

Commission: International Labour Organization

Subject: Training and practicing the professions of 2030

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Position: Chairs



Introduction:

The International Labour Organization (ILO) convenes to address the multifaceted challenges and opportunities presented by the rapidly evolving landscape of work in 2030. Not only will our discussions center around the impact of automation and artificial intelligence (AI) on the workforce, but also the possible creation of a UN percentage based UBI and the imperative need to do something about the possible mental health issues that have been arising in the past decade. These topics have a crucial impact on the workers wellbeing and thus make precise actions necessary in order to provide everyone with the social security they deserve.

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Sources and bibliography

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Definitions:

Automation:

Automation refers to the process of utilizing technology, particularly computers and machines, to perform tasks and processes with minimal or no human intervention. It involves the use of software, algorithms, and machinery to automate repetitive or routine tasks traditionally performed by humans. Automation aims to increase efficiency, productivity, and accuracy while reducing costs and human error. Examples of automation include robotic assembly lines in manufacturing, automated customer service chatbots, and algorithmic trading in finance. The advancement of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning, and robotics has accelerated the pace of automation across various industries, leading to profound changes in the nature of work and employment patterns.

Universal Basic Income (UBI):

Universal Basic Income (UBI) is a social welfare policy that entails providing all citizens or residents of a country with a periodic, unconditional cash payment, regardless of their employment status or income level. The primary goal of UBI is to ensure that every individual has a basic level of financial security to meet their basic needs, such as food, shelter, and healthcare, without the need to rely solely on income from employment. UBI is often proposed as a means to address poverty, income inequality, and the potential impacts of automation on employment by providing a financial safety net for individuals in an increasingly automated economy. Proponents argue that UBI promotes economic stability, social cohesion, and individual freedom, while critics raise concerns about its affordability, potential disincentive to work, and long-term fiscal sustainability.

Wage Gap:

The wage gap, also known as the gender, pay gap or income gap, refers to the disparity in earnings between different groups of individuals, typically based on gender, race, ethnicity, or other demographic characteristics. It represents the difference in average or median wages earned by one group compared to another, often expressed as a percentage. For example, the gender wage gap measures the difference in earnings between men and women performing similar work or occupying similar positions in the workforce. The wage gap can result from various factors, including discrimination, occupational segregation, differences in educational attainment, and disparities in access to opportunities and resources. Addressing the wage gap is essential for promoting gender and racial equality, economic justice, and inclusive growth. Efforts to narrow the wage gap may include implementing anti-discrimination policies, promoting pay transparency, providing equal access to education and training, and advocating for fair labor practices and policies.

Conflicts:

The intersection of AI, automation, UBI, and mental well-being presents multifaceted conflicts that demand our urgent attention. Rapid advancement of AI and automation technologies, which, while driving economic growth and efficiency, also pose significant threats to employment stability and income inequality. The fear of widespread job displacement and the erosion of traditional employment models exacerbates socio-economic tensions and highlights the urgent need for comprehensive policy responses. The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation technologies has ignited a host of conflicts and complexities in various sectors of society. One of the primary conflicts arises from the potential displacement of human workers by machines and algorithms. As AI becomes increasingly sophisticated, there are concerns that automation could lead to job losses across a wide range of industries, particularly in sectors that rely heavily on routine tasks and manual labor. This displacement could exacerbate income inequality and

socioeconomic disparities, as displaced workers may struggle to find alternative employment opportunities or may face downward pressure on wages in the remaining jobs. Additionally, the unequal distribution of the benefits of AI and automation technologies raises ethical and social justice concerns, with marginalized communities often bearing the brunt of technological disruption while benefiting less from its advances. Furthermore, there are apprehensions regarding the ethical implications of AI-driven decision-making, such as biases embedded in algorithms and the potential erosion of privacy and autonomy. As we navigate the complexities of AI advancement and automation technologies, it is critical to address these conflicts through comprehensive policy frameworks, ethical guidelines, and inclusive stakeholder engagement to ensure that technological progress benefits society as a whole.

The implementation of Universal Basic Income (UBI) as a potential solution to mitigate the adverse effects of automation encounters ideological, logistical, and fiscal challenges. While proponents argue that UBI ensures financial security for all individuals, irrespective of employment status, detractors raise concerns regarding its affordability, impact on work incentives, and adequacy in addressing broader systemic issues of poverty and inequality. Implementing Universal Basic Income (UBI) can cause concerns in terms of the financial feasibility and sustainability of such a program, particularly in terms of funding sources and long-term budgetary implications. Critics argue that providing a universal, unconditional cash payment to all citizens or residents could impose a significant burden on government budgets, potentially leading to inflationary pressures or necessitating higher taxes. Additionally, there are concerns about the potential disincentive to work created by UBI, as some individuals may choose to rely solely on the basic income rather than actively seeking employment or engaging in productive activities. Moreover, the effectiveness of UBI in addressing poverty and income inequality remains a subject of debate, with questions raised about its impact on targeted social welfare programs and its ability to adequately meet the diverse needs of vulnerable populations. Other considerations include potential administrative challenges, such as determining eligibility criteria, preventing fraud and abuse, and ensuring the equitable distribution of benefits. As policymakers explore the feasibility and implications of UBI, thorough analysis, experimentation, and stakeholder engagement are essential to address these issues and develop effective policy solutions.

The expansion of AI and automation technologies raises ethical and regulatory dilemmas, particularly concerning data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the erosion of human autonomy. The increasing reliance on AI-driven decision-making systems in various domains, from employment to healthcare, necessitates robust safeguards to protect individuals' rights and dignity.

The pressure of technological disruption on mental well-being cannot be overlooked. The uncertain future of work, coupled with the relentless pace of technological change, contributes to stress, anxiety, and job insecurity among workers. The psychological impact of job loss and economic insecurity resulting from automation and AI-driven has changed behaviour and attitude in the workforce. As individuals face the prospect of unemployment or underemployment due to technological displacement, they often experience heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. The loss of purpose and identity tied to traditional employment roles can further exacerbate mental health challenges, leading to feelings of isolation, hopelessness, low self-esteem and suicidal thoughts. Moreover, the uncertainty surrounding the implementation of UBI adds another layer of psychological strain, as individuals grapple with questions about their financial stability and future prospects. While UBI offers the promise of economic security and stability, concerns about its adequacy and long-term sustainability may fuel anxiety and uncertainty. Additionally, the rapid pace of technological change and the potential for job insecurity in the gig economy contribute to a pervasive sense of precarity and instability, exacerbating mental health issues among workers. Addressing these mental health challenges requires holistic approaches that prioritize the psychological well-being of individuals amidst the evolving landscape of work.

Context and causes:

In 2030, the global landscape is characterized by the rapid technological advancement, economic transformation, and shifting societal norms that took place throughout the 2020s. AI and automation have permeated virtually every aspect of life, revolutionizing industries, reshaping labour markets, and redefining the nature of work. The widespread adoption of UBI in some regions reflects growing recognition of the need to address income inequality and social exclusion amidst technological disruption.

India, is a country known for its blossoming AI industry and technological innovation. In the early 2020s, India made significant strides in AI research and development, positioning itself as a global leader in the field. However, the rapid adoption of AI technologies also led to huge job displacement, particularly in sectors like manufacturing, agriculture, and customer service. As automation prospered, millions of Indian workers faced the prospect of unemployment or underemployment, aggravating existing socio-economic inequalities. This situation prompted a national dialogue on the need for comprehensive policies to re-skill workers, promote entrepreneurship, and ensure equitable access to the benefits of AI-driven growth.

However, the benefits of technological progress are not evenly distributed, increases disparities within and among countries. The concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few tech giants further intensifies socio-economic inequalities, undermining social cohesion and political stability. Meanwhile, the mental health impacts of technological disruption are becoming increasingly evident, with rising rates of stress, depression, and burnout among workers.

In 2030, the increase in unemployment in China has become a significant driver of mental health issues and societal problems. As the country undergoes rapid technological advancement and automation, traditional industries are facing substantial disruption, resulting in widespread job losses and economic uncertainty for millions of workers. The transition towards a more automated economy has left many individuals without stable employment opportunities, leading to heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. The loss of income and financial security has profound psychological impacts, exacerbating feelings of helplessness, despair, and social isolation among affected individuals and their families. Moreover, the stigma surrounding unemployment in Chinese society further compounds the mental health challenges faced by those experiencing job loss, creating barriers to seeking support and assistance. The prevalence of mental health issues among the unemployed not only exacts a toll on individual well-being but also poses broader societal risks, including increased healthcare costs, decreased productivity, and social unrest. Addressing the mental health implications of rising unemployment in China requires comprehensive interventions that prioritize access to mental health services, promote social support networks, and foster resilience among affected populations.

Additionally, the discourse on UBI gained prominence in countries grappling with the socio-economic implications of automation. In Scandinavia, for example, Finland's UBI pilot program in the mid-2010s provided valuable insights into the feasibility and impact of unconditional cash transfers on workforce participation, well-being, and social cohesion. Despite facing challenges and limitations, the Finnish experiment spurred renewed interest in UBI as a potential policy tool to address income inequality and poverty in an increasingly automated world. Most national governments have experimented with various UBI programs, with none lasting more than a five years. However it is becoming clearer that it might be our only way forward, in terms of providing financial security.

Consequences:

Firstly, the continued advancement of AI and automation has reshaped labor markets, with significant ramifications for employment patterns and income distribution. While these

technologies have led to increased productivity and efficiency in many sectors, they have also resulted in job displacement and skill mismatches, particularly among vulnerable populations. In regions heavily reliant on industries susceptible to automation, such as manufacturing and agriculture, widespread unemployment and underemployment have become pervasive, exacerbating poverty and social unrest.

Secondly, the emergence of UBI as a policy response reflects growing recognition of the need to address the socio-economic inequalities worsened by technological disruption. However, the implementation of UBI remains a subject of debate, with concerns regarding its affordability, effectiveness, and potential unintended consequences. Without coordinated action to design and implement robust social protection mechanisms, including UBI where appropriate, vulnerable populations risk being left behind, further widening the gap between the rich and the poor.

Moreover, recent events, including the “Big one” earthquake in the United States and the desertification of the majority of southern Europe, underscore the urgent need for AI-driven solutions to enhance disaster preparedness and response capabilities. As climate change intensifies and natural disasters become more frequent and severe, the imperative to invest in AI-powered risk management and mitigation strategies becomes increasingly evident. Failure to do so could result in catastrophic consequences for human lives, infrastructure, and the environment.

In light of these challenges, immediate action is necessary for several reasons. Firstly, the pace of technological advancement is accelerating, amplifying the disruptive effects of AI and automation on economies and societies. Delaying action risks heightening existing inequalities and widening the digital divide, undermining social cohesion and stability.

Secondly, the consequences of inaction are not merely theoretical but have real and tangible impacts on people's lives. The persistence of high unemployment, poverty, and social unrest threatens to unravel the fabric of societies, fueling resentment and disillusionment with established institutions, as well as between nations. Moreover, the failure to address environmental risks, poses existential threats to human civilization and our planet.

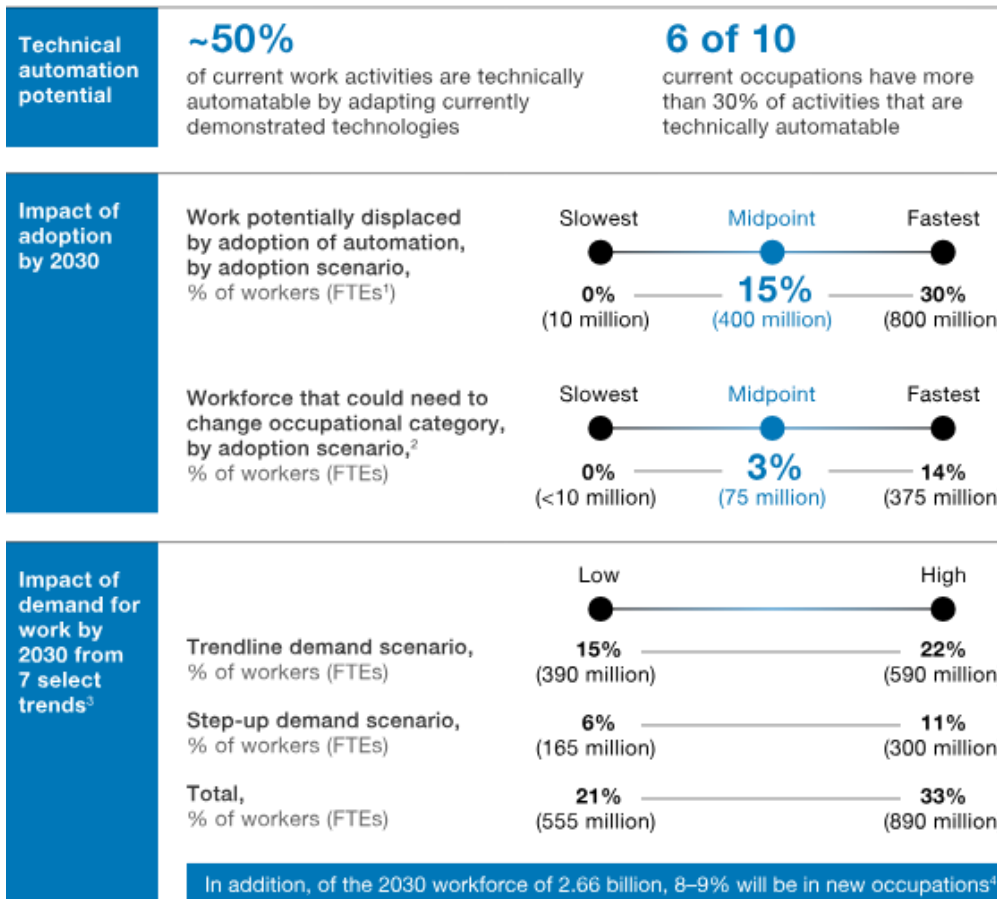
Openings:

We must confront the urgent need for robust social protection mechanisms whilst navigating the ethical and regulatory challenges inherent in the deployment of AI technologies. Moreover, let us recognize the imperative of global cooperation in addressing

regional disparities and promoting inclusive growth. As we delve into the intersectional nuances of gender equality and diversity, let us cultivate a spirit of collaboration and innovation, envisioning a future where every individual can thrive in dignity and opportunity. Investigate how to properly regulate the increasing numbers of mental health cases and suicide reports. Explore the ethical considerations and regulatory challenges associated with the deployment of AI technologies in the workplace. Investigate the differential impact of AI and automation on regions and countries with varying levels of economic development and technological readiness. Examine the possibility in creating a truly universal percentage based UBI, taking into consideration gender equality and diversity in the workforce, as well as a country's economic level.



Automation will have a far-reaching impact on the global workforce.



¹ Full-time equivalents.

² In trendline labor-demand scenario.

³ Rising incomes; healthcare from aging; investment in technology, infrastructure, and buildings; energy transitions; and marketization of unpaid work. Not exhaustive.

⁴ See Jeffrey Lin, "Technological adaptation, cities, and new work," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, Volume 93, Number 2, May 2011.