



Cornell University
ILR School
Institute for Compensation Studies

Information Technologies and Labour Market Disruptions: A Cross-Atlantic Dialogue

20-21 March, 2014

The Conference Board | 845 Third Ave, New York City
Eurasia Room

An interdisciplinary, cross-sector roundtable organised by The European Commission ([DG Enterprise and Industry](#) and [DG Connect](#)) in cooperation with The Conference Board and Cornell University ILR School.

AGENDA AND SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The meeting will operate under the Chatham House Rule.*

Objective:

To identify micro and macro employment issues and considerations resulting from technological progress and digital technology adoption that are important to improving economic growth, innovation, job creation and employee performance, considering policy and practice, and drawing lessons from EU-US comparisons.

Overarching themes:

- The impact of technology on employment and future jobs
- Current labor market and productivity "anomalies"
- Ensuring accuracy of official measures (including productivity calculations) given dynamic employment and labor market trends
- Contribution of technology to grassroots innovation: creation of new industries, products and services
- Policy and practice considerations
- International comparisons between the EU and the US

Day 1 - Thursday, 20 March 2014

Arrive	11.45– 12:00	<i>Registration</i>
Lunch	12:00 – 1:00	<i>Welcome lunch in the room</i>
Session A	1.00 – 1.30	<i>Introduction and setting the stage</i>
Session B	1:30 – 3:00	<i>What is the macro-economic impact of new technology on aggregate labor demand, productivity, output and competitiveness? What do the data show and what, if anything, needs to be measured in new ways?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the aggregate slowdown in productivity just a result of changes in industry composition, or is there a productivity slowdown within industries? How does the economic crisis affect macroeconomic productivity measures?• How do productivity developments in Europe differ from what can be observed in the US, and why?• What can be said about reconciling the various technology/job multipliers?

- How is technology impacting the globalization of supply chains and labor distribution?
- Are we correctly measuring output and productivity? Do national and international measurements need to be revised?
- How does technology impact the relationship between productivity and compensation? What is the impact on income inequality?
- Are there other labor market trends that intersect with technology in impacting productivity and employment? How can the effect of these be isolated?
- In terms of the impact on employment, are we experiencing an unprecedented technological shock, or will it have a similar impact as previous shocks?
- What is the role of worldwide demographic trends and what role can immigration play?

Break 3:00 – 3:30

Session C 3:30 – 5:00

What is the “frontline” (microeconomic) impact of new technology on workplace productivity, employment and employee compensation? How are we measuring what changes businesses are making to how work gets done?

- What are the types of tasks that are being, or will be, displaced, replaced, or otherwise materially impacted by technology – currently, in the immediate future and over the next generation?
- What new tasks are enabled and/or created by technology?
- Within existing businesses, is productivity increasing? Are productivity increases advancing at a slower rate?
- What is the net impact of technology on jobs in existing businesses?
- To what degree is technology spurring employment in new start-ups and are these jobs “different”?

Adjourn for day 5:30

Dinner 6:00– 9:00

Cocktail reception and dinner at Luna Piena restaurant (243 E 53rd St)

A short discussion to start dinner conversations around the following questions:

- What is the future of work? What kind of jobs will be available 20 years from now for today’s Kindergarteners?
- What are the long term consequences and implications of a shortage of jobs and a significant and growing surplus of labor?
- What is government's responsibility to plan for, and to seek to ensure, long term job creation in the face of the headwinds of accelerating technological advances?
- Are these issues being discussed within the relevant governmental agencies in the U.S. or Europe?

Day 2 - Friday, 21 March 2014

Breakfast 7.30 -8.30 AM *Continental breakfast served in the room*

Session D 8:00 – 10:00 *Breakfast Panel with TCB member representatives – The Impact of Technology on the Future Workforce*

- How are technology-enabled outsourcing, offshoring, and teleworking changing how and where work gets done, and who’s doing it (employees, contractors or freelancers)?
- What motivates employers to replace (even minimum wage) workers with technology or other alternative solutions?
- What are the pro and cons of expanding capital investment vs. employing people?
- How are new technology and data changing recruiting, strategic HR decision-making,

		and management of workplace operations?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which work tasks (done by human employees) are being/will be displaced or replaced by technology? Which are being enabled and/or newly created? • Is technology “disruptive” to workplaces in different ways in Europe versus the U.S.? (And, what about Asia and Pacific, Latin America, and the Middle East and Africa?)
Break	10:00 – 10:30	
Session E	10:30 – 12.00	<p><i>Technology’s impact on skill demand, potential skill shortages, and filling the skills gap</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main technological trends expected for the next decade and what are future jobs likely to look like? • What types of skills and jobs will be needed in which occupations? • Is there really a skills gap? If so, is the skill shortage the result of demographical developments, lagging educational curricula, lack of company-specific training and apprenticeships? • Why isn't increased compensation for workers a more significant part of the discussion regarding how to address the skills gap? Can skill shortages be abated by simply “paying more”? How significant is the arrival of the ‘digital natives’ generation, immigration reforms, governmental educational reform, and/or increased internalizing of training costs by employers? • What governmental policies could be most helpful in this context?
Lunch	12:00 – 1:30 PM	<i>Working lunch in the room</i>
Session F	1:30 – 3:00	<p><i>Revisiting The Employer Perspective -- the dynamics of technology on organizational structure, HR management and the meaning of “having a job”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is technology changing how/where work gets done, and who’s doing it? • Do organizations have the change management skills to accompany technology-driven disruptions? • How do employers balance expanding capital investment vs. employing people? Are new technologies and/or other forces changing the calculus? • Has business culture changed from layoffs being “the last resort in bad times” to downsizing as an annual (or quarterly) constant improvement process? (“productivity layoffs”?) • How do we properly balance efficiency and profitability against the need for jobs? • How will ‘big data’ impact recruitment and HR strategies and operations? • Is technology “disruptive” in different ways in Europe than the U.S.? (And, what about Asia and Pacific, Latin America, and the Middle East and Africa?)
Break	3:00 – 3:30	
Session G	3:30 – 5:00	<p><i>What have we learned? Is a consensus emerging? What are the key research topics and policy priorities? What are the main differences between the US and Europe, and what is the implication for individuals, employers and the government?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polarization, income inequality? Are current trends sustainable, or avoidable? • Jobs created vs. jobs destroyed, skills in demand vs. skills in decline • What might future jobs look like? • Impact of emerging and developing countries • The role of demographic trends and migration • The impact of past and current policies, and the role of government going forward
Session H	5:00 – 5:30	<i>Conclusions, Take-Aways, Next Steps</i>
Adjourn	5:30	

To benefit from the wide array of expertise, the Dialogue will be operated in roundtable fashion with participants contributing insight, comments and questions on a voluntary basis, moderated by the session chair and Dialogue facilitator. Each session will be opened with brief comments from the session chair and one or two predetermined attendees. There will be no formal presentations during the 1½ day meeting. All attendees agree to participate in the Dialogue under the Chatham House Rule.*

* Under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.

This event is organized by:



THE CONFERENCE BOARD



Cornell University
ILR School
Institute for Compensation Studies