

Trade unions and the transformation of technology

The changes in technology has over the years been central in the transformation of work, society and the market. Referred in some sectors/contexts as automation, digitization, computerisation, miniaturization and others technological transformation is at the core of capital's drive to enhance the control of the labour process. This has effect on how the society and market is organised and in particular how the work is done and how workers interact. This conversely produces resistance and informs how trade unions are organised. This project aims to explore trade unions response to technological transformation in different countries and contexts. The project will be guided by the following main question:

How are trade unions responding to technological transformation in different countries and context?

It will also aim to address the following sub-questions:

What have been the trade union strategic response to technological changes?

How is this affecting labour market policy? Skills policy, youth unemployment

How is it affecting collective bargaining?

What are the regional disparities in the effect, policy and response of unions to technological transformation?

Methodology

Qualitative and quantitative research

Possible country case studies:

China: (IT and auto sector), India: Public transport, India :(Security in the informal sector- Mumbai), Bangladesh: (Rice processing), Kenya: (Coffee Industry), Canada: (E-commerce) South Africa/Namibia/Mozambique: (Transport corridor) Zimbabwe: Food processing sector, Zambia :(Extractive sector), Ghana: (agriculture sector), Germany: (Working time and automation- Public transport)

Output and time line

- Research reports on the individual cases by June 2018
- Audio clip on the different case studies
- GLU working paper
- Edited book volume

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