

New working relationships: digitalisation and trade union strategies





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Foreword

Dear readers,

The working world is experiencing rapid change as a result of the ever greater use of digital technologies, and workers' organisations are called upon to play a part in shaping these developments. The speed of change is not the only challenge here. It is the diversity of the changes, too, that creates difficulties for workers and therefore also workers' organisations.

Action is required in relation to working hours, working conditions, social security systems, health protection in the workplace and work-life balance, to name but a few topics. But alongside these individual areas of social dialogue, fundamental aspects are changing, too. The type, scope and applicability of collective agreements are evolving as a result of a greater diversity of employment relationships. The working lives of employees who are now entering the workforce for the first time are likely to play out differently to in the past.

The spheres of activity, structures and membership of workers' organisations will not remain unchanged either. Workers' organisations must adapt and reorient themselves, and develop strategies that will enable them to represent the interests of workers effectively in the working world of the future, and advance them accordingly in businesses, politics and society.

This publication offers examples of the ways in which these processes are taking place, the issues confronting workers' organisations in Europe, and the ways in which they are addressing them.

Clearly, the dynamic nature of the developments makes it impossible to present definitive solutions or cure-alls for these questions. The publication nevertheless aims to illustrate the greatly differing ways in which digitalisation is affecting different European countries, and the possible courses of action that are emerging in response.

I hope you enjoy reading.

Sigrid Schraml

EZA Secretary-General

1 The impact of new technologies on the labour market

“We are not just pawns controlled by globalization, technological changes, or any other force totally outside our control. If we take the right actions and work together, we can shape the future of work in ways that work for all.”

Thomas Kochan
Shaping the Future of Work (2015)

New technologies change our everyday lives, both private and working. The current technological revolution is not a new thing. In the past we have already had three industrial revolutions:

The First Industrial Revolution (1760 - 1840) made the transformation from crafts to industry.

The Second Industrial Revolution (1860 - World War I) gave us radio, telephone, telegraph, cars and mass production.

The Third Industrial Revolution (World War II - present) brought computers and automatisisation.

But if, in the past, innovations were mostly labour-friendly, we now find ourselves in a totally different situation.

We are no longer secure about our future.

We are currently using technologies that were seen as science fiction only ten or twenty years ago, and these new technologies will take over jobs from humans:

- Self-driving, autonomous vehicles will lower the demand for drivers.
- 3D printing is an additive manufacturing tool already used to produce goods. 3D printing is even used in building houses. This also means the loss of jobs in industry and the construction sector.
- Big Data. Algorithms are replacing or supporting human decision-making in planning processes, working with documents, credit rating and other areas.
- Industrial robots. Robots are replacing humans almost in all sectors.
- Blockchain technologies are a great challenge to traditional banking services.
- In general, Industry 4.0 brings better control over manufacturing processes, better quality, faster processing time and a lower demand for employees.

According to forecasts, robots or computer programs will operate in all the following sectors within twenty years:

- Commercial driving and deliveries
- Food service industry
- Healthcare
- Companionship
- Manufacturing and construction
- Security guards and military
- Service clerks
- Telemarketers and technical support
- Real estate agents
- Journalists
- Pharmacists
- Teachers

2 The platform economy as a new business model

The digitalisation of the economy is not a new thing, but the combination of Big Data, new technologies and robotisation has led to new phenomena: the platform economy and a new world of work.

The platform economy is based on connectivity, data and mobile devices that allow people to network via digital platforms (e.g. Facebook), to access new services (e.g. Uber), including commercial services (e.g. Amazon, eBay and Alibaba), and to develop new business models based on online outsourcing.

As a result, new players have appeared in the labour market: the crowd of workers available 24/7 (almost) all over the globe and prepared to work at often very low rates.

Digital technology has made it possible to isolate each worker: a virtual “crowd” now exists (in both private companies and public services).

Some platforms focus on low-skilled, short-cycle and repetitive tasks (such as data-base cleaning), while others focus on highly skilled, specialised tasks (such as creative tasks, for example the development of a new logo).

There is no formal contract between the client and the worker (who is considered self-employed), but their relationship is based on a bilateral agreement.

The typical platform worker:

- is relatively young and well educated
- earns below the minimum wage
- may work long hours on several platforms
- is often not covered by any form of social protection or insurance.

Typical examples of new forms of work are:

- Job sharing, where an employer hires two or more workers to jointly fill a specific job, combining two or more part-time jobs into a full-time position.
- Interim management, in which highly skilled experts are hired temporarily for a specific project or to solve a specific problem.
- ICT-based mobile work, where at least some of the work is regularly carried out outside the main office.
- Voucher-based work, where the employment relationship is based on payment for services with a voucher purchased from an authorised organisation that covers both pay and social security contributions.
- Platform-based on-call work.
- Portfolio work, where a self-employed individual works for a large number of clients, doing small-scale jobs for each of them.
- Crowd employment, where an online platform matches employers and workers, often with larger tasks being split up and divided among a “virtual crowd” of workers.
- Collaborative employment, where freelancers, the self-employed or micro-enterprises cooperate in some way to overcome limitations of size and professional isolation.

3 Problems related to changes in labour relations

Digitalisation brings with it the deregulation of labour law:

- Unclear definitions of platform workers. It is not clear who is the worker or who is the employer. Some platforms such as Uber do not want to recognise themselves as an employer.
- Platform workers usually earn below the minimum wage.
- Longer working hours.
- Negative impact on health (intensification of work, working hours, psychosocial risks, burnout, bad work-life balance).
- No guarantee of pension, working conditions, holidays or social security.
- It is not clear how new forms of work should be organised within a stable framework of labour law.
- It is not clear where workers should pay taxes.

4 Challenges for trade unions

Since the nineteenth century, trade unions have achieved a great deal. High labour standards in Europe are the result of hard work by trade unions:

- Working hours
- Working conditions
- Work-life balance
- Social guarantees
- Sectoral agreements
- Health and safety at work
- Parental leave
- Permanent working contracts
- Informing and consulting of workers

But now trade unions are faced with challenges related to changes in labour relations. Developments in ICT, artificial intelligence and robotics are creating new conditions for employment and for the trade unions movement.

Unfortunately, trade unions are only just beginning to deal with all the new issues related to new labour relations.

Trade union density is dramatically decreasing across Europe. For the most part, trade unions are still not ready to organise employees from new sectors, especially self-employed workers, and the biggest trade union concentration is still in traditional, mostly public sectors.

Trade unions must start to use new technologies to their own benefit and offer new services to members and potential members.

5 Overview of seminars held

During 2018 and 2019, six seminars were organised by EZA under the title “New working relationships: digitalisation and trade union strategies”.

The project seminars coordinated were:

5.1 KGZE 2018: Capacity building in the digital age: trade unions – democracy – social dialogue, ÖZA (Österreichisches Zentrum für Arbeitnehmerbildung), Thessaloniki / Greece

The following conclusions were drawn at the conference:

- Work 4.0 is not only a further development in technological progress, but opens up a new era. While in the past the main goal of technological progress was to facilitate work, the change from analogue to digital is altering our entire way of life. Working relationships, families, leisure time and social behaviour are changing. „The Internet has come to stay.“ (Eliza Vozemberg MEP)
- Our social security systems in Europe have been linked to the employment contract for around 150 years. This means that in both individual and collective agreements, employers and employees agree to pay state taxes and social security contributions in addition to the wages for the work performed. In many European countries, the risks of illness, old age (pensions), unemployment and accidents are borne jointly in an often self-governed system of social security. If the predictions of the loss of many jobs to robots

and computers are correct, this social system would be massively endangered.

- In the digital age, many kinds of work are possible at any time and in any place: all that is needed is access to the Internet. However, this raises many new questions:
 - Who is the employer or employee?
 - Is there a legal employment relationship for every internet order? In which national states will taxes and social security contributions be paid in the future if the work is distributed worldwide?
 - How can new forms of work (crowd-working, freelancers etc.) be organised within a stable framework of labour law?
- The enormous amount of data available means that the protection of privacy must be viewed in a completely new light. Data protection must be massively improved – not only in the relationship between employers and employees, but also between states and individual citizens –, along with consumer protection and protection against the one-sided use of data for economic interests. Everybody has the right to decide for themselves on the use of their personal data. The protection of this right should be placed under state supervision and form part of the rule of law.
- Trade unions themselves must make greater use of new technologies (Internet, digitalisation etc.) and develop completely new methods of organisation. On the one hand, they can fight against deliberate false information (“fake news”) by providing high-quality information (e.g. all current collective agreements). On the other hand, online channels can also be better used for campaigns and protests. In addition, the Internet offers member organisations

completely new opportunities for participation (e.g. changes in forms of organisation, surveys and votes). Special attention must also be paid to the fact that digitalisation is progressing at completely different speeds in the various different sectors.

- In 2018 it became public knowledge that votes and elections in recent years had probably been massively influenced by social media channels. This represents a completely new threat to the democratic order in the EU. To counter this threat, states must invest both in the further expansion of infrastructure (fibre-optic cables, 5G network) and in completely new forms of education. According to forecasts, more than 50% of children starting school today will work in occupations that do not even exist today when they finish school. It also remains an important task for all democracies to ensure that all citizens have free access to the Internet.
- Although the “social dialogue” that has grown throughout Europe over the last 100 years is often questioned in the age of digitalisation, the participants reaffirmed the importance of this instrument. They are encouraged by the European Pillar of Social Rights (social pillar) proclaimed in November 2017. This calls for equal opportunities and access to the labour market, fair working conditions, social protection and social inclusion. Strengthening sustainable structures for social dialogue will continue to be indispensable in the future.

5.2 Digitalisation and social protection of employees in new forms of work, CNS “Cartel Alfa” / F.N.CORESİ (Confederația Națională Sindicală “Cartel Alfa” / Fundația Națională CORESİ), Bucharest / Romania

One of the most important aspects of the seminar was the fact that representatives from a large number of institutions and organisations gathered at the same table and had the chance to exchange opinions and experiences, thus enriching the picture of the profound changes that are affecting modern society and the economy, and are also reshaping labour relations.

Moreover, the event took place at a moment when Romanians were evaluating the effects of the radical change made at the end of the previous year by the Romanian government to the way in which social contributions are paid – the national protection system now being sustained almost entirely by the workers. Thus, the event allowed the participants to reflect on the possible future configuration of social protection in the new economy and the new types of work relationships that the digital era brings.

During the sessions of the seminar, the following main themes were discussed:

- Atypical forms of employment at European level
- Digitalisation, risks and opportunities
- Social protection in new forms of work
- Qualitative and quantitative effects of digitalisation
- Challenges for social partners and successful approaches in working representation

- Trade union strategies for the minimisation of the negative effects of digitalisation

One of the most appreciated presentations was made by Prof. Dr. Raluca Dimitriu from the Bucharest University of Economic Studies on “Atypical forms of employment”. It pointed out the ways in which the work relationship is being reshaped by atypical and very atypical forms of employment. In the digital era, work will no longer be articulated in standard employment contracts offering protection, but is increasingly being pushed out from the protective regulation of labour law.

Other speakers presented positive examples where trade union involvement is crucial in managing the effects of digitalisation and mechanisation in the workplace: by training, tackling health and safety issues and ensuring that the workers are not subject to constant monitoring. Also, as for example in Lithuania, trade unions have successfully organised some categories of independent workers.

The participants identified several areas for future action:

1. The priority is to protect the quality and financial sustainability of social welfare systems across the EU, which must be adapted to accommodate the new forms of work – for example via a statutory minimum wage for non-employees (in the legislative sense) and social insurance fees paid by everybody regardless of the kind of work he/she performs.
2. There is a need for further analysis of the impact of these developments on skills, and an assessment of the provisions for lifelong training, re-skilling and up-skilling available to workers in these new working relationships.

3. Statistics on these developments need to be gathered more routinely through national and European labour surveys and labour market reports identifying best practice where it exists.
4. Clarification of the legal status of new labour market intermediaries such as online platforms is urgently required to enable them to be identified and regulated.
5. It is necessary to elaborate a strategy for unionising workers in new forms of employment.
6. Labour inspectorates should be ensured a role that includes these employment forms in their remit, in accordance with national practices and with adequate resources.
7. We cannot prevent digitalisation; we must jointly find solutions to diminish the negative effects on workers.
8. To survive the threats caused by the 4.0 Revolution it is important to build a supranational coalition of trade unions to create common standards for workers within the EU.
9. It is essential to restore or ensure genuine social dialogue and collective bargaining at all levels and trade union rights for all non-standard workers, in order to allow them to enjoy the same benefits as standard workers.

5.3 New forms of employment and working methods: the impact of new technologies on employment, CFTC (Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens), Vienna / Austria

The following topics were discussed:

- The impact of new technologies: current status and future perspectives in Austria, Cyprus, Poland and Serbia
- The impact of new technologies and new professions on the family
- The social model of digital platforms
- Modes of governance and regulation of platforms
- The social protection of platform workers in France
- Platform workers: the initiatives and vision of ÖZA
- New working relations: digitalisation and trade unions strategies
- The impact of new technologies on a decent future

Goals agreed:

- Consideration of the economic subordination of the employee, rather than what is in practice a fictitious status as a self-employed person. Ensuring them the social protection to which they are entitled. Creation of a legal framework that goes beyond the national framework by identifying the person exercising economic control over the employee.
- Ensuring an adequate foundation for financing social protection and contributing to the financing of public expenditure on new activities.

- Monitoring algorithms and demanding their public transparency in order to know and assess the values and objectives of their authors.
- Consideration of the consent of individuals to the possession of personal data. Resisting the constant monitoring of workers and guaranteeing their right to disconnect.
- Giving absolute priority to lifelong education and training. Identification of resources targeted primarily at the unemployed and unskilled. Tackling the threat of social polarisation.
- Working towards the defining of European minimum requirements in this field.

5.4 The human dimension of the digital age: trade union commitment for effective responses to shape the future of work, prioritising social integrity and employment protection, PODKREPA (Confederation of Labour PODKREPA), Sofia / Bulgaria

The main goal of the project was to discuss the need to reshape trade unions' policies and implement innovative approaches in order to address changes that are currently taking place in the world of work (i.e. the expansion of new technologies). The second objective was to address impending socio-economic divides, helping workers in jobs that will likely disappear or be transformed. Other issues that were also targeted were: the future of employment relationships, including career opportunities and sustainability; social security; health and

safety; social inclusion; in-work training; and algorithmic transparency.

During his introductory contribution, Veselin Mitov, EZA Vice President & PODKREPA International Secretary, gave an overview of these objectives and of PODKREPA's involvement in one of the four key priority areas of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU: the digital economy and skills for the future, with a focus on young people. Leaders and experts from PODKREPA made use of the high-level forums organised in the context of the Presidency to stress the urgent need for the modernisation of educational and social security systems to fit the new employment practices, promoting the trade union values of solidarity, decent life, social inclusion and non-discrimination. Later on, speakers outlined the following principal messages: few workers in Europe will remain untouched by digitalisation; the world of work will be different; freelance and short-term contracts will become common practice; it is time to act and trade unions must take the right actions and work together to shape these trends in ways that will work for everybody. As the Fourth Industrial Revolution is characterised by rapid development, trade unions need to reshape their policies and structures simply to keep pace with it. Reforms in education and social security need to be initiated, including legislative initiatives first of all, and then the promotion and support of in-work training and the social protection of new forms of employment. Every speaker underlined that current regulatory frameworks should be complemented by strong and balanced safety standards, with adequate social and labour market policies to deal with these new threats.

The contribution by Sylvain Lefebvre, Deputy General Secretary of IndustriALL Europe, presented the position of the large European professional trade union organisation, analysing the effects of digital

change on working people. Its general message is that the Fourth Industrial Revolution has an unpredictable impact on workers and labour conditions, and may provoke an unacceptable level of variability and uncertainty. It is clear that digitalisation could potentially replace secure, well-paid jobs with temporary, low-paid employment. There is also a danger that employers will use the threat of automation to force down wages and worsen working conditions. Trade unions in Europe are opposing these trends and – with solidarity, fairness and dignity in mind – are demanding an adequate EU legislative environment and a reformed employment strategy to ensure that all forms of work provide decent income, working conditions and social protection, as well as access to adequate benefits. In addition, social dialogue and collective bargaining must increase their importance and influence, as should all other instruments of workers' participation, especially at branch and company levels.

During the second panel, EZA's various seminars were presented under the heading "New working relations: digitalisation and trade unions strategy" and presentations were given on the impact of new forms of work on national labour forces. National contributions identified various aspects of the effects of digitalisation, underlining the need to give them most serious consideration and action. The digitalisation of work is already an undeniable reality, but there are many concerns about the relationship between new forms of work and social and labour inequalities. Various problems were highlighted: legal provisions need to be enacted if we want to prevent the collapse of social security systems and guarantee equality of protection. From the national contributions it became clear that, firstly, digitalisation brings both job losses and opportunities, and, secondly, the major problem for workers' organisations is the impact on the labour market: job insecurity and unpredictability. It is difficult to predict what jobs, tasks and skills will potentially be affected, whether positively or

negatively. Concerns here are that these are changes not only to jobs, but also to living models. Thus, the future architecture of the labour market will probably be more fragmented, but also more interconnected. To try and make sense of this future landscape, trade unions should consider these many effects of new technologies.

Five key issues were mapped out during the round table on how to reshape political priorities and trade unions' actions to respond to the new forms of employment:

- The concerns are clear, and are related to jobs, which will change or even disappear, to be replaced by a robot system.
- The working environment is changing, giving rise to an increased risk of stress and isolation, particularly in cases of workplace monitoring and surveillance, or in discriminatory practices such as scoring or profiling.
- Workers with permanent labour contracts and organised workers are relatively well protected, unlike those who work via online platforms, so-called "gig workers" or atypical workers. These workers face specific risks such as job insecurity, discrimination, social isolation, overwork, unstructured work, uncertainty regarding legal responsibilities. Representation for them must be provided so that their voice can be heard.
- Digitalisation is a game changer and is revolutionising the way we work and live. It will trigger the creation of new organisational models and lead to new and vastly different work protection models.

- Given the multi-purpose nature of digitalisation, almost every area of human life will be affected, which is why developing a solid ethical framework is an absolute necessity. This framework must deal seriously with fundamental citizens' and workers' rights such as privacy, dignity and non-discrimination: standards which need to be upheld in this fast-changing world of work.

The expert from PODKREPA also presented an example of good practice: a project implemented under Erasmus+ consisting of online consultation, mediation and arbitration for digital workers. The platform will be maintained by PODKREPA and its services will be very easily accessible and free of charge to users.

The final conclusion from the first conference day was that trade unions should react fast, multiplying efforts to ensure that social dialogue and collective agreements are adapted to digital change and include clauses related to health and safety, social security and in-work training for employees in the new forms of work.

On the second day, attention was focused on the digital agenda of trade unions. It was underlined that social partners have a key role to play in twenty-first century work, at company, sectoral, national and European level (through European Social Dialogue Committees). The information and consultation procedure was highlighted as a first tool for this. It was stressed that trade unions should make better use of this existing mechanism for adequate participation by workers in the redesigning of their workplace architecture. Information and consultation must become more intensive, established and consistent practice, and this is particularly important for the new, atypical workers. In addition, ensuring rights to representation, information and consultation in new forms of work will require creativity and possibly even the invention of a new approach tailored to the specific working

environment. Secondly, trade unions are the structures closest to the workplace, so they may help to identify and propose skills that workers will need in the future. Thirdly, acquiring technical skills, though necessary, will be not enough. In this respect, trade unions could be engaged to prepare or train workers for job diversification and life-long learning.

It became clear from the individual contributions that it is necessary to propose a strategy aimed at improving the capacity of trade unions to shape digitalisation and protect and promote workers' rights in the context of the digital transformation. Collective bargaining and social dialogue as tools to address the vulnerability of workers in new forms of employment – which includes uncertainties regarding the impact on jobs, the risk of job losses, and the risk of undemocratic decision-making processes and diminishing rights at work – are of paramount importance and need to be protected. Trade unions can no longer rely on the achievements of previous decades, but must also adopt an “offensive” agenda to seize the challenge of digitalisation and promote the role and dignity of work in the twenty-first century.

To do this, trade unions must react fast and propose new solutions for bringing collective bargaining into a new, digitalised world of work. In this way, trade unions will be able to cope with changing business models and new risks. Here, the need to strengthen collective rights at all levels is clear and overdue. It is for this reason that we have to demand clear definitions of the new forms of work and of their legal status, as well as greater security and transparency with regard to digital transformation processes in the workplace and at company level. In this new world, training or reskilling workers will not be enough. Workers will need to stay together and defend their rights together in this profoundly different working environment. These are strong arguments: we need to explain trade unions' values and soli-

clarity better in order to convince digital workers to choose trade unions, the only independent authority defending employees' interests.

5.5 The digital world of work and the resultant demands on “digital” trade unions and workers' organisations, NBH (Nell-Breuning-Haus), Medulin / Croatia

In September 2017, the EU summit focused mainly on the infrastructure of a so-called “Digital Europe”, and a charter entitled “Social Dialogue in Europe” was presented. Both writings are of great importance for digitalising societies and the world of work. Intelligent technology will dominate and define production and service, and perhaps even humans. If the unions and other workers' organisations want to continue to represent the interests of working people well, they must change their own organisational structures, look for new ways of communicating, and modernise their image without denying their values.

The most important aspects, topics and insights here are that digitalisation is already well advanced in many sectors, some examples being the automotive and pharmaceutical industries, medicine and the green economy. Digital remote diagnostics and therapeutic measures are already in use in the medical professions. Care robots increasingly care for people in clinics and nursing homes. Fully automatic car production is almost a reality.

At the same time, atypical forms of work are increasingly establishing themselves: teleworking and project-based work, as well as by-the-hour services with constant availability. Work-life balance is under

threat. Digital surveillance is increasing. There is a gradual deregulation of the labour market. Collective bargaining rights, health and safety and employment law are not applicable to these atypical employment relationships.

To keep pace with development, unions need to be more flexible and ready to transform into “Unions 4.0”. At the same time, thinking in terms of the working worlds, structures and social conditions of the nineteenth century often prevents rapid adaptation to the new economic and non-work-related living conditions of the twenty-first century.

In his introductory speech, Andreas Gjeca, Secretary General of the Christian Union of Trade Unions (FCG in the Austrian Trade Union Confederation ÖGB) presented twelve theses on digitalisation and its effects on work in trade unions and workers’ organisations:

1. The world of work is currently undergoing radical change.
2. Digitalisation is generating a similarly dramatic change to the First Industrial Revolution.
3. Data is the raw material of the twenty-first century.
4. The Digital Revolution is already taking place.
5. Digitalisation creates a new “view of the world”. As a result, it will be even more crucial to investigate value chains.
6. The Internet must not become a dimension of our life and work in which neither law nor legislation applies.

7. Young people should not become the “forgotten losers” of digitalisation.
8. Workers’ organisations must let go of the working society’s creed of thought and be open to new ways of thinking.
9. Work must be distributed more equitably.
10. Humans are not 24/7 entities. Therefore, the concept of “good work” is becoming increasingly important.
11. Digitalisation allows for comprehensive control. It therefore also needs comprehensive safeguards.
12. Bridging the future requires a sustainable foundation in the present.

It is therefore absolutely necessary that the unions renew themselves and also prepare their employees for this new world through education, training and further education. It is very likely that there will be entirely new departments within the unions that specialise in the new forms of work. There must be union-owned digital tools and workflows, perhaps so-called “union algorithms”.

Dr. Erik Meyer talked in his speech about the “Digital World – Possible Approaches to Modern Trade Union Work”. Unfortunately, in an age of global market liberalism, industry and politics are not separate sectors, but are ever more closely connected. Unions are very often fixated on industry alone. But the service sector is an increasingly growing one in which many solo self-employed people are working exclusively for projects and usually precarious project-related payment.

As an example, much attention has been given to the so-called platform economy. Google, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and Amazon are some great examples of these new businesses. But there are also other platforms that are built primarily according to the crowd model to handle employment: for example, Addjobber, MyLittleJob and Jovoto. Microjobs and microtasking can be offered and accepted here for design work, graphic projects, language problems and IT programming. Low pay, time pressure and lack of social security are the hallmarks of these platforms. Of course, all work produced is processed digitally.

The most important aspects, topics and findings here are:

- In the future, digitalisation will be of central importance in any type of communication.
- Trade unions need to establish contact with the world of work through comprehensive online platforms in order to use new formats to organise the interests of, above all, precarious workers and the solo self-employed.
- If they share the same values as the unions, digital consumer platforms could report on working conditions at Amazon. They could also organise buyer strikes if, for example, collective agreements are not respected.
- In the future, there will be a so-called algorithmic public sphere as the arena for digital labour disputes.

Easy-to-use online platforms are needed that serve as the key to lowering bureaucratic hurdles in the self-organisation of solo self-employed and crowd workers.

This also means that unions need to build new organisational forms.

Three working groups are needed to develop strategies and recommendations for action and evaluations for works councils, trade unions, interest groups and politics.

European legal regulations for digitalisation must be developed. Trade union demands must be enforced in order to better represent the interests of employees in the platform economy of the future with its solo self-employed and home workers. In collaboration with companies, new vocational qualifications could then be agreed. Trade unions need to redefine their understanding of roles in Industry 4.0.

It is necessary to recruit trade union digitalisation professionals, train staff, interest young people in union work, develop and use digital tools such as union apps or union algorithms, provide digital services and remain mindful of traditional trade union responsibilities.

5.6 Workers' organisations 4.0: workers searching for greater human dignity in the new era, ZD NSi (Združenje delavcev Nove Slovenije), Čatež ob Savi / Slovenia

The purpose of the seminar was to consider how workers' organisations can address the needs of workers in the world of Industry 4.0.

The seminar was divided into five thematic sections:

- Work and human dignity
- Quality at work: generational aspects
- The expectations of young people towards employers and workers' organisations

- The conditions of workers' organisations in the World 4.0
- Social dialogue and workers' organisations in the World 4.0

The following questions were raised during the seminar:

In what ways can workers' organisations better represent workers and contribute to strengthening social dialogue?

What changes has the Fourth Industrial Revolution brought and how do these changes affect the work of workers' organisations?

What profile do workers have in the environment of Industry 4.0?

During the seminar, differences between generations on the labour market were discussed.

It was very interesting to listen to the expectations of young people. Young participants in the seminar mentioned difficulties in accessing the labour market. Nobody teaches them how to find a job, what to write on a CV, or how to prepare for interviews with potential employers.

Nobody informs them about what trade unions do, or what kind of services they can offer.

It may be too late for young people to get this information when they are already in the labour market. It should be provided at earlier stages: at school, university or college.

It was interesting to hear that young people do not think about retirement and do not expect to have a pension.

In comparison with the older, baby-boomer generation, young people change jobs more easily and do not stick to the company where they work.

The older generation has many positive stereotypes, such as:

- Experience, knowledge, working habits, accuracy
- Leadership skills, skills in traditional communication
- Affiliation to the company
- Commitment to quality
- Peaceful handling of crisis situations
- A rich informal network

But, on the other hand, they also have some negative stereotypes, such as:

- Reduced ability
- Lower motivation
- Questionable digital skills (these differ greatly from individual to individual)
- Physical restrictions
- Lower productivity
- Inflexibility, resistance to new technologies and innovations

In Slovenia, at the end of September 2017, 80,990 unemployed people were registered, which is 14.9% less than in September 2016.

Almost 55% of these are people who have been unemployed for more than a year, a large number of older people over 50 (40.4%) and people with restrictions on employment (health problems, disabilities, older age, lack of motivation).

Participants in the seminar proposed some measures for better integration into the labour market:

- The establishment of a healthy working environment for all generations
- The strengthening of education and lifelong learning
- A longer working life for older people
- Transitions by older people into and out of unemployment
- Measures for the integration of older people into the labour market
- Awareness and information for all stakeholders in the labour market
- An institutional framework for the functioning of the labour market

During the seminar, the following issues related to digitalisation were discussed:

According to official statistics, 37% of the workforce in the EU lack sufficient e-skills.

It is important to increase awareness among all labour market stakeholders of the importance of investing in lifelong learning and training (including demographic trends).

Peter Pogačiar, General Director of the Directorate for the Labour Market at the Ministry of Social Affairs, described the risks and opportunities that come with digitalisation:

Risks:

- Increasing income inequality
- The problem of the hours during which “employees” are expected to be available
- Low-quality jobs in routine work, e.g. logistics centres for e-commerce
- Reduced access to social security systems
- Reduced legal protection for “employees”
- Reduced employment rate (Is the concept of “full employment” still an ambition?)
- Disparity between supply and demand in the labour market

Opportunities:

- Increasing efficiency
- The flexible organisation of work: a high level of work autonomy can improve the quality of the workplace and facilitate the reconciliation of family and work life

Digitalisation will bring new challenges:

- Contributions to pension insurance. The method of pension calculation is different from that of traditional employment contracts. It depends entirely on the amount of contributions paid.
- Contributions to health insurance. Do workers have a right to sick leave (as is the case with a contract of employment)?
- Contributions to parental protection and unemployment insurance. How should rights be determined within the existing social insurance system?

6 Social dialogue and workers' organisations in the World 4.0

The European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) recently published a study which states that more than half of jobs will disappear:

- In Romania, 61.93% of jobs are under threat
- In Portugal, 58.94%
- In Bulgaria, 56.56%
- In Greece, 56.47%

Trade unions and employers have a common interest in ensuring that workers are prepared for changes and re-trained in line with new work tasks.

New demands on employees:

- Greater IT knowledge
- Flexibility with regard to changing hours, jobs, locations
- Openness to lifelong learning
- Cognitive abilities: management, analysis, interpretation and assessment
- Tolerance, autonomy, self-control and self-discipline at work
- Knowledge of foreign languages
- Mobility

What is the role of the trade unions?

- Be prepared for constant change and lifelong learning
- Inform the leadership and members of the trade unions about what digitalisation brings and train them in new skills

- Adopt a digital strategy and action plan
- Modernise communication and information methods
- Engage special digitalisation consultants
- Improve the image of unions and promote them on social networks
- Include as many young people as possible
- Use digital tools for campaigns and offer new digital membership services
- Improve negotiating competencies
- Continuously monitor and update the digital action plan
- Continue to provide traditional services and foster traditional methods of communication and relationships with membership based on mutual respect, trust and solidarity!

What should the key areas for trade unions be?

- Minimum standards, discussed and defined at a European and national level

Digitalisation is connected with the individualisation of labour relations. Many people are without social rights. All workers in all sectors and all kinds of employment should have fundamental social rights and access to lifelong learning. Trade unions should demand equal social rights for all types of employees.

More action is needed at European and national levels. Trade unions should put pressure on the EU and national governments to put regulatory frameworks in place.

- New forms of employment

The new, digital jobs must now also be defined and described inter-

nationally (ILO). The definitions should apply in every EU member state.

- Trade unions and new forms of employment

All types of self-employed workers from all areas of the platform economy should be represented by trade unions. The right to join a trade union should be equal for all types of employees.

- Equality

Measures should be taken to ensure that the digitalisation of the economy will not increase polarisation and growing inequality between highly skilled and low-skilled workers, or between men and women or the young and the old.

- Lifelong learning

The right to re-training for workers needs to be expanded. It is important to include this in collective bargaining.

- Health and safety issues

The growth of new work models and new technologies has brought new challenges to occupational health and safety: the intensification of work, working hours, psychosocial risks, burnout, self-exploitation, and social isolation for people working from home.

- Data protection

It is very important that trade unions find ways to implement workers' data protection provision. Workers' data rights and data protection

will be one of the new issues for trade unions in the digital world of work.

- Digital management

Trade unions should consider how to ensure that workers do not become subject to permanent monitoring.

- New kinds of services

Trade unions should offer new services. Online platforms should be used to publicise complaints or bad behaviour in the workplace. Union members should also be viewed individually as customers in order to be able to provide individual solutions to problems.

- A new image for trade unions

Trade unions must present a modern image, open up to the so-called “Instagram generation” and digitalise themselves.

Trade unions need better publicity. In-house academies should be established in which employees are prepared by experienced workers for Industry 4.0. Internal and external training and education should be encouraged. The Gothenburg EU script “Social Dialogue in Europe” should become a Europe-wide regulation.

7 Conclusions

The Fourth Industrial Revolution has created both great opportunities and risks. It will further increase differences between workers, and the only legal means of defining social standards is the collective protection and international cooperation provided by trade unions.

In the twenty-first century, trade unions must become more dynamic and implement new methods and tools, but nevertheless remain on their traditional, very strong ground: solidarity and support between working people, no matter what form their employment takes.

The combined challenges of globalisation, digital transformation, mass migration and the ageing population cannot be handled in isolation. As genuine defenders of human rights, trade unions are looking at all of them together in order to fully understand their multiple and complex consequences for the world of work.

8 Sources and further literature

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