International Interdisciplinary Conference Transform

»The Future of Human Workforce«

Online event – 27 March 2025

Book of Abstracts

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International Interdisciplinary conference Transform »The Future of Human Workforce«

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AGENDA | TRANSFORM CONFERENCE 27. 3. 2025

09:00-09:20	**Prof. Dr. Annmarie Gorenc Zoran** (dean, FOŠ): Welcome to TRANSFORM CONFERENCE.	**Zoom**
9.20-10.00	**Dr. Hab. Ryszard Praszkier:** The Power of Horizontal Connectivity. Q&A	Zoom
10:00-10:20	Coffee Break	Space for networking
10:20-10:50	**Session 1: Workforce and Gender equality** Chair of Session: *Dr. Maria João Velez* **Chiara Cristini:** AI and Gender Equality: Risks and Opportunities. **Beatriz Saavedra:** Bridging the Gender Gap: Women in AI and their Role in Achieving the SDGs. Q&A	Zoom
11:00-11:50	**Session 2: Workforce adaptation to energy transition; Technologization, Sustainability and Workforce Challenges** Chair of Session: *Dr. Alexander van Biezen* **Diogo Torres, Dr. Maria João Velez, Dr. Sara Ramos, Dr. Sílvia Silva:** The Blueprint of Tomorrow: The Future of Human Workforce Survey. **Dr. Babak Zendehdel Nobari and Dr. Behnam Zendehdel Nobari:** Unmasking and Classifying the Hidden Risks of Artificial Intelligence. (AI) in the Future Workforce: A Soft Systems Methodology (SSM). Q&A	Zoom
12.05-12:45	**Session 3: Workplace well-being, ethics, and organizational management group** Chair of Session: *Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadia Molek* **Mara Rodrigues:** The Importance of Wellbeing and Soft Skills in the Field of Youth – Practices, Policies and Initiatives at European level. **Karina Minda:** Transpersonal Principles and Practices in the Workplace – A Holistic Model for an Eco-centric Paradigm Shift. Q&A	Zoom

12:45-13:45	Lunch	Space for networking
13.45-14.35	**Session 4: Navigating Workforce Transformation, Policy, Skills, and Demography** Chair of Session: *Dr. Margret Jaeger* **Dr. Aneta Pieczka and Dr. Miłosz Miszczyński:** Technology in Warehousing: Shaping Workforce Integration and Evolving Skillsets. **Dr. Bogusław Balza:** Legal Frameworks for Remote Work: Productivity, Challenges, and Long-Term Labor Market Implications. **João Pedro Pereira:** Social Protection in a Changing World: Job Guarantee as a Pathway to Address Technological Unemployment and Green Transition. **Dr. Nadia Molek:** Demographic Shifts and Workforce Policies: Asian Migrants in Slovenia's Labour Market. Q&A	Zoom
14.35-15.00	Coffee break	Space for networking
15.00 -15.45	**Dr. Alexander van Biezen:** Ai is not a tool. The Impact of Growing AI Agency on the Future of Work. Q&A	Zoom
16.00-16.45	**Dr. Dan Podjed:** Crisolation. Q&A	Zoom
16.45- 17.00	Closing session	Zoom

Keynote speakers

THE POWER OF HORIZONTAL CONNECTIVITY
Dr. Hab. Ryszard Praszkier, University of Warsaw, Poland.

There is an untapped power of employees communicating with each other. This sort of peer-to-peer horizontal communication often provides new inspiration and prompts new ideas. Some contemporary projects in which the employer prompts and rewards horizontal communications will be presented. Moreover, recent research called Social Network Analysis (SNA) will be presented and illustrated by graphs, documenting the power of horizontal connectivity, instigating a multiplicity of bottom-up cooperation initiatives. Releasing the power of horizontal connectivity seems the future of the workforce. It is concluded that a popular catchword 'network effect' is, so far, used as a vague metaphor. The study makes 'network effect' tangible, measurable and evidence-based.

Keywords: horizontality, connectivity, bottom-up initiatives, networks, sna.

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Dr. Hab. Ryszard Praszkier (Warsaw, Poland) has authored and co-authored numerous academic publications about social entrepreneurs and the ways they have identified innovative solutions to seemingly insurmountable problems. He is a professor emeritus at the University of Warsaw where he conducts research on peaceful transitions, including social-change processes facilitated by social entrepreneurs. He innovated the concept of perceiving insurmountable challenges as doable (coining the name "possibilitivity" – portmanteau of possible and creativity); also proposed the concept of Peace-Oriented Mindset. Moreover – developed evaluation tools for both. His recent Cambridge University Press book "Working Wonders: How to Make the Impossible Happen" illustrates how some individuals successfully address seemingly impossible" challenges, and how the reader can follow this path.
Dr. Praszkier has worked for nearly 30 years for Ashoka: Everyone a Changemaker global organization, which empowers social entrepreneurs. He conducted over 200 interviews with social innovators in nearly all continents. He is a licensed psychotherapist and psychotherapy supervisor.
In the 1980s, Dr. Praszkier participated in the Polish underground peaceful Solidarity Movement and wrote, under a false name, a manual for Solidarity activists titled "How to survive police interrogation." He later acted as a consultant for Solidarity candidates during Poland's first free election in 1989.

AI IS NOT A TOOL. THE IMPACT OF GROWING AI AGENCY ON THE FUTURE OF WORK

Prof. Dr. Alexander F. van Biezen, UCLL University of Applied Sciences (Belgium).

It is striking to note that the current state of investigation on the impact of AI on the future of work tends to be rather rosy. Some even hail AI as the next Industrial Revolution, lifting the future of the human workforce to a whole new level. Admittedly, there are quite a number of economic and labour studies highlighting the risks of automation and AI for skills mismatch and workforce displacement. However, voices pleading for some caution are easily drowned out as too overly pessimistic. In this article, I investigate some of the tacit philosophical assumptions underlying this remarkable tendency towards the oncoming wave of AI and its impact on the future of work, based on literature research in philosophy of science and philosophy of mind. The main tacit assumption is that AI is still regarded as a mere tool, not able to "think" and therefore not able to make any decisions on its own. While the assumption that AI remains a "dumb" tool, always in need of human oversight, can be very comforting and reassuring, some recent studies in AI research indicate that AI will be operating more and more independently in the future. These studies compel us to consider the possible consequences of the resulting outsourcing of human decision-making. Drawing both from insights from philosophy and recent studies with regard to AI agency, we investigate whether this assumption of AI being only a mere tool can still be justified or not. If not, can exposing and undermining this assumption help us in a more cautious approach to implementing AI? We claim that these developments certainly do not mean the end of human work. However, we must see to it that the transition to human-AI cooperation is not too disruptive, as this could be a threat to an inclusive and just division of labour, possibly destabilizing society. Hence, we plea for the need of continuing policy debates on AI regulation taking explicitly into account the phenomenon of growing AI agency.

Keywords: artificial intelligence; AI agency; AI consciousness; workforce; future; philosophy of science; philosophy of mind.

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Dr. Alexander van Biezen is a philosopher of science, graduated from the Free University of Brussels-VUB as a Doctor of Philosophy and Moral Sciences. He specialized in the philosophy of cosmology, with a doctoral dissertation on the cosmological models of Stephen Hawking and Thomas Hertog. His book Top-Down Cosmology and Model-Dependent Realism (2022, VUB Press) is freely available online through the research portal of the Free University of Brussels-

VUB (https://researchportal.vub.be/). He has an additional background in religious studies and in computer science. After having worked for a number of years in the IT sector, he is now enrolled as a researcher and lecturer at the UCLL University of Applied Sciences in Leuven, Belgium (Research & Expertise Department). His main areas of interest are cosmology and the philosophy of artificial intelligence.

CRISOLATION

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Dan Podjed, Research fellow at the Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SRC ZASU), Associated professor at Institute of Slovenian Ethnology, University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Arts (Slovenia)

A new phenomenon has emerged from the intersection of global crises (such as pandemics, climate change, and economic instability) and the resulting social and emotional isolation: *Crisolation*. In times of crisis, individuals and communities often experience a dual burden: the external challenges of the crisis itself and the internal struggle of feeling disconnected from others.

The COVID-19 pandemic as a prime example of *Crisolation*, where lockdowns and social distancing measures, while necessary, exacerbated feelings of loneliness and disconnection. But it is not limited to pandemics. It became a recurring pattern in other crises, such as natural disasters or political upheavals, where people are forced into physical or emotional isolation.

We will highlight how technological advancements, while offering tools for connection, can also deepen isolation if not used mindfully. The overreliance on digital communication, which often lacks the depth and empathy of face-to-face interactions, are further alienating individuals during crises.

Nevertheless, there is also a hopeful perspective. *Crisolation* can serve as a catalyst for innovation and resilience. By fostering a sense of shared humanity and collective responsibility, crises can bring people together in unexpected ways.

Keywords: crisolation; crisis and isolation; social transformation; impact of global crises; emotional isolation; community resilience and solidarity; technology and human connection; innovation during adversity.

<div align="center">***</div>

Dan Podjed, PhD, is a Senior Research Fellow at the Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Institute of Slovenian Ethnology, Associate Professor at the University of Ljubljana's Faculty of Arts, and a Field Expert at the Institute for Innovation and Development of the University of Ljubljana. Podjed is also the founder and Executive Advisor of the EASA Applied Anthropology Network and initiator of the international symposium Why the World Needs

Anthropologists, annually held since 2013. His research focuses on human-technology interactions, digital transformation, sustainable lifestyles, and the epistemology of everyday life. His most recent book project, Crisolation, which consists of a scientific monograph and a dystopian novel, has gained significant acclaim in Slovenia and has been well-received by both the academic and general public.

WORKING SESSION 1: WORKFORCE & GENDER EQUALITY PANEL

Chair of Session: Dr. Maria João Velez

AI AND GENDER EQUALITY: RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Chiara Cristini

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The analysis proposes a reflection on the impact of AI in the world of work from a gender perspective, with reference to the North-East area of Italy, an area economically dynamic, with development levels above the national average and with gender indicators close to the EU average. However, it is characterised by SMEs with a management culture that is not yet 'mature' in terms of equality and use of AI. The analysis considers what policy interventions can be implemented to tackle the risk of accentuating inequalities with an anticipatory method. This starts from the consideration that the ability to recognise and anticipate the transformations produced by AI in the world of work from a gender perspective is a technical and collective issue. AI is not just a technology, but a transformative force that is rewriting the rules of the game in the world of work and the impact will be not gender-neutral. In fact, AI could amplify already existing inequalities and to address this risk, an anticipatory and participatory approach involving different stakeholders may prove useful, especially in recognising the possible more subtle and pervasive forms of discrimination arising from technology and bias. It therefore becomes crucial to work on the community to make it aware and take appropriate action and what kind of policy interventions or systemic approaches might be identified. As noted in the report 'Gender Equality in Swedish AI Policies', 'algorithms do not make mistakes, but slavishly repeat the patterns of discrimination inherent in the data they receive'. The EU has introduced the AI Act, however, much remains to be done to include specific criteria that take gender equality into account. The UNESCO Report 2022 also highlights the need to incorporate specific gender equality criteria at every stage of technological development. Likewise, the directive on pay transparency aims to combat pay inequalities, which are often exacerbated by algorithmic decisions. How can a systemic approach be taken to tackle these risks emerging from digitalizations, involving main stakeholders as equality bodies, social parts and education system?

The contribution, based on qualitative methodologies, proposes interviews (5) (equality bodies, trade unions and social parts, business leaders, consultants) and focus groups (1) with key players in the labour market (equality bodies, trade unions and social parts, gender experts, IA experts, labour law experts). Foresight techniques (Three Horizons and Backcasting) are used to facilitate a vision of possible futures and identify what actions can be taken from the present an. An initial

desk analysis of the main available statistical data (ISTAT) and existing good practices is planned (discourse analysis).

Keywords: gender; IA; gender impact; stem; gender equality.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Chiara Cristini is graduated in Political Science at University of Trieste (Italy), Master in Social Foresights (Unesco Chair-Trento UnivTN). She has worked with IRES FVG since 1996 and is member of the board of directors. She has specialised in gender equality issues (in the labour market, governance systems, local development, organisations). On these topics she carries out research, planning, consultancy, training and has published articles. Auditor for UNI/PdR 25:2022 (Gender Equality), she was responsible for work-life-balance policies at the FVG Regional Employment Agency and member of the Board of Directors of the Upper Adriatic Technological Pole. For 9 years Equality Councillor for the Province of Pordenone, she chairs the Equal Opportunities Commission of the Municipality of Pordenone.

BRIDGING THE GENDER GAP: WOMEN IN AI AND THEIR ROLE IN ACHIEVING THE SDGS

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The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent the most pressing priorities defined by the United Nations, with a global objective to achieve them by 2030. Artificial intelligence (AI) plays a pivotal role in achieving these goals, namely by helping to enhance the efficiency of renewable energies and facilitating a circular economy and building smart cities that use their resources efficiently. Despite its significance, there is a gender gap in AI-related careers with women representing only 22 per cent of their global workforce. This disparity indicates a significant untapped potential, as women represent a valuable demographic that can drive economic growth and job creation. Despite this, there is a lack of research that explores how AI contributes to achieving the SDGs, particularly from the perspective of young women.

This study seeks to bridge this gap by exploring young women's perceptions of AI, their awareness of its potential for SDG implementation, and the barriers they face in AI- related careers participation. Using snowball sampling, semi-structured focus groups will be conducted with young women (18-29 years old) to identify the young women's views on AI, its role in achieving the SDGs, and the challenges they face in AI-related careers. The data will be analysed using thematic analysis, allowing educational institutions and policymakers how to develop AI-related programs that better support young women's participation, and therefore bridging the gender gaps in AI-related careers.

Keywords: sustainable development goals; artificial intelligence; gender gap; women in AI.

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Beatriz Saavedra is a final-year Master's student in Social and Organisational Psychology at Iscte. Her thesis focuses on the adoption of Generative Artificial Intelligence in higher education, and she is a research fellow at BRU-Iscte in the WISE-AI project. In 2024, she contributed to the ESIF.COM-BOOST project team, working on literature reviews, data analysis, and report writing.

Her research interests are focused on the adoption of emerging technologies, digital transformation, and innovation in organisations. She has been involved in various research projects and presented her study, "The Relationship Between Paradoxical Leadership and Individual Creativity: The Mediating Role of Managerial Voice Endorsemen," at the XIX PhD Meeting in Psychology. She also gained experience at the QSR Innovation Centre, collaborating on R&D projects. Currently, she is currently engaged in workshops and scientific events, further exploring the intersection between psychology, technology, and digital transformation.

WORKING SESSION 2: Workforce Adaptation to Energy Transition; Technologization and Sustainability

Chair of Session: Dr. Alexander van Biezen

THE BLUEPRINT OF TOMORROW: THE FUTURE OF HUMAN WORKFORCE SURVEY

Maria João Velez*, Diogo Torres, Sara Ramos and Sílvia Silva

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The *Blueprint of Tomorrow: The Future of Human Workforce Survey* explored European citizens' views on employment trends, workplace well-being, and the impact of technology to inform labor market policies and workforce strategies.

Data were collected as part of the CERV TRANSFORM project, which targeted nine project partners (Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, and Sweden) along with Spain, utilizing a non-probability sampling approach. It was distributed online via partner organizations and social media, collecting 833 valid responses from a diverse sample (aged 18-83, 68.3% female, 68.1% highly educated). The majority (77.1%) were employed, primarily in the public sector (50.8%) and large organizations (54.8%).

Findings revealed that 62.7% believe an aging population will lead to recruitment challenges, while 60.4% fear job displacement. AI is divisive, with 49.7% viewing it positively, while 47.2% are concerned about skill devaluation. Regarding climate change, 64.9% worry about negative job impacts, while 38.9% see the green transition as beneficial. Analytical thinking, creative thinking, and lifelong learning were ranked as the most critical future skills.

Demographic comparisons revealed significant differences: women are less confident in adapting to new technologies and more concerned about job security, while higher education is associated with greater confidence in technology adaptation. Younger workers are more skeptical about technology's benefits. Public sector employees express lower confidence in adapting to technology but emphasize diversity in hiring, whereas employees in large companies are more positive about technological advancements. Hybrid workers are more optimistic about technology and favor flexible work arrangements.

The findings suggest that while technological progress and demographic shifts pose challenges, they also offer opportunities for innovation and improved work conditions. Policies must prioritize upskilling, inclusivity, and flexible work models to align workforce capabilities with future demands. Thus, a collaborative approach between governments, businesses, and workers will be crucial for fostering a resilient and adaptive labor market.

Keywords: CERV TRANSFORM project; workplace transformation; well-being; technology.

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Diogo Espinhal Torres is a research assistant at ISCTE who holds a BSc in Economics from Nova School of Business and Economics and is currently completing a Postgraduate Program in Planning and Evaluation of Public Policies at ISCTE. He served as an advisor to the Secretary of State for Labour in the XXIII Constitutional Government, focusing on social dialogue as well as labour market policies and statistics.

Maria João Velez is Phd in Management at Nova School of Business and Economics. Assistant Professor in the Department of Human Resources and Organizational Behaviour, she has been teaching courses related with Human Resources Management in several Undergraduate Degrees, Master and PhD, mainly in Psychology and Management Degrees. She also supervises master and Phd students mainly in the field of Leadership and Human Resources Management. Researcher at BRU-ISCTE, her main research interests are in the field of human resources management and organizational behaviour, covering topics such as leadership (both positive and destructive forms), human resources management practices, emotions in the work context or work-family interface. She has published in international journals, including *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology or The Leadership Quarterly*.

Sara Ramos holds a PhD in Psychology in 2006, specializing in Work Psychology at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences-University of Porto, with a thesis on aging and work. Post-Doctorate in Ergonomics in 2009 at the Faculty of Human Kinetics-University of Lisbon. Associate Professor at ISCTE-IUL since 2007, within the Department of Human Resources and Organizational Behaviour, teaching in the areas of Work Psychology, Occupational Health and Safety, Organizational Behaviour, and Qualitative Methods across various study cycles, having supervised numerous master and doctoral theses. She is also a researcher at Dinâmia'CET-ISCTE, conducting research on the relationship between health, age, and work, particularly on working conditions, psychosocial risk factors, teleworking, aging, and age diversity in the workplace, with national and international publications in these areas. She is Specialist Advisor in the Office of the Secretary of State for Labour in the XXIII Constitutional Government (2022/23) and Executive Director of the National Plan for the Implementation of a Youth Guarantee (2023/24).

Sílvia Agostinho Silva holds a Phd in Social and Organizational Psychology with a specialization in Organizational Behaviour. Full Professor in the Department of Human Resources and Organizational Behavior at Instituto Universitário Lisboa (ISCTE- IUL). Her research is in the field of organizational psychology applied to occupational safety and wellbeing. She has been teaching courses related with Work Psychology, Organizational Behaviour and Research Methods in several Undergraduate Degrees, Master and PhD, mainly in Psychology and Management Degrees. Her work has been published in several books and international journals, as for instance "Journal of Occupational Health Psychology", "Risk analysis", "Safety Science", "British Journal of Health Psychology", "Accident analysis and Prevention". She supervised several PhD thesis and Master thesis in the field. She has been a member of several scientific associations and international networks. In 2018 she was the Chair of the 13th European Academy of Occupational Health Psychology Conference. She coordinated several research national and international projects (including FCT projects) and collaborated with several companies aiming workplace safety and health promotion.

UNMASKING AND CLASSIFYING THE HIDDEN RISKS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE. (AI) IN THE FUTURE WORKFORCE: A SOFT SYSTEMS METHODOLOGY (SSM)

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The rapid integration of AI into organizational operations offers numerous benefits but also presents significant challenges. With the advent of Generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Copilot, and DeepSeek, AI applications have become increasingly prevalent, generating enthusiasm among experts and managers. However, the unconsidered use of these tools can lead to hidden risks that must be addressed and managed.

This research employs Soft Systems Methodology (SSM)—a stakeholder-centric approach—to identify and categorize risks through CATWOE (Customers, Actors, Transformation process, Worldview, Owners, and Environmental constraints) analysis. SSM was selected for its iterative process, which integrates conflicting stakeholder priorities (e.g., executives' efficiency goals vs. employees' job security concerns) into a unified risk framework.

Through SSM focus groups with 15 cross-functional stakeholders, we identified practical risks not present in the literature, such as employees inadvertently exposing organizational data while over-optimizing AI models. This is in stark contrast to technical risks such as adversarial attacks that have been highlighted in previous studies. The research findings indicate that the hidden risks of AI can be categorized into five areas: (a) Ethical and Social (e.g., dehumanization); (b) Organizational (e.g., over- reliance on AI decision-making); (c) Technical (e.g., poor data quality); (d) Legal (e.g., lack of clear regulations); and (e) Societal (e.g., erosion of trust).

The study advocates a paradigm shift toward active AI governance through four strategies: (1) International collaboration (e.g., UN AI advisory bodies); (2) Government mandates (e.g., transparency requirements for high-risk AI systems); (3) Industry standards (e.g., FINRA's AI compliance guidelines); and (4) Organizational reforms (e.g., establishing Chief AI Officer roles and prioritizing AI literacy programs).

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), AI risk Management and classification, soft systems methodology (SSM), future workforce, generative AI, ChatGPT, Copilot and DeepSeek.

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Babak Zendehdel Nobari holds a Ph.D. in Management (Operations Research) from the University of Tehran and is currently working at the National Library and Archives of Iran. Is a ph.d. candidate in management with a specialization in marketing at iscte business school.

DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES AND THE LABOUR MARKET: ADAPTING THE WORKFORCE TO THE NEW REALITY

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The presentation analyses the impact of disruptive technologies on the labour market and the adaptation of the workforce to changing realities. It focuses on key innovations such as artificial intelligence, automation and data-driven technologies that are revolutionising various industries. The changing competency requirements are driven by technological advances, the diversification of working methods and the growing need for flexibility and innovation, which necessitates the development of digital, analytical, communication and creative skills. Employees need to adapt to new trends such as automation, remote working and sustainability in order to remain competitive in the labour market. The article discusses how these technologies are reshaping workforce structures, changing competency requirements and affecting the professional development of employees. It also identifies challenges such as the need to train new skills and adapt employment policies to meet the needs of the labour market in an era of digital transformation.

The paper uses a literature review and case study analysis to explore the impact of disruptive technologies on the workforce. The literature review identified key trends and changes in competency requirements, while the case studies provided a more detailed understanding of the real-world impacts of the introduction of new technologies in different industries.

Keywords: disruptive technologies, labour market, workforce adaptation, automation.

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Magdalena Byczkowska is a PhD, Professor at AJP. She is holder of a postdoctoral degree in economics; research interests - international finance; dean of the Faculty of Economics at the Jakub z Paradyż Academy in Gorzów Wielkopolski, head of the Chair of Financial Management; member of the Polish Economic Society and the Polish Knowledge Management Association; as well as member of scientific committees of international conferences. orcid.org/0000-0003 2718 2863

WORKING SESSION 3: Workplace well-being, ethics, and organizational management group panel

Chair of Session: Dr. Nadia Molek

THE IMPORTANCE OF WELLBEING AND SOFT SKILLS IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH – PRACTICES, POLICIES AND INITIATIVES AT EUROPEAN LEVEL

Mara Rodrigues
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This research explores the concept of well-being and its relationship with soft skills among young people (18–30 years old) and youth workers. It examines existing strategies, policies, and initiatives at the European level, analysing their implementation in the present and near future. The study also presents findings from trainings and youth exchanges conducted over the past four years, assessing awareness and knowledge of well-being and soft skills among participants. The research is based on experiential learning programs involving 46 young people from Turkey, Poland, Romania, Greece, Bulgaria, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and Hungary, as well as 14 youth workers (aged 24–33) from the Czech Republic, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Finland, Greece, Bulgaria, and Portugal.

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative methods include observation, reflection exercises during workshops, and open-ended questions in evaluation forms. These tools assess knowledge and skills before and after workshops, learning experiences, and participants' insights. Quantitative methods involve structured evaluation surveys, rating participants' agreement with provided statements, and measuring skill improvements pre- and post-activity. Research was conducted within European training environments through workshops and reflective exercises focusing on well-being, emotional intelligence, value-based learning, mindfulness (including Vipassana), coaching and mentoring, positive psychology, and digital well-being. Data collection occurred via debriefing sessions and non-formal learning techniques consistently applied across groups.

The study contributes to a deeper understanding of well-being in youth work, testing the hypothesis that young people and youth workers acknowledge the importance of well-being and soft skills but face challenges in implementing them in practice. Furthermore, the research develops guidelines based on theoretical analysis of European Union policies, World Health Organization reports, Sustainable Development Goals, the Geneva Chapter (2021), and EU Compass initiatives. These guidelines highlight key strategies to integrate well-being more effectively into workplace and youth work environments.

Findings reveal that while most young participants had encountered well-being-related concepts before, participation in training significantly enhanced their emotional management skills, empathy, and awareness of its connection to daily life. They also developed a new capacity for self-reflection and learned practical well-being methods, including distinctions between coaching

and mentoring. Notably, only one in 46 participants had prior knowledge of Vipassana meditation.

For youth workers, the study confirms a strong recognition of well-being's relevance in professional settings, yet implementation remains limited. Training activities helped them distinguish emotions from feelings, apply coaching principles, and set personal and professional boundaries. These skills were identified as particularly important for youth work and workplace environments. However, similar to young participants, two out of 14 youth workers had never heard of Vipassana before the training.

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Mara Rodrigues is a trainer on soft skills at European Level, in the field of youth work and adult learning, MA from the University Adam Mickiewicz in Poznań in International Relations with a paper titled 'The role of creativity in International Relations - in the EU', with focus on creative problem solving and the Programme Erasmus+.

As researcher, she has been involved in research related to youth work, non formal learning and its implementation in formal education institutions, well-being and social inclusion.

She is the head of EU Training Academy Poland and works on a daily basis with supporting youth personal development and youth workers professional development, by creating innovative tools and methods to support the formal educational systems through non formal learning.

TRANSPERSONAL PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES IN THE WORKPLACE – A HOLISTIC MODEL FOR AN ECO-CENTRIC PARADIGM SHIFT

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What re-evolution is required in our working culture to support the further development of the workforce and reshape the workplace dynamics to improve mental health, enhance well-being, reduce burnout and stress, but also to boost performance, creativity and innovation? How can we adapt but also keep up with the rapid technological developments, and still value the unique qualities of the human factor? This paper advances the theoretical implications of bringing the transpersonal framework and values into the workplace by drawing on transpersonal psychology theory to investigate and address the aforementioned questions. Transpersonal psychology (TP), the 4th force in psychology, is understood as a 'transformative psychology of the whole person in an intimate relationship with a diverse, interconnected and evolving world" (Hartelius, Rothe & Roy, 2013) and becomes a crucial element in innovating the collective working culture. Compared with other approaches that focus on well-being and mindfulness, such as Positive Psychology or mindfulness-based interventions, PT is an approach that seeks to integrate spiritual and transcendent human experiences into the framework of modern psychology, understanding how the non-ordinary states of consciousness play a role in transformation, healing and self-actualisation.

The paper analyses the existing research and literature on transpersonal in the workplace while theoretically examining how the core values of TP applied in the workplace can create a bridge towards the development of a new working culture, a bridge to a paradigm shift from a highly competitive, performance-oriented, stress-inducing working culture to one focused on sustainability and its four crucial aspects: human, social, economic and environmental. The results of this literature review conclude that TP holds key principles and practices needed for the future of the working culture, and suggest possible ways as to how to move the discipline forward. For example, in the workplace, addressing the human being/employee's well-being from a holistic perspective, integrating the spiritual dimension, and developing transpersonal leaders. We need a shift in consciousness, in the human consciousness, in the working culture, and the collective values. These shifts will help to create working environments that support growth and well-being, centred on sustainability, that help the employees find their unique contribution, their eco-niche and feel like a meaningful part of a greater whole.

Keywords: transpersonal psychology, burnout, eco-centric workplaces, human resources management, workforce development.

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Karina Minda is a clinical psychologist, transpersonal psychotherapist, board member of EUROTAS Global Transpersonal Network and co-founder of Well-being LAB. Her areas of professional focus are transpersonal psychotherapy, breathwork, creative expression, amplified states of consciousness and wellbeing.

WORKING SESSION 4: Workforce Transformation, Labour Laws, and the Future of Work

Chair of Session: Dr. Margret Jaeger

TECHNOLOGY IN WAREHOUSING: SHAPING WORKFORCE INTEGRATION AND EVOLVING SKILLSETS

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Human-machine collaboration is a central theme of Industry 5.0, a concept that builds upon the advancements of Industry 4.0 by emphasizing human factors. This human-centric approach conceptualizes workers as valuable assets rather than mere costs, highlighting the necessity of upskilling to help them adapt to new technologies and roles. Building on these assumptions, this paper contributes to understanding the role and perception of warehouse worker's; skills through empirical data from the research project Humans in Digital Logistics (HuLog), conducted between 2023 and 2025 in Poland, Belgium, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

The analysis is based on Polish fieldwork comprising two case studies, 41 in-depth semi-structured interviews and non-participant observation of warehouse operations. The interview protocol, informed by a literature review on work and employment, covered themes such as workplace technology, career trajectories, employment conditions and industrial relations. Interviews were conducted with warehouse operatives (n=23), professionals (n=6), and managers (n=12). The studied warehouses employed digital warehouse management systems and automation solutions. Data analysis followed an iterative coding process using both deductive and inductive qualitative research methods.

The findings reveal that warehouse workers, often categorized in the literature as low- skilled, in the era of automation and multi-process workflows must possess competencies such as spatial orientation, adaptability, teamwork, and communication skills. These competencies are frequently perceived by employers not as hard skills but rather as inherent or natural attributes, leading to their devaluation and normalization as self-evident qualities. Warehouse workers participating in the study often reported experiencing cognitive fatigue after a workday. While machines and automation alleviate physical strain, they introduce a variety of cognitive tasks that require workers to operate scanners, computers, tablets, and voice-picking headsets. This duality positions the warehouse worker as both a 'polyvalent worker' and, paradoxically, as a workforce often seen by stakeholders as requiring basic skills and minimal technical expertise. Such narrative devalues warehouse labour and justifies precarious employment conditions imposed by employers.

Our research contributes to the literature on the devaluation of low-skilled labour, highlighting how precarious working conditions are reinforced by prevalent narratives and organizational practices in logistic sector. Our findings demonstrate that warehouse workers can perform diverse tasks and that digital and automation technologies can reduce physical load while increasing cognitive engagement. This challenges the classical assumption that technology inevitably leads to deskilling, as we observe both deskilling and upskilling effects. We argue that job design and training for warehouse workers should be approached more comprehensively, considering the multifaceted nature of their roles, the impact of technology and the need for tailored support aligned with job requirements.

Keywords: warehousing, skills, digital workplace, labour devaluation, precarity.

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LEGAL FRAMEWORKS FOR REMOTE WORK: PRODUCTIVITY, CHALLENGES, AND LONG-TERM LABOR MARKET IMPLICATIONS

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The global shift toward remote work, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has brought new challenges and opportunities for both employees and employers. While the legal frameworks supporting remote work have evolved in many countries, there is still a need for further regulation to address issues such as workers' rights, data protection, and work-life balance. Specifically, ensuring fair treatment of remote workers, including protection against discrimination and access to career advancement opportunities, remains a concern. Additionally, data protection laws must adapt to new challenges such as employer monitoring and cybersecurity risks in remote settings. Finally, work-life balance regulations, including the right to disconnect and measures to prevent burnout, require clearer legal frameworks to ensure employee well-being.

This research explores the legal aspects of remote work, focusing on the productivity implications, challenges, and long-term effects on the labour market, with a particular focus on Cracow, a hub for shared services. In Cracow, more companies are now insisting on a return to the office, shifting toward a hybrid model where employees work three days remotely and two in the office. This transition is driven by the need to improve productivity, foster team building, and enhance knowledge sharing, which are seen as crucial for maintaining the effectiveness of shared services in a competitive market.

The study is based on an empirical analysis of key performance indicators (KPIs) measuring productivity before and after the pandemic. Results show that performance initially declined by 18% in the first months of COVID-19 but returned to pre-pandemic levels after seven months as organizations adapted. While this case study focuses on Cracow, the findings are broadly applicable to other European countries with similar labour markets and shared services industries. The EU's regulatory framework shapes remote work policies across member states, and multinational companies often apply uniform strategies, making the observed trends in productivity and legal challenges relevant on a broader scale.

Research examines how legal frameworks have evolved to accommodate remote and hybrid work arrangements. The findings reveal that while some regulations—such as the right to

disconnect, employer obligations for home office setups, and data protection rules—have been introduced, gaps remain in ensuring equal treatment and long-term protection for remote workers across different jurisdictions.

The study also demonstrates how hybrid work models influence employee productivity and engagement. While many organizations initially struggled with remote work, the transition to a structured hybrid model has improved efficiency, collaboration, and knowledge sharing. However, the research highlights challenges such as workplace inequalities between remote and on-site workers, as well as disparities in career advancement opportunities.

Beyond individual organizations, findings show that remote work is reshaping the broader labour market. Job roles are evolving in knowledge-based industries, where digital collaboration tools are replacing traditional office interactions. The study also identifies a shift in talent distribution, cross-border employment, and changing regional labor demand. Companies have opportunities to hire talent from different countries, as physical presence in an office is no longer always required. This trend is particularly noticeable in the shared services and technology sectors, where businesses recruit employees from across Europe to work remotely. Some cities – like Cracow - that previously had strong job markets due to office-based workforces may experience shifts. If remote work continues to grow, demand for office space, local services, and urban infrastructure may decrease.

Keywords: remote work, legal frameworks, labour market, productivity, shared services.

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Dr. Boguslaw Balza is an Assistant Professor at the University of the National Education Commission in Cracow. He holds doctorates in both economics and law and specializes in labour law, immigration law, tax law, and economic policy. His research focuses on the intersection of legal and economic disciplines, analysing the impact of regulatory frameworks on labour markets, migration policies, and fiscal systems. As the author of numerous articles and books, he actively contributes to academic discourse and policy discussions. Dr. Balza regularly presents his findings at national and international scientific conferences, engaging with experts in his field. His work aims to provide insights into legal and economic challenges, shaping discussions on sustainable policies and regulatory improvements.

SOCIAL PROTECTION IN A CHANGING WORLD: JOB GUARANTEE AS A PATHWAY TO ADDRESS TECHNOLOGICAL UNEMPLOYMENT AND GREEN TRANSITION

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Welfare-states in various countries face numerous challenges nowadays to provide adequate social protection to their populations, given the social dynamics that characterize post-industrial societies, from ageing populations to the emergence of "atypical" forms of work.

Prospects of net job losses due to automation and the need to reshape various sectors of our economies to meet the targets of carbon neutrality, which may represent the extinction of numerous job posts in polluting industries and an urgent need to requalify and reintegrate in the job market a great number of workers, represent a whole new range of additional challenges for Welfare-states in the areas of employment protection.

In order to contribute to this discussion, we analyse in this article the proposition of public policy known as *Job Guarantee*, which consists in guaranteeing a job post in public service to anyone who voluntarily applies for it, serving both as a safety net for involuntary unemployment and to cover areas of activity not addressed by the market.

The structure is as follows. We start by explaining, in more detail, what *Job Guarantee* is and what are the main arguments in favour of this policy option. Then, we briefly compare *Job Guarantee* with other policies (namely Participation Income and Basic Income), based on dimensions of analysis found in the literature review, so that we have a better understanding of the sort of questions raised by the implementation of such policies.

We conclude with a brief analysis (based on policy evaluation reports and academic papers) of two programs that come close to the idea of *Job Guarantee*: the Argentinian program *Plan Jefes* and the French program *Territoire Zéro Chômeur de Longue Durée* (TZCLD). We hope with this analysis to stimulate reflection in the challenges we are facing and the trade-offs between the options to address them.

Keywords: welfare-state; social protection; employment; green transition.

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DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS AND WORKFORCE POLICIES: ASIAN MIGRANTS IN SLOVENIA'S LABOUR MARKET

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The European labour market is undergoing a demographic transformation, marked by population aging, declining birth rates, and an increasing reliance on migrant workers to fill critical labour shortages. In semi-peripheral countries like Slovenia, migration from Asia is emerging as a significant but underexplored workforce trend. Specifically, the number of Asian migrants in Slovenia has been steadily increasing, with a notable rise of 10–17% in early 2024. As of May 2024, there were 1,021 Indian, 409 Nepalese, 266 Bangladeshi, and 184 Filipino workers in the country, primarily employed in construction, manufacturing, IT, and healthcare.

This paper examines the structural role of migrant labour in Slovenia's evolving workforce, focusing on the intersection of demographic shifts and EU labour policies. Drawing on labour segmentation theories and transnational migration frameworks, the research explores how policies designed to attract and regulate migrant workers are shaping labour integration, workforce sustainability, and economic inclusion.

While the empirical phase of this research is yet to be conducted, involving multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork, in-depth interviews with labour migrants, employers, and NGOs, as well as the collection of quantitative labour force data, this presentation will critically assess current EU and Slovenian migration policies. It will evaluate their implications for workforce development and outline key hypotheses regarding the role of Asian migrants in addressing demographic and sectoral gaps. The findings will contribute to broader discussions on how European labour markets can adapt to demographic realities through inclusive and sustainable workforce strategies.

The research employs a policy review and demographic data analysis methodology, systematically examining the EU and Slovenian migration policies, including legal frameworks, bilateral agreements, and employment regulations shaping migrant workforce integration, as well as Demographic and labour market data from Slovenian statistical sources, identifying key trends in workforce shortages and the role of foreign labour in mitigating these gaps.

Key words: demographic transformation; labour migration; eu and slovenian migration policies; workforce shortages.

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Her research focuses on identity processes, migration, transnationalism, AI ethics in organizations, sustainable development, diversity and inclusion, gender balance, and workplace well-being.

She has received first prize from the Government Office for Slovenians Abroad (2013, 2023) for her research on Slovenian identity in Argentina. She has worked at UNIPE and Universidad del Salvador, and has been a visiting researcher at the University of Stavanger (Norway) and University of Primorska (Slovenia). https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5265-2241

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