



## Crowdsourcing and Crowdwor- king and their implications for the organization of work – the case of IBM

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## Outline

- 1 Former forms of organization of work
- 2 Definition: Crowdsourcing and Crowdwor-  
king
- 3 Crowdsourcing at IBM
- 4 Impacts on former organizational forms of work
- 5 About our research project

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## Former forms of organization of work: The case of IBM

In the 1980s:  
Inhouse

In the 1990s:  
Outsourcing

Science the 2000s:  
Near- and Offshoring

Currently: Crowdsourcing

"And today it is self-evident that we are operating in these global teams. I have not one of my team members operating in Germany. I have Australia, I have USA, India, then I have a few people in some i European countries, China is coming now. So, the work has changed, completely - and it works. [...] Yes, I do work in the virtual space. And because we don't work with video calls, I always only know all other by their pictures, the photos of the people. [...] Most of them I only know by phone."  
(Interview 4, E: 438-450, own translation)

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## Definitions

"... the strategy of outsourcing a typically paid work rendered by employees, by an organization or private individual through an open call to a mass of unknown actors, in which the crowdsourcer and / or the crowdsourtees have free and usable economic advantages"  
(Papsdorf, 2009 : 69, own translation).

Crowdworking as a new form of work - at the subjective level - and crowdsourcing as a new form of organization of work - at the organizational level.

Interpretation framework of our research

Papsdorf, Christian (2009): Wie surfen zu Arbeit wird. Crowdsourcing im Web 2.0. Frankfurt a.M./New York: Campus. 6

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## Crowdsourcing at IBM: the principle

Project managers divide previous projects into small work packages.

These are distributed on a specialized Internet platform to the crowd.

Several Crowdworkers are working on an advertised task and deliver a ready solution.

Only the best result is rewarded, all others receive nothing



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## Impact on former work organization

The relationship between certainty and uncertainty changes for both, the organization and the subject.

There is an increase of certainty for the organization.

We see a decrease of the certainty for the subjects.

For them former expectations and securities dissolve in respect to:

Income security

Labour law

Social benefits

Representation of interests

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## Research question 1

### Entrepreneurial forms of power and governance

Trough the new organizational form of work new forms of certainties and uncertainties arise for organizations and for subjects.

How do the previous forms of power and governance change?

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## Research question 2

### Justification

New forms of power and governance have to be justified by the subjects to function.

How is the new organizational form of work legitimized or delegitimized?

Why do crowd workers participate?

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## Research question 3

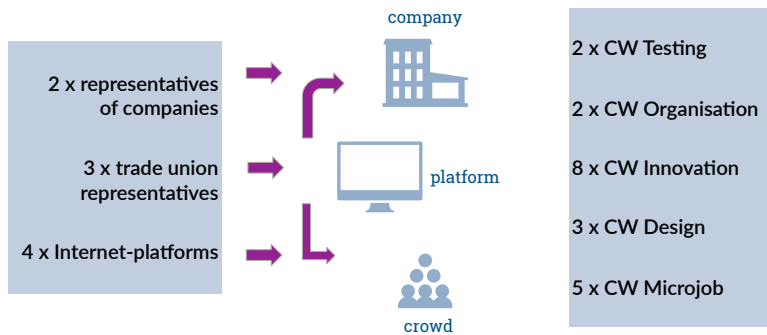
### Interests and industrial relations

What demands do Crowdworkers articulate?

What are the starting points for interest-policy action beyond the company and the nation state?

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## Research design



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## Empirical findings so far

There are four types of crowdsourcing platforms in Germany

Innovation-platforms

Testing-platforms

Microjob-platforms

Design-platforms

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## Empirical findings so far

### Crowdsourcing at IBM: Liquid is a thing of the past

Because the crowd is not visible on the internet, there is little potential for mobilization for trade unions

#### Motives to participate in crowdworking:

- Persons with health restrictions
- Persons in the transitional phase up to an employee
- Crowdworking as self-marketing
- Part-time employees with dependent persons in the household
- Digital nomads

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**Thank you!**

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