

High-Level International Conference

Towards a Digitalized World of Work: What Future Works for All?

In the context of the International Labour Organization's Centenary

CONCEPT NOTE

25-26 April 2019

Hotel Crowne Plaza Vilnius

M. K. Čiurlionio 84, Vilnius, Lithuania



Ministry of Social Security
and Labour of the Republic
of Lithuania

CONTENT

The Future of Work is a theme of central importance for individuals and societies, as labour market across all regions are undergoing one of the most profound and transformative changes of our times. Automation, digital platforms, and other innovations are changing the fundamental nature of work. Understanding these shifts can help policy makers, business leaders, and workers move forward. Challenges in labour markets are growing with new forms of employment changing traditional labour relations. These fast-paced changes are introducing new working methods, creating novel business models and occupations but they are also challenging existing modes in the way that work and production are organized and are putting pressure on labour markets and social security systems. At the same time, there is growing polarization of labour-market opportunities between high- and low-skill jobs, unemployment and underemployment especially among young people, stagnating incomes for a large proportion of households, and income inequality. Migration and its effects on jobs has become a sensitive political issue in many advanced economies. Yet remarkable opportunities also summon us. Advances in technology are not only expanding choices about where and when to work but have the potentials of creating new and better jobs. But these technologies also raise difficult questions about the broader impact of automation on jobs, skills, wages, and the nature of work itself. In such an evolving context, we need to ensure that all workers will be able to enjoy equal rights and protection and that at the same time businesses are able to capture the productivity benefits of technology while efforts by all actors are jointly directed to promoting decent work in the digital age. In order to address all these challenges there is an imperative and urgent need to design comprehensive strategies addressing the impact of the new forces that are transforming the world of work on employment, social, and education systems.

In 2019, the International Labour Organization celebrates its 100th anniversary. The centenary provided an opportunity to launch seven initiatives to equip the Organization to take up successfully the challenges of its mandate in the future with the most important one – the Future of Work Initiative, as the world of work is undergoing major changes, such as technological change, globalisation, ageing population, migration flows and climate change that will continue, and potentially intensify, in the future. An independent Global Commission on the Future of Work, convened by the ILO Director-General in January this year has launched an independent report that portrays the urgency of the changes that the world of work is facing and provides ideas on how to manage and leverage these transformations.

To mark the ILO Centenary and in the context of the Future of Work Initiative the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania organizes **the High-Level International Conference “Towards a Digitalized World of Work: What Future Works for All?” on 25-26 April 2019 in Vilnius.**

FOCUS

The Conference will focus in particular on the impact of technological changes and digitalization on labour relations. It will explore how automation, digital platforms and other innovations are changing world of work and how it will impact employment relations, skills, and social protection.

High-level participants will debate how technological advances will create new jobs and how to address skills mismatch and the needs of those who lose their jobs in this transition. Changes in demographics will also be a central element of the discussions. Dealing with expanding youth populations in some countries and ageing populations in others will become a constant challenge for policy makers aiming at inclusive societies.

Future challenges and opportunities for the most vulnerable groups will also be one of the main focuses in the discussions. These also will include policy perspectives on how to design inclusive agendas for gender equality for the future of work and how the institutions, policies and strategies will support people through future of works transitions.

The aim of the Conference is to have high-level debates and an exchange of views on future of work related issues from different stakeholders, taking into consideration various actions that international organizations have already taken or are planning to take in the future, main challenges that different countries in Europe are facing and finding the best possible ways forward, within the spirit of tripartite deliberations.

The Conference will be organized around two interactive high-level plenary sessions, related to the future of work on how the use of new technologies will affect the future of work and what future we can create for the most vulnerable ones.

Plenary sessions will be moderated by journalists and will be framed around introductions made by high-level representatives and leading experts from international bodies. Parallel sessions will then discuss in more detail focusing on the impact of technology on the quality and quantity of jobs; policy options for ensuring social protection measures for the future of work; addressing the situation and specific needs of vulnerable populations; and tackling inequalities linked to demographic changes particularly in the context of ageing societies.

The ILO will contribute to the Conference by preparing issue briefs on each of the discussion topics.

PARTICIPANTS

International organisations:

International Labour Organization (ILO), Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), International Social Security Association (ISSA), European Commission (EC), European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofond), European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE).

Member states¹:

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Estonia, Georgia, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova, the Netherlands, Poland, and Ukraine.

Social partners:

International Organisation of Employers (IOE), International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), BusinessEurope and European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

¹ National delegations are expected to be composed by a High-level Representative plus technical expert(s).