

Commission: International Labour Organisation

Issue: Training and practicing the professions of 2030

Country: Belgium

As humankind advances towards the future, AI technology is further proving the unquestionable and major importance it will hold in lives throughout the world. With the rapid improvements in AI chatbots such as ChatGPT, generators of AI art such as DALL-E and others, we are already seeing a glimpse of what our future may contain. Accompanying these advancements are the rapid automation of many sectors of work, jobs could be threatened by the use of AI to cut costs leading to unemployment, the rise of poverty and widespread mental health issues such as depression and the implementation of universal basic income in affected countries.

Belgium has proven to be one of the European countries with a clear plan on the topic of the use of AI. The budget allowance given to integrate AI has been EUR 15 million for the addition of AI within companies EUR 12 million allocated to basic research, and EUR 5 million to supporting measures. For the region of Wallonia, EUR 18 million per year has been given to the regional AI program including a research project named "ARIAC by DigitalWallonia4.ai" alongside the TRIAL consortium, a gathering of universities and research centers throughout the Wallonia-Brussels Federation. Belgium has been in support of AI development since before the large explosion of AI use in recent times with the regional innovation funding body Innoviris holding an important position for research and innovation positions with a dedicated budget of EUR 22 million.

Belgium holds in mind three major pillars for AI development in their country: Creating a technological impact by supporting high-quality expertise in AI and outlining a responsible data strategy for AI; Ensuring social and economic benefits by encouraging continuous skills development in AI, building a robust and prosperous AI economy and optimizing public services through AI; Building appropriate conditions for the development of an ethical, resilient and secure society through AI. Keeping those in mind, they encourage teaching elements concerning AI in schools. Reforms have passed in all regions integrating AI related courses in primary, secondary and tertiary education levels to deepen knowledge among children and adolescents. Belgium therefore has in mind the importance of educating the younger generations about AI and its uses.

Belgium has been focusing on deinstitutionalization and community-based support. The aim of the MHC reform is to bring care as close to patients as possible and respond to their needs and preferences in the best possible way. To accomplish this objective multidisciplinary mobile teams were set up to provide specialized care in the home environment of patients with severe psychiatric disorders. In 2022, 157 FTEs were active in the mobile crisis teams and 106 FTEs in the long-term care teams of the MHCY networks. In the adult mental health networks. alongside the agreement with the IMC Public Health, a recurrent budget of 200 million euros has been given to reinforce the care offered in front-line healthcare. To this is added more intensive psychiatric care, if necessary, with 2 possible models: the ID model and the HIC (high intensive care) method, each to treat different levels of mental disorders. These mobile care teams are central to Belgium's mental health reform and show the countries dedication to treating any possible problem that might occur.

Belgium has in place a very stable social security system based on the payment of social contributions on an individual's income. These social contributions serve to finance the social security system. This in addition to the numerous allowances and unemployment benefits raises the question of the necessity of any form of universal basic income. For example, the university of Antwerp published a research paper stating possible issues: the UBI's funding, if it is replacing the social protection already in place and more. One of the paper's significant insights is that the source of UBI financing critically affects redistributive outcomes. If it is done by abolishing tax benefits UBI can reduce poverty more effectively. However, if it is funded through the removal of social benefits, then it will negatively affect

poverty in the country. In addition, if a flat tax is used instead of a progressive one, the redistributions being lower means a more benefit for high income households increasing inequality and poverty. Other important factors are the context in which the reform is implemented, if it is partial (a smaller income supplement) or not, the design and more. Belgium, whilst it holds in mind the best its population, remains unsure of the necessity of a UBI reform.

Belgium is in support for the advancements of AI in the world believing in the benefits it may bring to the future if used well and if taught well to the next generations. We have also been aware of the possible mental disturbances the rise of AI in the work force may cause making implementing reforms to aid our population. We have been in support of the necessary reforms made during the major conventions. We promote the innovation provided by tools such as AI whilst not neglecting the problems it may cause to the populations of our respective countries. Therefore, we are looking forward to taking a step in the right direction for the improvement of our societies and bask in the benefits of technological improvements in the name of social benefit and collective fulfillment.