

www.eurofedop.org



A connected Digital Single Market and Change of Work. What will be the effect for consumers, employees and trade unions?

Le Meridien St. Julians Hotel (Malta), 09-10.02.2017

A seminar on this very up-to-date subject was organised in Malta, Le Meridien St. Julians Hotel, on 9 and 10.02.2017. On invitation of the WOW, more than 50 delegates from 15 European workers' organisations took part in the debate.

A welcoming word was said at the opening of the seminar by Mr Søren Fibiger Olesen, President of Krifa and WOW, and Mr Josef Vella, Chief Executive Officer of UHM, Malta.



Mr Søren Fibiger Olesen



Ms Sonia Jemmotte

The position of the European Commission on “Labour market implications of ICT development and digitalisation” was presented by Ms Sonia Jemmotte, Policy Analyst, DG Employment and Social Affairs. She spoke about the advantages and disadvantages for employment and “the platform economy”, its opportunities and challenges. Here the problem is about formal work and how to get tax revenues. Remains the question: “Are we prepared?”

In conclusion, she summed up the potential implications associated with the 4th industrial revolution:

- employment (size) consequences,
- skills,
- job quality (job security, working times, reconciliation work-private life)
- informal economy,
- access to social protection.

Claudio Grech, Shadow Minister for the Economy (Malta), explained that 1987 was the year that Malta took a new course with regard to digitalisation. Until then, IT had been forbidden from the point of view that employment had to be protected.

In the course of last 4 years, Malta has taken the lead together with countries like Estonia and Austria in the field of the implementation of new technology.

New jobs have been created, for example in the financial sector.

Other developments have been: a greater access to the market, high speed infrastructure, lower operating costs, access of users to cheaper prices, stronger removal of barriers for training.

More key points in his speech: regulation cannot be globalised, privatisation of infrastructure investments, talent innovative development, sovereignty of skills policy, financial independence, capital flow should be free, innovation policy.

Norbert Klein of EZA spoke about the contents and significance of projects set up with the help of EZA.

The first seminar day was concluded with the discussion of the seminar themes in working groups.

The second seminar day started with explanation given by Ms Ivette Schuitema of the CNV (the Netherlands) about the way in which collective bargaining agreements are established in their country by consulting their members online. Furthermore, she indicated that this online consultation is not limited to their own membership, but all workers are invited to take part in the consultation.

The seminar ended with the presentation of the conclusions.

- Trade unions are advised to take part in the developments.
- Technology must serve man.
- Regulation (collective bargaining) is necessary.
- The responsibility for training and re-education is shared by the State, the employers and employees.
- The importance of employability.
- Social justice needs to be secured (basic income – work sharing).
- Minimum standards, participation in decision-making, data protection.