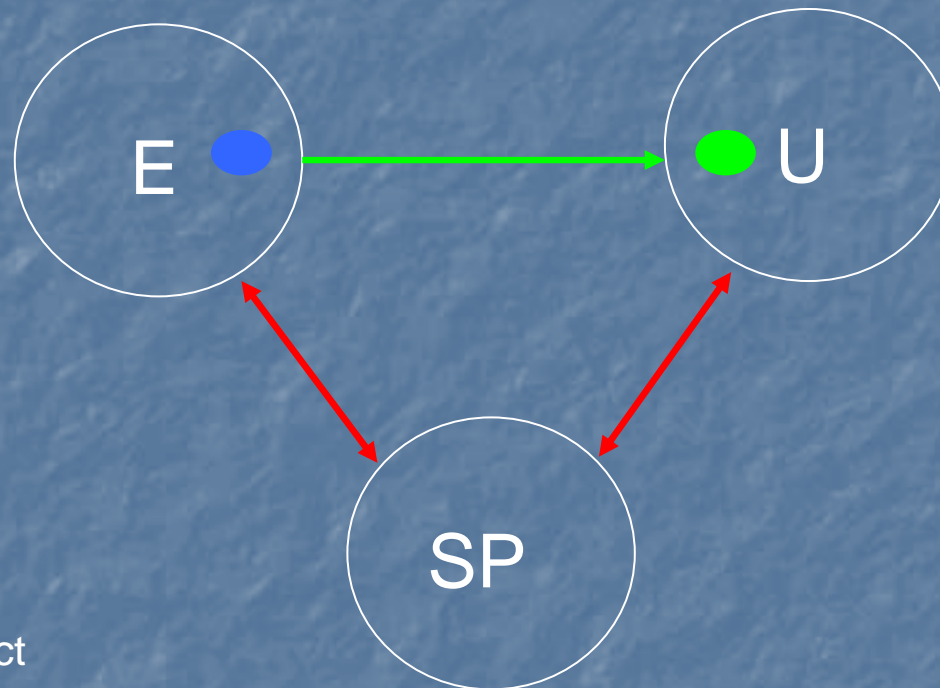
→ Managing contract

● Worker under contract

● Worker temporarily assigned

Employer = Employers Group  
Management by the Employers Group  
Administration by the Board of Directors

# Skill Pooling (B)



↔ Commercial Contract

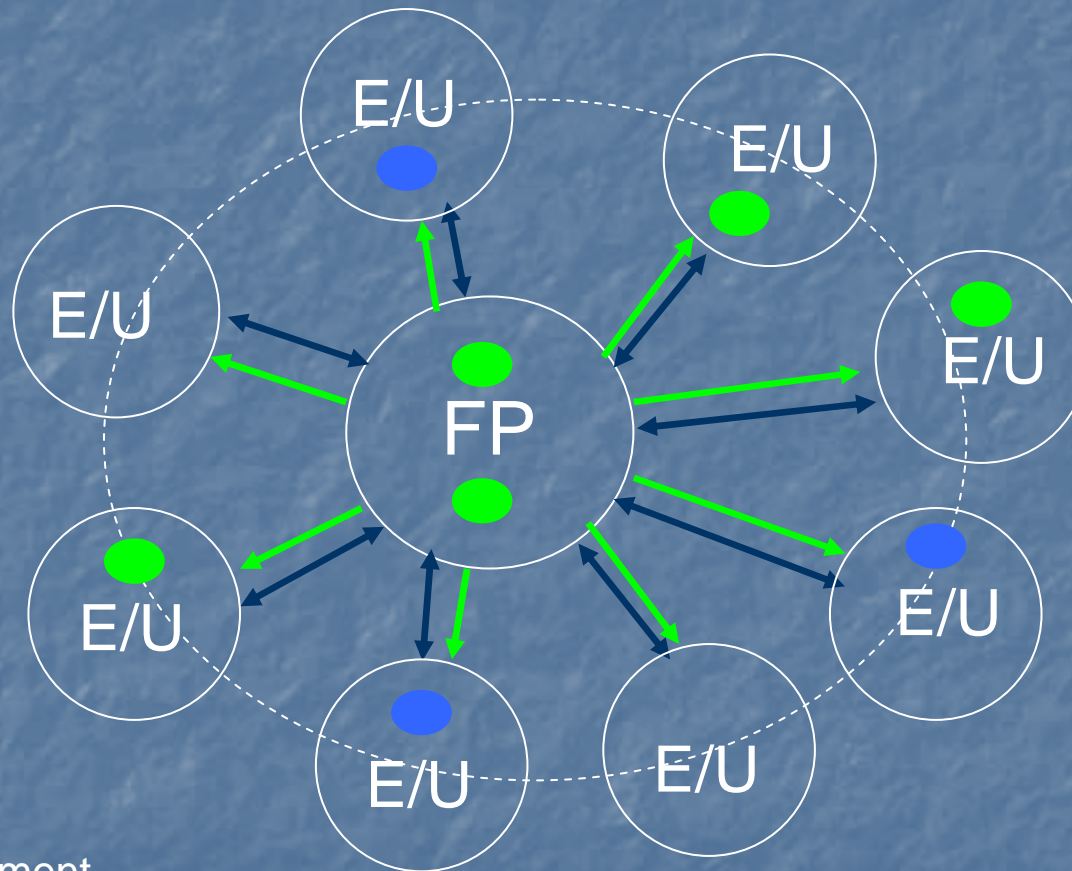
→ Temporary assignment

● Worker under contract

● Worker temporarily assigned (part-time)

Employer = the initial company  
No contract between employer and user  
Management by the SP entity

# Flex Pools (G)



→ Temporary assignment

→ Managing contract

● Worker under contract

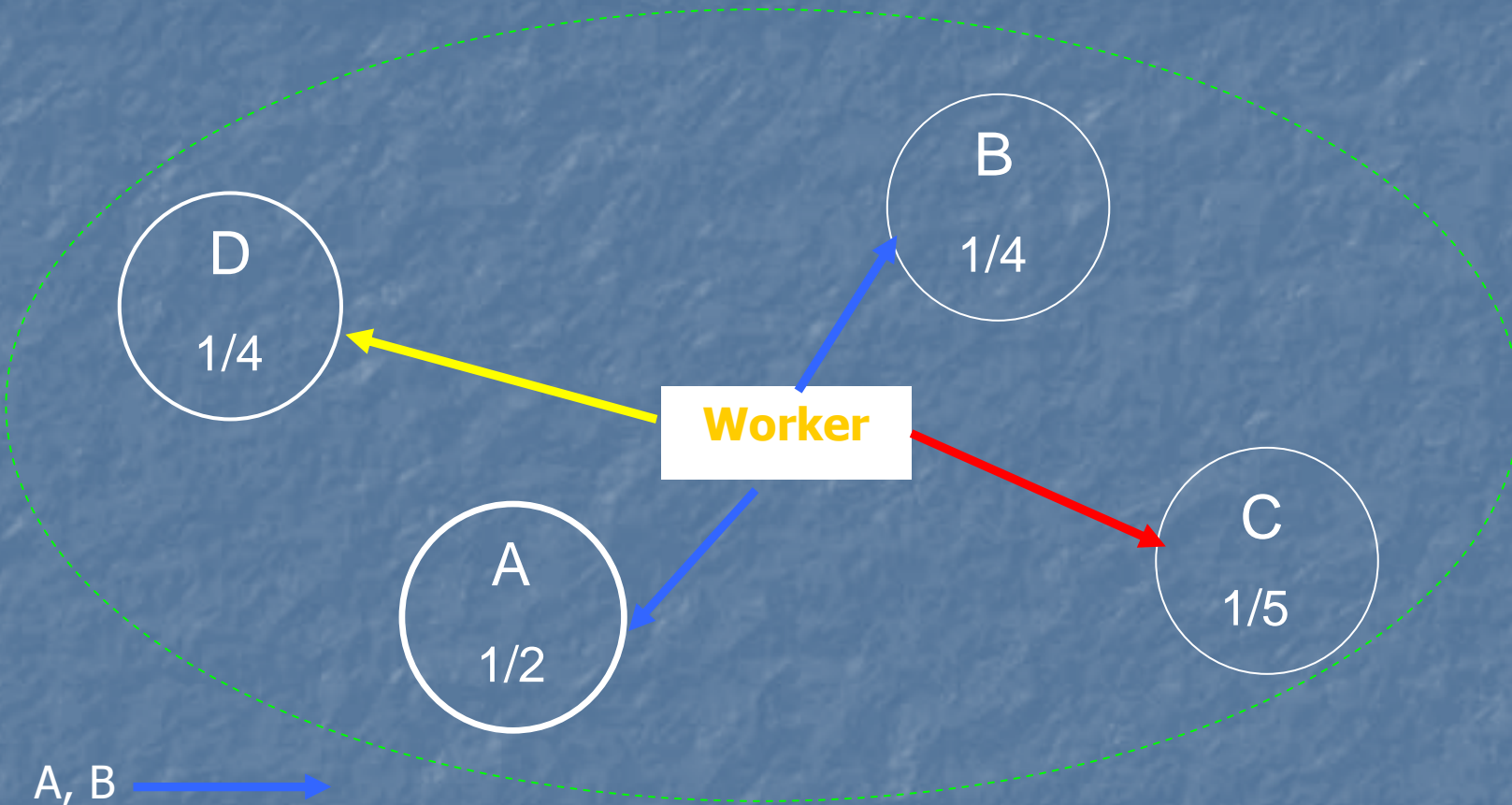
● Worker temporarily assigned

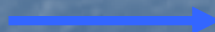
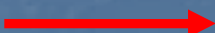

Employer = the initial company

Management by the flexpool

Administration by the co-employer companies

# Multi-activity



- A, B   
Salaried employment
- C   
Moonlighting
- D   
Self employment

Many employers  
Various status (salaried and self employed)

