



High-level conference



The Future of Work:

Today.
Tomorrow.
For All.

Programme

9 April 2019

Charlemagne Building, Rue de la Loi 170, Brussels

#FutureOfWorkEU

Social Europe



The Future of Work: Today. Tomorrow. For All.

08:30 *Registration and Welcome coffee – Exhibition*

09:30 **Opening session: The future of work - our joint responsibility**

Welcome remarks: **Joost Korte**, Director-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission

María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the United Nations General Assembly (video message)

Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, European Commission

Muriel Pénicaud, Minister of Labour, France, Presidency of the G7

Guy Ryder, Director-General, ILO (video message)

10:30 **First round of parallel sessions**

A. FAIR TRANSFORMATION: Bringing opportunities of digitalisation to all

Gasperi room (2nd floor)

Moderator: **Gertrud Ingestad**, Director-General for Informatics, European Commission

Kris Peeters, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Employment, Economy and Consumer Affairs, Belgium

Luca Jahier, President of the European Economic and Social Committee

Heinz Koller, Assistant Director-General, Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, ILO

Maarten Goos, Professor, Utrecht University, and Chair of the High-Level Expert Group on the Impact of the Digital Transformation on EU Labour Markets

Julie Foulon, Co-Founder, MolenGeek

Jan Noterdaeme, Senior Adviser and Co-Founder, CSR Europe

B. UPWARD CONVERGENCE: Employment, social and territorial cohesion

Mansholt room (Ground floor)

Moderator: **Marc Lemaître**, Director-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

Magdalena Valerio Cordero, Minister for Labour, Migration and Social Security, Spain

Karl-Heinz Lambertz, President of the European Committee of the Regions

Stijn Broecke, Senior Economist, OECD

Milena Angelova, Secretary-General of the Bulgarian Industrial Capital Association, and Vice-President of CEEP

Esther Lynch, Confederal Secretary, ETUC

C. GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY: The EU and the international scene

Jenkins room (Ground floor)

Moderator: **Joost Korte**, Director-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission

Muriel Pénicaud, Minister of Labour, France, Presidency of the G7

Deborah Greenfield, Deputy Director-General, ILO

Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation

Renate Hornung-Draus, Regional Vice-President (Europe & Central Asia) of the International Organisation for Employers, and Managing Director of the Confederation of German Employers' Associations

Enrico Giovannini, Co-Chair of the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development and Member of the Global Commission on the Future of Work

12:00 **Special address**

Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission

12:30 *Lunch*

14:00

Second round of parallel sessions

D. EMPOWER PEOPLE: Life-cycle transitions, education and skills challenges

Gasperi room (2nd floor)

Moderator: **Ann Mettler**, Head, European Political Strategy Centre, European Commission

Regina Doherty, Minister of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, Ireland

Jean Arthuis, Member of the European Parliament

Michel Servoz, Senior Adviser, Robotics, Artificial Intelligence and the Future of European Labour Law, European Commission

Luc Triangle, General Secretary, industryAll European Trade Union

Danny Van Assche, CEO of the Flemish organisation for SME, and Vice-President of SMEunited

Stephan Howeg, The Adecco Group, VET Week Ambassador

E. PROTECT AND INVEST: Modernising welfare systems, making them sustainable and inclusive

Mansholt room (Ground floor)

Moderator: **Vladimir Sucha**, Director-General of the Joint Research Centre, European Commission

Ylva Johansson, Minister for Employment, Sweden

Maria João Rodrigues, Member of the European Parliament

Paul Schoukens, Professor, KU Leuven

Anne-Sophie Parent, Secretary General, AGE Platform Europe

Ilka Wölfle, Director, European Representation of the German Social Insurance, and Vice-President, European Social Insurance Platform

F. MANAGE CHANGE: Governance and partnerships

Jenkins room (Ground floor)

Moderator: **Andriana Sukova**, Deputy Director-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission

Marko Pavić, Minister of Labour and Pension System, Croatia

Oliver Röpke, Head of the Brussels Office, Austrian Trade Union Federation and President of the EESC Workers' Group

José María Lacasa, President of the Confederation of Employers and Industries of Spain, and Chair of the Social Affairs Committee, BusinessEurope

Carina Autengruber, President, European Youth Forum

Fons Leroy, Chair, European Public Employment Services Network

15:30

Coffee break

Press point – Vice President Valdis Dombrovskis and Commissioner Marianne Thyssen

16:00

Perspectives from the social partners and civil society

Moderator: **Ann Mettler**, Head, European Political Strategy Centre, European Commission

Luca Visentini, General Secretary, ETUC

Markus Beyrer, Director General, BusinessEurope

Valeria Ronzitti, General Secretary, CEEP

Ulrike Rabmer-Koller, President, SMEunited

Catherine Naughton, Vice-President, Social Platform

17:00

Concluding address: looking ahead

Valdis Dombrovskis, Vice-President for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union, European Commission

17:15

End of the conference



The Future of Work: Today. Tomorrow. For All.

First round of parallel sessions

A. FAIR TRANSFORMATION: Bringing opportunities of digitalisation to all

Gasperi room (2nd floor)

Digitalisation and new technologies have the potential to create jobs, improve quality of life, increase the productivity of labour and lead to much-needed investments and economic prosperity. Due to digitalisation some jobs will be created, others will disappear, but almost all tasks will be transformed through digitalisation. New technologies are making remote working and flexible working time arrangements easier. However, they also make it more difficult to disconnect from work and establish a suitable work-life balance. The growing application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning will have consequences on the way we work and live, the full extent of which is difficult to predict. Additionally, in order for AI to be further embraced by citizens and businesses, it needs to be trusted.

The central question is: how can we reap the benefits and opportunities linked to these trends while mitigating possible risks? This includes potential job losses or job transformation through the digitalisation of tasks, decreasing job quality, skills polarisation, inequalities in the workforce, and privacy considerations. Managing the digital transformation in a socially responsible manner should be our common goal. Workers facing job losses or transformations due to digitalisation will need support for and guidance to new jobs. For certain groups with persistently low levels of employment, such as persons with disabilities, new assistive technologies can improve their access to the labour market.

Recent EU initiatives, inspired by the European Pillar of Social Rights, such as the new Directive on Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions, or the Recommendation on Access to Social Protection for workers and the self-employed already address different aspects of the impact of digitalisation on the way we work. Moreover, the European Accessibility Act helps people with disabilities to participate more actively in society and at the workplace.

Topics to be reflected:

- How can we manage the digital transformation in a socially responsible and inclusive manner?
- How can our policies help to foster a thriving business environment that supports job creation and maintains high productivity levels, leaving no one behind?
- How should AI be governed so that it is trusted and follows ethical rules? To what extent and how should we protect workers' privacy?

B. UPWARD CONVERGENCE – Employment, social and territorial cohesion

Mansholt room (Ground floor)

A number of megatrends, such as digitalisation, globalisation, transition to a low carbon economy, and demographic ageing are transforming the way we live and work. These developments can lead to growing inequalities between the EU's regions; a trend that goes against the goals of a more economically, socially and territorially cohesive Union, as set out in the Treaty. Wide regional disparities remain between rural and urban areas and between Eastern and Western Member States, often leading to brain drain of skilled young people. Powerful economic forces push towards geographical concentration.

EU leaders proclaimed the European Pillar of Social Rights in 2017 to support upward convergence, in order to make sure that no one is left behind. It is therefore essential to opt for policies favouring geographical inclusiveness, by focusing more on local development and employment and taking into account territorial aspects when designing policies for digital transitions across regions and sectors.

Such a place-centred approach can help to address the challenges faced by certain regions, to adopt new technologies, retain and attract talent, and stimulate new investments. The place-centred approach would, however, not cover the entire issue: there are also vulnerable populations with little access to the labour market in developed urban areas.

The challenges ahead call for a people-based approach, which would take into account people at risk of exclusion in all territories. For more than 60 years, the European Social Fund has been Europe's main instrument for investing in people. A large part of ESF spending is devoted to social inclusion of individuals or groups facing difficulties or discrimination in their everyday lives. For the first time, the next multi-annual financial Framework 2021-2027 has an explicit amount for the European Social Fund proposed: a total of 101 billion euro. To make the most out of it, expenditure will be more closely linked to objectives identified in the European Semester of policy coordination.

Topics to be reflected:

- How do we balance between supporting the growth in areas that are doing well and arrest decline in the others, while ensuring social justice, educational and employment opportunities and quality of life for all?
- How can different policies be coordinated for maximum impact to reduce regional disparities, thereby decreasing the costs of brain flow/drain?
- How can a people-based and place-based approach be combined to ensure that all, including vulnerable groups, are part of Industry 4.0?

C. GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY: The EU and the international scene

Jenkins room (Ground floor)

The future of work is already part of our present. The combined effects of globalisation and technological, environmental and demographic change are transforming the world of work at an unprecedented pace and scale. These are global phenomena that call for action at the international and multilateral level to ensure sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth worldwide. As a global economic power, the EU continues to play a constructive role in shaping a collective response to these megatrends in order to better manage their impact on the world of work.

In a context of rapid changes in employment relationships and forms of work, it is particularly important to provide all workers with labour protection and quality working conditions. In doing so, the EU can build on its longstanding commitment to promote and uphold rights for decent work for all, and these efforts are borne forth by combining internal and external policies and actions. In particular, the EU can rely on a body of up-to-date labour standards, as well as its development, trade, neighbourhood, enlargement and human rights policies. Moreover, the EU is active in a number of international organisations (e.g. UN, ILO, OECD) and fora (in particular G7 and G20). The EU is therefore a powerful stakeholder.

The future of work is at the centre of many international and multilateral discussions, including among the G7 and G20. It is also the focus of the ILO Centenary Initiative. Based on its diversity of practices, social acquis, and tradition of social dialogue, the EU can provide an important contribution to the ILO Centenary and other international initiatives on the future of work, as well as taking into account the broader framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Topics to be reflected:

- How can the EU best harness globalisation and govern global supply chains in a way that contributes to the promotion of decent work?
- How can the EU use its instruments and policies (e.g. trade arrangements, development cooperation and partnership instrument, legislation) more effectively?
- How can the EU work with other organisations and partners, including the ILO, to promote decent work, to ensure progress in the implementation of international commitments, including the SDGs, in a changing world of work?



The Future of Work: Today. Tomorrow. For All.

Second round of parallel sessions

D. EMPOWER PEOPLE: Life-cycle transitions, education and skills challenges

Gasperi room (2nd floor)

Skills are the currency of the 21st century, and together with education, are crucial factors in determining the future of our societies and economies. Both the European Pillar of Social Rights and the 2016 Skills Agenda for Europe recognise this. Workers, across occupations and sectors, increasingly have to adapt to changing skills requirements and more frequent transitions between tasks, jobs, occupations, forms of work.

Automation and Artificial Intelligence may herald an age when transversal skills become increasingly important and we need to identify skills that are considered distinctively human, such as creativity and empathy. Systems and tools to validate all types of skills remain vital as people's skills still often go unrecognised. Education and training systems need to prepare workers for the dynamic work environment and the individuals who are required, more than ever, to embrace lifelong learning in order to sustain their employability.

In line with the European Pillar of Social Rights, individuals should be empowered and provided with the right guidance, relevant skills, and adequate safety nets to give them the confidence to engage in transitions throughout their careers. This is especially important for the most vulnerable groups, such as low-skilled and disadvantaged. New laws and policies on paper need to be brought to life. We need to have the skilled people in place to make sure these rights and policies are delivered properly, to those who need to access them. More focus on adult learning, including vocational educational training (VET), and greater coordination between the education and training system and employment sectors will be needed. Businesses are key actors in this discussion. The question of who should bear the cost of life-long learning, including in the case of new and non-standard forms of work, is also important.

Topics to be reflected:

- The global race for skills has started, is EU prepared for it?
- How can businesses and people in all types of work, including platform work, better engage in life-long learning?
- Who should bear the cost of life-long learning and how to make sure that the most vulnerable, including the least skilled, are included?
- How can we open up education and VET systems, and strengthen links to the labour market, to match the demands of the future of work? Should we "codify" distinctly human skills? If yes, how?

E. PROTECT AND INVEST: Modernising welfare systems, making them sustainable and inclusive

Mansholt room (Ground floor)

National social protection systems as we know them today were designed in an era where employees had one – fulltime – job for life. The system's primary function was to protect these "standard" employees and their families. New forms of work, which blur the distinction between employment and self-employment, challenge this system, raising questions about access to social protection schemes for non-standard workers and the self-employed. Non-standard workers may also face other challenges such as difficult access to training, lack of access to mortgages and other forms of credit. The emergence of new forms of work might thus have negative impacts on groups that, already today, find themselves in vulnerable situations, at the margins of society and excluded from the labour market.

The social protection systems should be modernised to fit the new dynamics. This is also part of the approach of an economy of wellbeing, focusing, among other things, on preventing social exclusion and inequalities. Another element that merits discussion is investing in

health and occupational safety, as well as health to match the need for people to work longer. Social protection systems that do not offer protection in line with new realities may hamper people's willingness to retrain or engage in necessary transitions throughout their careers. In the long run this may hamper economic productivity and growth. At the same time, the long-term sustainability of the social welfare system will be at stake if fewer people contribute. Therefore models of financing have to be rethought.

The Recommendation on Access to Social Protection for workers and the self-employed aims to establish minimum standards in the field of social protection for workers and the self-employed. Member States should make sure that all working people, regardless of their employment status, are sufficiently covered by social security schemes and protected against economic uncertainty.

Topics to be reflected:

- How can adequate protection for all be ensured in labour markets with increasing transitions and diverse career paths? What are the options to prevent different coverage linked to the new forms of work and ensure equal opportunities?
- What is needed to ensure that welfare systems will be able to ensure protection and provide basic coverage (i.e., dignified life standard) to those persons that find it hard to adapt to and participate in the future labour market?
- What are the options for financing of social protection systems?

F. MANAGE CHANGE: Governance and Partnerships

Jenkins room (Ground floor)

Tackling the challenges and seizing opportunities linked to the future of work depend largely on public policies and actions by Member States. It is, however, not a task national governments can do alone. Partnerships with other countries, social partners, employment services, training providers, civil society organisations, and the private sector will be crucial in order to ensure that changes in the world of work do not exacerbate inequalities by benefiting some groups, while leaving other (already disadvantaged) groups behind.

A number of national governments are putting in place comprehensive strategies on the future of work. These coordinated policy approaches are cross-sectoral (covering areas such as education and training, social and employment policy, research and innovation, taxation) and make use of different, complementary instruments (political, legal, and financial). As such, they contribute to the further implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Given the transnational nature of the trends redefining the world of work, the EU is uniquely placed to support Member States by promoting the exchange of views and playing a coordinating role, most notably within the framework of the European Semester. The EU has already engaged in the adoption of several initiatives on how to extend or adapt existing legislation to fit the needs of the 21st century (i.e. proposals for Directives on Work-Life Balance, Predictable and Transparent Working Conditions and the European Accessibility Act). A further example is the European Labour Authority, which will support the cooperation between Member States in the cross-border enforcement of relevant Union law.

Topics to be reflected:

- How can Member States develop a comprehensive cross-sectoral policy response - in cooperation with social partners, civil society, and the private sector - to the challenges and opportunities brought about by the future of work?
- How can social partners and civil society adapt to ensure that they remain highly relevant in the changing world of work?
- What should be the role of the European Union? Which instruments should be used to support national governments and other relevant stakeholders?

