

**Committee** : International Labour Organisation (ILO)

**Subject** : Does technology help or hinder working conditions?

**Author**: The delegation of Germany (Workers)

As Germany is the most innovative country in the world according to the World Economic Forum, it goes without saying that technology plays a major role in the country's economic growth. Technology provides the basis for the future. Every year, more than 290 million inventions are filed for patent protection. This figure is significant thanks to the investments made, to the research universities that push technical progress to its paroxysm, but also to the highly competitive companies that are developing new ways of working day by day. Technological changes are the very essence of the creation of new professions. The BCG (Boston Consulting Group) report predicts the creation of 390,000 new jobs within the next decade. Although, as we know, technology is not always a source of positive externalities,

there is a continuing debate in Germany on how digitalisation, mobile ICT devices and changing work organisation blur traditional borders between working and private life. Constant availability is said to lead to higher stress levels and more mental illness.

However, around 95% of all employees were very satisfied with their jobs, as long as they could plan their work themselves. This statistic suggests that Germany is positioning itself as a country where working conditions are more than satisfactory, thus providing a more favourable environment for the invention of new technologies. The German Confederation of Employers' Associations (BDA) foreshadowed in June 2015, that digitalisation and innovation will improve the competitiveness of German industry, create new business opportunities and provide better scope for combining work and private/family life.

Although the figures given above are more than encouraging, Germany is determined to improve the working conditions of its employees by

- Promising that no workers will lose their jobs as a result of mass redundancies due to technological advances.
- If this is the case, Germany undertakes to find alternative work within six months of dismissal in the same area of the previous job.
- In addition, if your working time in your company exceeds 4 weeks, you are entitled to maintain your basic salary for a maximum of 6 weeks. We will do our best to increase this period by one week.