National Action Plan to implement the European Social Partners Framework Agreement on Digitalisation in Poland

Preamble

We live in an era of advanced technological change, sometimes referred to as the Industrial Revolution 4.0. Digital technologies have been transforming our daily lives, as well as the way we work and do business. Digital solutions such as communication systems based on the development of online platforms, artificial intelligence or quantum technologies can enrich the working environment in many ways. What is needed is investment in such innovations and proper management of the implementation process.

The social partners emphasize that, if properly implemented, digital transformation will bring clear benefits to employers, workers and jobseekers alike in terms of new job opportunities, increased productivity, optimized processes, better working conditions, new ways of organizing work and improved quality of services and products. The use of new technologies will have a significant impact on the labour market, the functioning of business models and the structure of employment. Technological progress can lead to new, more productive jobs and the automation of routine tasks, while providing opportunities for workers to upgrade or retrain. In the long run, this can lead to increased demand for labour in certain sectors and create better employment opportunities. The introduction of new technologies is beneficial for the economy and society, but it is equally important to use them in an informed way. It will also be necessary to develop holistic strategies to support workers in the roboticization of their jobs. In particular, this concerns the use of collaborative robots (cobots), which will share a common space with humans while ensuring their safe interaction. All indications are that the development of this practice will affect most industrial sectors.

The ability to reap the benefits of digitalisation in the workplace depends on effectively mitigating its negative impacts, as well as managing and identifying potential risks associated with the process. Therefore, it is important to create the right conditions and tools to support the course of digital transformation and mitigate risks. True digital transformation of the workplace must start with building trust among employees and organizations that the applications and processes used are secure for business management and do not violate employees' privacy. Feeling safe is not just a matter of cyber security.

Digital transformation also brings challenges and risks to employees and organizations. Employees need to have confidence in the technology itself and in the way it is used. This is particularly important when it comes to artificial intelligence. Digital transformation needs to be properly managed, including through social dialogue mechanisms, to limit potential job losses. Entrepreneurs, especially small and

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medium-sized enterprises, need support to acquire the knowledge and tools necessary for this process. This is clearly signaled in the European Commission's 2020 White Paper[1]. The main elements of the paper are ecosystems of excellence and trust in artificial intelligence, based on European values. The creation of ecosystems should encourage citizens to use AI and provide businesses and public organizations with the legal certainty to innovate with AI.

Improving education and skills should become a key element of Poland's overall digital transformation vision. To succeed in the competitive, technology-driven EU market, Polish companies need digitally literate employees. Employees, in turn, need digital skills to navigate an increasingly digital and rapidly changing labour market. Meanwhile, there is a noticeable shortage of digitally literate workers. According to research by the European Commission, 90% of all jobs already require at least a minimum level of digital skills, and the demand for digital professionals is growing[2]. However, 37% of the EU's workforce has insufficient digital skills. In addition, almost half of EU companies still have no re-skilling strategies in place for their employees. Meanwhile, structural changes in the labour market due to digitalisation and automation of processes are creating situations where retraining and upskilling are needed.

As more and more processes in the working environment are automated, digitalisation will lead to changes beyond the technology sector. This means that many professions will be completely transformed. The social partners have a key role to play in this context. The promotion of innovation and the diffusion of digital technologies are prerequisites for a good quality of life, employment opportunities and the elimination of existing inequalities in access to the labour market. This is particularly true for the activation of under-represented groups in the labour market, in particular women, people with disabilities and people approaching retirement. Many of the appropriate solutions will need to be sector-specific and differentiated. To find appropriate solutions, it is necessary to make use of bipartite dialogue mechanisms, in particular collective bargaining and agreements, the importance of which has been confirmed by Principle 8 of the Social Rights Pillar, the EU Council Recommendation of 13 June 2002 on strengthening the social dialogue in the European Union and Directive 2041/2022/EC.

Against this background, the social partners have decided to adopt the following action plan to implement the European social partners' June 2020 agreement on digitalisation.

The social partners will take action in the following areas:

- The right to disconnect

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- Building a culture of lifelong learning and supporting the creation of digital jobs

Right to disconnect

The parties point out that the existing legal guarantees for working time standards and the right to rest provide a basis for realizing the right to disconnect. It is therefore essential to respect the existing legal framework. At the same time, the parties point out that it is necessary to take measures to promote a working culture that guarantees the undisturbed enjoyment of the right to rest, by which the parties mean limiting the use of telephones, business e-mail, instant messaging, etc. outside the employee's working hours. The parties state that the starting point for action should be a discussion at company level, involving trade unions or employee representatives, to diagnose whether and to what extent there is a problem with participation in communication via digital tools and excessive involvement of employees in work-related activities outside working hours.

The Parties stress that the well-being of workers requires the effective implementation of the right to disconnect.

<u>In order to effectively implement the right to disconnect, the parties will encourage practices such as:</u>

☐ Setting up auto-responders in company mailboxes indicating that a worker is on leave and who in the team of colleagues should be contacted for urgent matters.

☐ Setting up autoresponders in company mailboxes indicating the employee's working hours and the possibility of replying during working hours.

☐ Training of managers/training of all employees on respecting the right of subordinates/colleagues to undisturbed rest.

☐ Meetings with a psychologist/professional counselor on the need to "fast" from a constant online presence on social media or instant messaging in one's professional and personal life.

☐ Work at employer level, involving trade unions and employees, to find the right balance between online and face-to-face verbal communication.

☐ Take initiatives at employer level to create an appropriate work culture that respects workers' right to disconnect, including informing workers of their rights.

☐ Raise awareness among workers and employers about the digital and psychological well-being of workers and the risks associated with being online all the time.

☐ Establishing rules on the use of digital tools for work purposes.

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☐ The employer may monitor the performance of work to verify that the employee is fulfilling his/her duties, in full compliance with the principles and requirements set out in Regulation (EU) 2016/679 [GDPR].

<u>Proposal to be followed up.</u>

The parties declare that the issue of the right to disconnect will be included in the discussion at the planned talks on the revitalization of collective bargaining practice.

The parties will continue to work together to develop guidelines and good practices to enable the creation of an appropriate working culture that takes into account the use of digital tools, the right of workers to disconnect and the need to ensure that the right of workers to disconnect is respected.

Building a culture of lifelong learning and supporting the creation of digital jobs

Today's dynamic process of technological change, including digitalisation, requires a new approach to upskilling and supporting job creation. As processes become increasingly automated, workers need to have the right digital skills to communicate effectively at work and to work with and manage technology (more broadly: Forecasting the demand for skills and qualifications in selected sectors in the context of economic change[3]).

Despite progress in this area, Poland is ranked 25th out of the 27 EU Member States in terms of access to digital infrastructure (DESI - Digital Economy and Society Index, 2022). Women and people with disabilities are important groups of digitally excluded people. The highest proportion of people who have never used the internet live in rural areas, although at the same time rural areas have seen the fastest growth in the proportion of people using the internet regularly in recent years (an increase of 14.8 p.p. between 2017 and 2022).

<u>In order to develop a culture of lifelong learning, the parties will promote practices such as:</u>

☐ training and social trade union activities to make workers aware of the need to improve their skills and competences,

☐ the development of career paths that take account of current technological trends,

☐ the development of workers' digital skills useful in the workplace and in future/potential workplaces,

☐ building workers' and jobseekers' confidence in technology through campaigns to create a positive image of technology, especially for digitally excluded groups,

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[3] https://lewiatan.org/raporty-i-manifesty/

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☐ activities for the professional activation of under-represented groups in the labour market, in particular women, people with disabilities and people close to retirement age in digital jobs.

<u>The Parties declare that they will initiate activities aimed at:</u>

☐ developing and implementing a solution to effectively support the co-financing of employers' activities in the field of equal forms aimed at improving the professional skills and qualifications of employees by identified needs, in particular equipping students with the skills of the future through the development of effective teaching and learning methods using ICT and SI technologies;

☐ supporting the creation of digital workplaces;

☐ developing of training programmes to provide workers with full knowledge and security regarding their functioning in the robotized working environment, when strategies for the use of collaborative robots (cobots) in the workplace are adopted;

☐ the use of real instruments from the National Training Fund (KFS, *Krajowy Fundusz Szkoleniowy*) and the financing of 40% of the Labour Fund (FP, *Fundusz Pracy*);

☐ development of a digital strategy for the wider working environment, involving public authorities;

☐ development of strategies (bilateral and trilateral) at national, regional, sectoral level on the impact of digitalisation processes on the location(s)/sector(s) concerned;

☐ effective forecasting the demand for digital skills in a given sector.

Monitoring and implementation

The approved Action Plan will be submitted to the government and to the Social Dialogue Council (RDS, *Rada Dialogu Społecznego*) for information.

The parties undertake to publish the Action Plan on the website of the represented organization and to promote it through the communication channels used by the organization.

The signatories undertake to implement the Action Plan with due diligence and to monitor progress in this area. The signatories undertake to hold a meeting to review progress after 6, 12 and 18 months.

After each meeting, the parties will prepare a note to be forwarded to the RDS Steering Committee.

The parties note that many aspects of the digitalisation process should be the subject of further intensified work by the social partners. Issues that could be the subject of joint projects include:

- the impact of the use of algorithms on the working environment,

-analysis of the impact of the future AI regulation on the working environment,

-issues related to psychosocial risks associated with the use of new communication tools.

The Parties express their interest in pursuing further work in the above areas.

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The Action Plan includes an annex that discusses changes in labour law in the area of electronic applications, information and declarations.

Annex

Digitalisation of applications, information and declarations

An important element of the digitalisation of HR processes was the introduction in 2019 of the possibility of keeping and maintaining employee records in electronic form. However, the changes to the record keeping rules have not kept pace with the labour laws governing the submission of declarations themselves, applications or the provision of information to employees. If a paper document is to be attached to employee records kept in electronic form, the employer or a person authorized by the employer must prepare a digital reproduction of the document, affix a qualified electronic signature or a qualified electronic seal of the employer to it and place it in the employee records in a manner that ensures legibility, access and consistency of the records. Due to the provisions of the Labour Code, the parties to the employment relationship often had to create paper documents first and then the employer had to create a digital reproduction of the document.

The 2023 amendments to the Labour Code were a breakthrough in this respect. The legislator decided to introduce electronic forms to a greater extent in the Labour Code.

The option of using a paper or electronic form was introduced into the Labour Code:

- to provide the employee with additional information on the terms and conditions of employment,

- to provide the employee with information on the principles of monitoring,

- providing an employee sent to perform work on the territory of another country with information on the terms and conditions of employment during the performance of work abroad,

- providing the employee who is subject to a breathalyzer test with information on how the test is carried out,

- the worker's request to change the type of employment contract to a contract of indefinite duration or to one with more predictable and secure working conditions,

- the worker's request to take part of her maternity leave, parental leave, paternity leave or filial leave

- an employee's request for flexible working arrangements,

In addition, it is possible to amend the employment contract in paper or electronic form to the extent that the parties agree on the use of remote working. Declarations, information (e.g. on health and safety) required by labour law about remote working may be provided in paper or electronic form. In the case of remote working, the employee's requests for which the provisions of the Code require written form may be made in paper or electronic form.

National action plan on Digitalization in Macedonia for the period 2024-2026

When we are talking about digitalization basically we are speaking about encompassing the transformation of information into digital formats, use of digital technologies, connectivity, software applications, data management, cybersecurity, and the development of digital skills. Digitalization is a multifaceted process that influences various aspects of society, economy, and governance.

Macedonia, started to witness the initial developments in information and communication technologies in the late 20th century. It was started with establishing the basics of the ICT infrastructure as well as introducing the computer systems as well as telecommunication and networks as a new way of working.

In the begging of 21st century Macedonia started to take steps towards e-government initiatives to improve public services. Efforts were made to digitize government processes, making them more efficient and accessible to citizens. This period marked the beginning of the country's digital transformation journey. In the next years' government continued its efforts in digitizing public services and enhancing the overall e-government framework. Investments were made in improving digital infrastructure, including internet connectivity and data centers.

When it comes to the private companies, Macedonia has made significant progress in establishing a legislative framework as well as a strategic one that allows companies to embrace digitalization. Several approved laws in 2019, such as the Law on electronic documents, electronic identification and fiduciary services and the Law on electronic management and electronic services, allow individuals and legal entities to regulate their electronic signatures and seals and thereby obtain electronic confidential services. Furthermore, the Law on electronic commerce establishes the conditions for providing information services related to electronic commerce, the responsibilities of the providers of information services, commercial communications and the rules for the validity of contracts in electronic form. A key prerequisite to ensure that businesses, especially SMEs, can take full advantage of digital transformation is improved alignment and cooperation between regulatory bodies in Macedonia.

Like all the other countries, Macedonia also faced big challenges regarding the cybersecurity, digital skills gaps, and the need for a more robust regulatory framework to support the growing digital ecosystem. On the other hand, opportunities emerged for leveraging digital technologies in areas such as healthcare, education, and public administration. In the following period our country is continuing its efforts to strengthen digital infrastructure, enhance cybersecurity measures, and further develop e-government services.

Digitalization is a transformative force that can propel Macedonia into a new era of economic growth, efficiency, and societal well-being. This comprehensive National action plan on digitalization outlines the steps required for a successful national digital transformation. It encompasses key areas such as infrastructure, education, governance, innovation, and international collaboration.

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However, the effective implementation and enforcement of existing laws is a prominent challenge in the effort to digitize Macedonia, primarily in terms of stronger enforcement of these laws. Although Macedonia has established a solid legal framework, there is often an inadequate level of oversight by the competent authorities, resulting in challenges faced by consumers, especially in the domain of e-commerce. Moreover, compiling with EU regulations is another key obstacle. Although steps have been taken to align the legal framework with EU standards, certain gaps and inconsistencies exist that require resolution.

Macedonia, aspiring to join the European Union, aligned its digitalization efforts with EU standards and frameworks. But, nevertheless, we as a country haven't done much in that direction. First of all, the European social partner's framework agreement on digitalization hasn't been translated into Macedonian language, even though it is signed almost 4 years ago. Regarding that we cannot see any implementation of it and the social partners have big difficulties to implement any part of the agreement.

Furthermore, the national ICT strategy, which contains key pillars aimed at encouraging the digital transformation of businesses, is in the process of being drafted and harmonized since 2020. However, its finalization and formal adoption have yet to be realized. In addition, the imperative to strengthen public awareness and education regarding digital rights and responsibilities is emphasized. To effectively address these challenges, it is essential to adopt a multifaceted strategy that combines robust policy development with comprehensive implementation, ultimately fostering an environment in which digitization truly empowers businesses and benefits society as a whole.

Based on all that, the social partners decided to adopt the following National action plan on digitalization in Macedonia, for the Period 2024-2026.

The social partners will work on the following fields:

- Informing about European social partners' framework agreement on digitalization (EFAD)

- Right to disconnect (R2D)

- Digitalizing the work and communication of the social parners

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Informing about European social partners' framework agreement on digitalization:

As we point out previously almost nobody knows about European social partners' framework agreement on digitalization, especially the social partners in Macedonia. We as social partners, signing this National action plan about digitalization in the next 2 years, will work on informing bigger audience about EFAD. To inform relevant audience about the European Social Partners Framework Agreement on Digitalization, we will undertake a series of targeted activities. The aim is to raise awareness, facilitate discussions, and engage relevant parties. Here is a suggested plan of activities:

- Informational sessions about EFAD:

  o Include sessions about promotion and information about EFAD in current activities, which will be consisted of explanation about the key provisions of the framework agreement, where broader audience can be reach but also experts can present information and engage in sessions with questions from the present participants.

  o Facilitate discussions to address questions and concerns, where relevant representatives from the social partners or government officials will be present.

  o Promote the European Social Partners Framework Agreement on Digitalization through partners' informational channels, such as websites.

  o Organizing debates to discuss the practical implications of the framework agreement and how it can be implemented at the national level.

  o Create informational materials such as brochures or social media posts to explain key points of the agreement.

  o Proposing initiatives for amendments to key laws for the application of digitization in the current law or collective agreements

By combining all of these activities, we can create a comprehensive and inclusive information campaign that ensures stakeholders and relevant people at various levels to be well-informed about the European Social Partners Framework Agreement on Digitalization.

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Right to disconnect

"Right to Disconnect" is not existing in any legal framework in Macedonia and therefore employees are not familiarized with this therm. In short, "Right to Disconnect" is a labor right concept that acknowledges employees' right to disengage from work-related communications and tasks outside of their regular working hours. The idea is to establish a clear boundary between work and personal life, especially in an era where digital technologies have enabled constant connectivity. And when we are talking about the key aspect of R2D we can say that they include: work-life balance, mental health and well-being, legal protections, collective Agreements, company policies, flexibility, global trends and many more. The parties signing this National action plan will stimulate activates like:

- o Increasing awareness about Right to disconnect in a way that promote a healthier work-life balance by preventing excessive work demands beyond regular working hours and that the continuous digital connectivity can contribute to stress, burnout, and negatively impact on employees' mental health.

- o Submit proposals that Right to Disconnect needs to be part of the new Labor law. Since the new law is not passed yet, when there will be official time for amendments to it, the parties that signed this NAP will propose changes to it, and the R2D to be included in the law, more precisely to be explained what it is and the employees can use it as their right.

- o Foster communications with the employers that the Right to disconnect to be included into the Collective agreements or the institutions legal documents.

- o Organize seminars and workshops to inform and educate about rights under the Right to Disconnect policy. Emphasize the importance of work-life balance and mental well-being and explaining them that Right to Disconnect does not necessarily mean a complete disconnection for everyone. Instead, it emphasizes the importance of establishing clear expectations and providing employees with the flexibility to manage their work schedules responsibly.

- o Promotional activates about the Right to disconnect, where social partners will use various channels such as emails, websites, posters, etc. to inform employees and employers about the Right to Disconnect.

The overall goal of this is to strike the balance between the demands of the modern workplace and the well-being of employees

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Digitalizing the work and communication of the social partners.

Digitalizing the work and communication of social partners can enhance efficiency, transparency, and collaboration. Parties that has sign this National Action plan on digitalization in Macedonia believes that digitalizing the work of social partners will be in favor for the members and introduce in the same way long-life learning because only in that way the employees can educate themselves, gain new skills but also have some requalification so they can keep their current jobs. According to that bellow are steps to achieve this digital transformation:

- o Train members on digital skills, which will be consisted of conducting training programs to familiarize members with digital tools and platforms. Moreover, implementing programs like this will enhance digital literacy and skills among the workforce and general population and promote life-long learning.

- o Foster the use of social media, where well established social media presence will happen and moreover we will maintain it for outreach and communicate with members.

- o Collaboration with international trade union organizations and international employers' organizations, as well as neighboring countries, and the European Union to share best practices, lessons learned and leverage support for digitalization efforts.

- o Discuss, research and gather information about creating a database of the trade unions or employers' organization which signed this NAP. The conducted research will be shared among the signing parties and will help them to find appropriate funding to create database which will be used to keep track of members, their profiles, and engagement levels, etc.

- o Initiate the creation of National strategy on digitalization. With all the info, activities and work done before, the parties signing this NAP will have good ground for proposing the creation of National strategy on digitalization.

By embracing digitalization, social partners can adapt to the evolving landscape, enhance member engagement, and foster more efficient communication and collaboration. Regularly reassessing and updating digital strategies will help organizations stay agile and responsive to the needs of their members.

Implementing this action plan requires strong leadership, coordination among various stakeholders, and a commitment to continuous improvement. Regular reviews and adjustments will be made to adapt to changing technological landscapes and emerging and arising opportunities. By embracing digitalization, Macedonia can

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position itself as a competitive player in the global digital economy, driving sustainable economic growth and improving the quality of life for its citizens.

The parties that have signed this National action plan on Digitalization in Macedonia will monitor the implementation of it with having continuous reports on every 6 months. Moreover, a meeting will be scheduled among signing parties after one year of the signing to review the implementation of it.

The National action plan on Digitalization in Macedonia was agreed, accepted and signed by social partners' organizations:

Organization of employers of Macedonia
President
Dr. Vladanka Trajkoska

Confederation of free trade unions of
Macedonia – KSS,
President,
Blagoja Ralpovski

January, 2024

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Aim 2: Raising awareness about Right to disconnect		
Result	*Activities*	*Timeframe*
Improved legal framework that it is in line with EU laws	- Submit proposals that Right to Disconnect needs to be part of the new Labor law. Since the new law is not passed yet, when there will be official time for amendments to it, the parties that signed this NAP will propose changes to it, and the R2D to be included in the law, more precisely to be explained what it is and the employees can use it as their right	2024-2026
	- Foster communications with the employers that the Right to disconnect to be included into the Collective agreements or the institutions legal documents	
Higher number of population has knowledge about Right to disconnect	- Promotional activates about the Right to disconnect, where social partners will use various channels such as emails, websites, posters, etc. to inform employees and employers about the Right to Disconnect	2024-2026
	- Increasing awareness about Right to disconnect in a way that promote a healthier work-life balance by preventing excessive work demands beyond regular working hours and that the continuous digital connectivity can contribute to stress, burnout, and negatively impact on employees' mental health	
Members of the social partner are informed and educated about their rights concerning R2D	- Organize seminars and workshops to inform and educate about rights under the Right to Disconnect policy. Emphasize the importance of work-life balance and mental well-being and explaining them that Right to Disconnect does not necessarily mean a complete disconnection for everyone. Instead, it emphasizes the importance of establishing clear expectations and providing employees with the flexibility to manage their work schedules responsibly	2024-2026

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Aim 3: Digitalizing the work and communication of social partners		
Result	**Activities**	**Timeframe**
Improved lifelong learning within social partners	- Train members on digital skills, which will be consisted of conducting training programs to familiarize members with digital tools and platforms. Moreover, implementing programs like this will enhance digital literacy and skills among the workforce and general population and promote life-long learning	2024-2026
Enhanced cooperation on international organizations	- Collaboration with international trade union organizations and international employers' organizations, as well as neighboring countries, and the European Union to share best practices, lessons learned and leverage support for digitalization efforts	2024-2026
Bigger use of digital tools	- Foster the use of social media, where well established social media presence will happen and moreover we will maintain it for outreach and communicate with members	2024-2026
	- Discuss, research and gather information about creating a database of the trade unions or employers' organization which signed this NAP. The conducted research will be shared among the signing parties and will help them to find appropriate funding to create database which will be used to keep track of members, their profiles, and engagement levels, etc.	2024-2026
Improvement of the legal framework about digitalization in Macedonia	- Initiate the creation of National strategy on digitalization. With all the info, activities and work done before, the parties signing this NAP will have good ground for proposing the creation of National strategy on digitalization	2024-2026

National Action Plan of Social Partners in Romania
Regarding Digitalization

1. Introduction
1.1. Context and history

In recent years, we have witnessed a significant transformation in the nature of work, primarily driven by the substantial development of digital technology, which is increasingly used in all work processes. The digitalization of work is a continually expanding phenomenon, accelerated by global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to widespread adoption of remote work practices. Consequently, employers, regardless of their size or sector, have increasingly integrated digital technologies into the organization of their work. Flexible employment contracts, including remote work, teleworking, and home-office arrangements, are becoming more prevalent.

The emergence of digital platforms and remote communication technologies has allowed employees in certain sectors to connect and perform their professional activities from geographically dispersed locations. While this change offers increased flexibility, it also brings new challenges for both employers and employees.

This plan aims to address the implications and challenges posed by digital transformation.

1.2. Purpose of the National Action Plan

The main objectives of the national action plan include safeguarding the rights of workers in the light of the new realities brought about by the digital era, and addressing the challenges posed by the digital transformation.

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The plan aims to introduce new topics into the social dialogue in Romania, prompted by the digital era. These include the right to disconnect, occupational health, and safety outside the workplace, mental health, and lifelong learning regarding new digital technologies, as well as aspects related to data security.

Furthermore, it seeks to raise awareness regarding the irreversible nature of digital transformation and its impact on the labour market.

With a focus on social dialogue, the plan aims to provide a strategic vision for implementation and monitoring, ensuring a smooth and inclusive transition to the digital era.

The current national action plan is based on the European Social Partners' Framework Agreement on Digitalization (June 2020) and aims to adhere to the principles established in this framework agreement.

1.3.   Important Themes to Address

The process of digital transformation in labour relations raises a number of important issues that need to be addressed in discussions between the social partners and which should be a priority in the coming period both in national debates and in sectoral debates or collective bargaining.

Some of the essential identified themes include:
✓ Education and continuous professional training

✓ Right to Disconnect
✓ Data Security
✓ Collaboration with Artificial Intelligence
✓ Stress and Mental Health
✓ Health, Safety, Ergonomics in teleworking
✓ Digital illiteracy
✓ Young workforce migration - impact regarding the openness towards digitalization (from older remaining workforce)
✓ Institutional adaptation to new realities and challenges of digitalization
✓ Interconnectivity of relevant public institutions' databases (Labor Inspectorate, National Pension Agency, National Health Insurance Agency, General Inspectorate for Immigration, National Tax Administration, etc.)

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✓ Awareness regarding the digitalization phenomenon - advantages, disadvantages, and challenges

2. Lifelong Learning and Continuous Professional Development

2.1. Adapting to Digitization, Automation, and Robotics

Recognizing the transformative impact of digitalization on the labour market, it is imperative to equip the workforce with skills aligned with the evolving technological trends. Continuous professional development programs should focus on developing skills relevant to digital technologies, automation processes, and robotics. This includes training in data analysis, artificial intelligence, and other emerging technologies to ensure that workers remain competitive and adaptable in the digital era.

2.2. Addressing Digital Illiteracy

Romania ranks low in the European Union in basic digital skills. Addressing digital illiteracy remains a priority to ensure that more workers acquire basic digital skills.

2.2.1. Tailored Training Programs

To combat digital illiteracy, organizations, companies, and educational institutions need to collaborate to design and implement tailored training programs. These programs should respond to the specific needs and skill gaps of the workforce, providing comprehensive training in basic digital skills, the use of digital tools, and understanding emerging technologies. A modular and adaptable curriculum ensures that individuals can progress at their own pace.

2.2.2. Inclusion for Vulnerable Groups

Recognizing that certain demographic groups may be more susceptible to digital exclusion, training programs should be inclusive and accessible to all. Special attention should be given to older workers, women, immigrants, and other vulnerable groups. Inclusion

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measures may include language support, flexible work programs, and personalized support to ensure equal opportunities for participation in lifelong learning initiatives.

2.2.3. Young Workforce Migration

There is a significant correlation between age and the ability to adapt to the changes proposed by digitalization. Thus, it is evident that the younger workforce is more capable to adapt to new digital transformations. The emigration of younger individuals greatly impacts the composition of the national workforce, and the existing older workforce may exhibit increased resistance to embracing new digital advancements. Therefore, there is a greater effort required in the training of workers for the new digital era, especially considering the continuous evolution of technology.

2.3. Promoting Collaboration with Educational Institutions

Collaboration between employers and educational institutions is essential for the success of continuous professional development. Establishing partnerships with universities, vocational schools, and online learning platforms allows organizations to access up-to-date knowledge and resources. Internship programs, joint research initiatives, and collaborations between industry and academia foster a symbiotic relationship, ensuring that the workforce is equipped with the latest skills demanded by the digital economy.

2.4 Government Incentives for Lifelong Learning

Governments play an essential role in promoting lifelong learning. The implementation of incentives, such as tax exemptions for organizations and companies investing in employee training, subsidies for educational programs, and grants for skill development initiatives, fosters a culture of continuous learning. Public-private partnerships can leverage government resources to create an environment conducive for employers to invest in their workforce development.

Addressing digital illiteracy through specific training programs, promoting inclusivity, collaborating with educational institutions, and providing government incentives for lifelong learning, this comprehensive approach ensures that the workforce remains resilient and adaptable in front of the digital transformation.

3. Right to Disconnect
3.1 Legal Framework
3.1.1 EU Legislation

EU legislation, particularly the Working Time Directive (2003/88/EC), provides a basis for protecting the right to disconnect. The directive sets limits on working hours, ensuring that workers benefit from adequate rest periods and breaks. The European Union recognizes the importance of safeguarding workers' rights in the evolving landscape of remote work. The European Parliament has adopted a resolution urging the European Commission to prepare a directive on the "right to disconnect." Additionally, initiatives like the European Pillar of Social Rights emphasize the need for fair working conditions, creating a framework to support the right to disconnect within the EU.

3.1.2 National Legislation

The Telework Law 81/2018 represents a significant step in regulating remote work and establishing specific employment relationships for such contracts. The labour code has been complemented with provisions explicitly referring to telework. However, these legislative changes need to be supplemented with new norms adapted to the challenges posed by the digitalization of work.

National legislation can play a crucial role in adapting the right to disconnect to the specific needs and contexts of each member state. This involves defining clear parameters for organizing working hours and rest time, as well as explicitly regulating the right to disconnect outside established working hours.

In correlation, legislative changes should aim to adjust norms related to monitoring compliance with these rights, including new regulations through labour inspection laws providing inspectors with tools to verify compliance with legal provisions regarding working and rest time in the digital era.

3.1.3 Collective Agreements

Collective labour agreements can also be an essential mechanism for regulating the right to disconnect, tailoring the mode of work and the extent to which this right is respected,

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for each employer. Both sectoral and unit-level collective labour agreements have the flexibility to address nuances not explicitly covered by legislation. Therefore, collective labour agreements can represent the most well-adapted regulatory framework for protecting workers' rights in the digital labour field.

The right to disconnect is intrinsically linked to broader workers' rights, encompassing the principles of work-life balance, mental well-being, and the preservation of personal time. Recognizing this, efforts are made to incorporate the right to disconnect into the broader spectrum of workers' rights, acknowledging that the ability to disconnect from work-related communication outside regular working hours is essential for employees' health and overall satisfaction.

3.2 Course of Action

Digital work, remote work, and work flexibility must be regulated with the establishment of precise limits, considering the development of policies that respect workers' autonomy while also expecting reasonable disconnection outside working hours. The principle of flexibility should always consider respecting the worker's privacy, maintaining a balance between private and professional life, and ensuring the health and safety of the worker, including mental well-being.

In regulating the right to disconnect, it is essential to establish clear and transparent communication protocols. These include defining clear expectations regarding digital communication to avoid encroaching on the worker's private life and personal time after working hours. Protocols should be known to both workers and their hierarchical leaders or individuals with whom the worker communicates in any work-related capacity.

Beyond regulatory measures, companies and organizations are encouraged to implement initiatives that promote work-life balance. This involves creating a culture that values employee well-being, providing mental health resources, and offering flexible scheduling options. By encouraging a favourable work environment, employers contribute to the effective implementation of the right to disconnect.

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4.   Remote Work and Workers' Rights
4.1. Promoting Healthy Home Work Environments

Creating a healthy home work environment is crucial for the overall well-being of remote workers. Employers should provide resources for suitable furniture and equipment for work. Encouraging regular breaks, physical exercise, and maintaining a clear distinction between workspace and personal space contribute to a healthier balance between professional and private life.

It is also essential to consider ensuring occupational health and safety standards in remote work and addressing specific issues related to this type of work in the Occupational Health and Safety Committees established at the employer level.

4.2. Data Privacy and Security

As remote work becomes more widespread, increased reliance on digital communication and collaboration tools raises issues related to privacy. It is essential to address aspects such as safely managing sensitive information, protecting against cyber threats, and complying with data protection regulations. Organizations must implement robust cybersecurity measures, including encrypted communication channels and secure file-sharing platforms, to protect employees' privacy and reduce the risk of data security breaches.

4.3. Mental Health Support Programs

Recognizing the potential impact of remote work on mental health, organizations and companies must prioritize the well-being of their employees. Implementing mental health support programs, accessible resources, and counselling services contribute to mitigating stress, isolation, and exhaustion. Managers should be trained to recognize signs of mental health challenges and encourage open communication about well-being within remote teams.

5.   Increasing Awareness regarding Digital Transformation
5.1 Understanding Digital Transformation

Promoting awareness campaigns about the irreversible nature of digital transformation, emphasizing the profound and lasting changes brought about by digitalization. Information dissemination in the campaign can be achieved through

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informative materials/brochures, direct meetings with workers, and dissemination through digital platforms.

Awareness efforts should also include communication about the risks associated with digitizing work. Individuals and organizations need to be informed about potential challenges, such as job displacement, changing skill requirements, and the impact on traditional industries. Open and transparent communication about these risks is crucial for mitigating negative consequences.

There is an equal need to accelerate certain digitalization processes within public institutions. While there are significant concerns about the digital development in the public sector, there is still a need to expedite this process, considering that there are institutions where the digitalization process does not keep pace with the new realities imposed by technological advances.

5.2 Collaboration with Media and Educational Institutions

New generations entering the workforce need to be equipped with digital knowledge to limit digital illiteracy from the beginning. In this regard, collaboration with media outlets and educational institutions enhances the coverage and impact of awareness initiatives.

6.   Ensuring Workers' Rights in Algorithmic Decision-Making Processes

As algorithms play an increasingly significant role in decision-making processes, safeguarding workers' rights becomes paramount. Unions should advocate for transparency and fairness in algorithmic decision-making.
This involves:

- Understanding Algorithms: Unions should make efforts to ensure that workers have a clear understanding of how algorithms influence their working conditions.
- Access to Information: Supporting workers' rights to obtain clear and understandable information about algorithms that impact their activities.
- Fair Representation: Ensuring that algorithmic systems do not disproportionately affect certain groups of workers, reinforcing principles of equal treatment and non-discrimination.

7. Steps for Implementation

7.1 Legislative Reforms

On one hand, consideration may be given to the revision and updating of legislation. Regular revision of existing laws related to remote work, digitalization, and workers' rights may be necessary in the digital context to ensure alignment with the current landscape and anticipated new digital developments.

On the other hand, analysis should be conducted regarding the introduction of new regulations. In the case of identifying gaps in legislation concerning certain aspects arising from the digitalization process, the analysis of introducing new regulations that specifically address the challenges and opportunities presented by digital transformation is necessary. A good example in this regard could be the regulation of the right to disconnect.

It is also essential to consider the continuous adaptation of the legislative framework to new European regulations on digitalization during the legislative reform process, as these regulations are themselves in a constant dynamic due to the new challenges posed by digitalization.

7.2 Role of social partners and interinstitutional collaboration

Social partners play a crucial role in implementing this plan as the main representatives of workers and employers. Close collaboration between unions, employer organizations, and the government is essential to ensure that the plan reflects the needs and interests of both parties and facilitates an efficient transition to the digital era. Interinstitutional collaboration is also crucial, especially concerning the interconnectivity of databases of relevant public institutions. Institutions such as the Labor Inspectorate, National Pension House, National Health Insurance House, General Inspectorate for Immigration, National Tax Administration, and others must work together to ensure coherence and efficiency in the digitalization process and facilitate information exchange between them.

7.3 Initiatives for Collaboration between Employers and Unions

Implementing the National Action Plan requires close collaboration between employers and union organizations.

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Thus, digitalization and the regulation of digital labour relations should become an important chapter in future collective labour agreements to be negotiated, both at the unit and sectoral levels.

The active involvement of authorized social partners in collective bargaining is essential to incorporate contractual norms reflecting the principles and guidelines presented in the National Action Plan.

7.4 Public Awareness Campaigns

Public awareness of the National Action Plan is essential. Various channels, such as social networks, traditional media, and community communication programs, should be used to disseminate information about the plan.

The plan should also be disseminated within member organizations to popularize it among employers and workers.

7.5 Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

Establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms ensures the effective implementation of the National Action Plan, such as:

- Feedback Mechanisms: Implementation of feedback mechanisms for workers, trade unions, and employers to monitor the effectiveness of the plan and suggest improvements.
- Technology Utilization: Using technology to facilitate the collection and processing of collected data, as well as real-time monitoring of the entire process.

8. Monitoring Means

8.1 Periodic Meetings of Social Partners

To ensure effective monitoring and coordination, it is proposed to hold periodic monitoring meetings between representative social partners to discuss progress and address new challenges.

Conducting regular audits and evaluations is essential for assessing compliance and effectiveness:

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- Frequency: Implementing periodic audits to assess how well organizations adhere to the guidelines presented in the National Action Plan.
- Evaluation Criteria: Developing comprehensive evaluation criteria covering key aspects, including workers' rights, well-being, and adherence to guidelines on digital transformation.

8.2 Feedback mechanisms from workers and unions

Incorporating feedback mechanisms ensures that the experiences and concerns of workers and unions are considered. Conducting regular surveys to assess satisfaction levels and gather information about the impact of the National Action Plan on the ground.

8.3 Incorporation of technological solutions for supervision

Implementing data analysis tools to process and analyse large datasets, providing insights into the overall impact of the National Action Plan.

Posting the action plan on websites and promoting it through communication channels used by organizations, including digital platforms.

9. Conclusion
9.1 Recap of Key Points

In conclusion, the National Action Plan outlines a comprehensive strategy to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by the increasing prevalence of remote work and digitalization. Key points that should be discussed by social partners and that the current plan focuses on include:

- Defending workers' rights: through the right to disconnect, compliance with OSH standards, and protection in algorithmic decision-making.
- Promoting well-being: emphasizing support for healthy home office environments and initiatives for work-life balance.
- Lifelong learning: addressing digital illiteracy through personalized training programs, inclusion measures, and collaboration with educational institutions.
- Increasing awareness: communicating the irreversible nature of digital transformation, individual and collective risks, and engaging in public forums for discussions.

- Implementation methods: involving legislative reforms, addressing digitalization issues in social dialogue, including in collective bargaining of labour agreements, funding for training programs, public awareness campaigns, and robust monitoring mechanisms.

9.2 Commitment to involvement of social partners regarding the challenges posed by the digitalization of work processes

The National Action Plan signifies a commitment to raising awareness and addressing digitalization of work processes together with all the challenges posed by the digitalization process. As essential principles, the well-being and rights of workers, encouragement of continuous learning, and the development of workers' digital literacy process will be treated with priority. The Plan lays a foundation for a workforce that can adapt to the evolving technological landscape.

The success of the National Action Plan relies on collaborative efforts from government bodies, employers, union organizations, and individuals. Therefore, awareness is needed among both involved social partners and workers regarding the importance of the digitalization process and the changes it will bring to labour relations.

Joint Declaration of the National Social Partners on the Implementation of the European Framework Agreement on Digitalisation and the National Action Plan

As representatives of employers and workers in Romania, we support with this joint declaration the implementation of the European Framework Agreement on Digitalisation.

This joint statement reflects our intention to cooperate to embrace digital transformation while respecting the fundamental principles of fairness, inclusion, and social responsibility. We understand the importance of a balanced and inclusive approach to digitalisation, ensuring that the benefits are shared in a fair way between workers and employers in Romania, considering the specificities of SMEs.

We recognise the imperative of a balanced and inclusive approach to digitalisation, which stimulates economic growth and equally ensures that the benefits are distributed fairly across society.

The European Framework Agreement on digitalisation sets out overarching principles to guide our approach to digitalisation, focusing on a future of work that puts welfare, rights, and fair opportunities for our workforce at the forefront.

In parallel, we also aim to jointly discuss a National Action Plan of the social partners in Romania, setting out a pathway tailored to the specific challenges and opportunities of our country. We aim in this way to establish a comprehensive strategy to address the complex aspects of the digital transformation, including the promotion of lifelong learning.

As we move forward on the path of digital transformation, we recognise the importance of aligning our national strategies with the broader European framework, while addressing the multifaceted needs of our country's workforce and industries.

Through this joint declaration, we express our desire to place the issue of digitalisation at the heart of the social dialogue, aware of the importance of this issue in the future development of labour relations. We understand that digitalisation brings important changes in the way labour relations are conducted, and therefore it must be a key topic of the social dialogue to enable the social partners to find solutions adapted to the new challenges posed by the digitalisation process and the development of public policies on digital transformation for SMEs.

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We recognise the shared responsibility of employers, workers, and stakeholders in shaping a future of work that is both digital and socially responsible.

With this joint declaration, we commit ourselves to a collective pathway of adaptation, continuous learning and fostering a working environment that reflects the values embodied in the European Social Partners' Framework Agreement on Digitalisation.

Date: 5 December 2023, Bucharest

Signatories (name, signatory organisation, signature):

Bogdan Iuliu HOSSU
CNS CARTEL ALFA (trade union confederation)

Dumitru COSTN
BLOCUL NATIONAL SINDICAL (trade union confederation)

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CSN MERIDIAN (trade union confederation)

Adelina DABU
CONFEDERATIA PATRONALA ,CONCORDIA' (employers' confederation)

Florin JIANU
CNIPMMR (employers' confederation)

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Lithuanian social partners' action plan for the implementation of the European Social Partners' Framework Agreement on Digitilisation
2024 January, Vilnius

The Lithuanian Trade Union „Solidarumas" and the Confederation of Lithuanian Employers recognize the Framework Agreement on Digitalisation achieved at the European level and consider it valid in Lithuanian conditions.

The social partners discussed the possibilities of complementing the Framework Agreement and decided to draw up the following action plan for 2024.

The right to disconnect, as autonomous regulation is provided by collective agreements and individual relations. The parties are committed to lay down the rules to be adhered to. These rules will help to protect and improve workers' well-being and privacy in the context of remote work/teleworking/distant work/home-office work.

The parties agree the need to promote **life-long learning and provide continuous vocational training (CVT)** relevant to the challenges of digitalisation, automation, and robotization, in the first place by addressing digital illiteracy/inadequate digital skills of the workforce, especially those segments that are particularly prone to digital exclusion (elder workers, women, migrants etc.). Both the trade union „Solidarumas" and Employers' organisations participate in different projects on the National and International level and agree that there should be a priority list of themes drawn up in the coming period to be addressed both in national debates and in sectoral debates or collective bargaining.

Some of the essential themes:
☐ Education and continuous professional training
· Right to Disconnect (rule setting)
· Data Security
· Stress and Mental Health
· Health, Safety, Ergonomics in teleworking
· Digital illiteracy
· Young workforce migration - impact regarding the openness towards digitalization
· Institutional adaptation to new realities and challenges of digitalization
· Awareness regarding the digitalization phenomenon - advantages, disadvantages, and challenges.

The parties agree that collaboration between employers and educational institutions is essential for the success of continuous professional development. Establishing partnerships with universities, vocational schools, and online learning platforms allows organizations to access up-to-date knowledge and resources. Internship programs, joint research initiatives, and collaborations between industry and academia foster a symbiotic relationship, ensuring that the workforce is equipped with the latest skills demanded by the digital economy.

The parties agree to emphasize the importance of observing **occupational health and safety (OHS)** standards and regulations outside employers' premises (off-site work), including the **ergonomics of the actual workplace (home office).**

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The parties agree to raise the general awareness of society about the profound, irreversible **nature of digital transformation** and its consequences for labour market and employment, in particular, **individual and collective risks** caused by the transformation.

Workers and trade unions have the right to clear, understandable information on how their working conditions are affected by algorithms. The right to information and consultation is fostered by both organizations in accordance with the Lithuanian Labor Code.

Implementation of the National Action Plan requires close collaboration between the parties, they agree to have **periodic meetings** of social partners bilaterally for the exchange good practices, opinions and ideas. In the future, other employers and union organisations will be invited to join the National Action Plan.

Action plan for 2024

1. Joint activities

No	Activity	Period
1.	Signing of the agreement on the implementation of digitization in Lithuania.	March 2024
2.	Presentation of the draft agreement in the Trilateral Council of the Republic of Lithuania.	March 2024
3.	Invitation to join the agreement for social partners.	May 2024
4.	Preparation of the draft rules of conduct regarding the right to disconnect outside working hours and after working hours.	May 2024

2. Lithuanian Trade Union "Solidarumas"

No	Activity	Period
1.	Preparation of the draft agreement on the implementation of digitization in Lithuania.	February 2024
2.	Discussion of the draft agreement in the organization.	March 2024
3.	Signing of the agreement on the implementation of digitization in Lithuania.	March 2024

3. Confederation of Lithuanian Employers

No	Activity	Period
1.	Discussion of the draft agreement in the organization.	February-March 2024
2.	Invitation to join the agreement for social partners.	May 2024

LPS „Solidarumas"

Kristina Krupavičienė
President

Confederation of Lithuanian Employers

Danukas Arlauskas
President

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DOCUMENT FOR THE NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT
ON DIGITALISATION

Business Europe, SMEunited, CEEP and the ETUC concluded the European Social Partners Framework Agreement on Digitalisation on 22 June 2020, the implementation of which is left to the procedures and practices «specific to management and labour and the Member States» (Art. 155(2) TFEU).

This agreement applies to workers and employers in both the private and public sectors within the EU.

Only the private sector was analysed within the Efad project.

The subject of regulation is the impact of digitalisation on work content, working conditions, work relations and work organisation. In particular, reference is made to the topics of professional skills, employment terms and conditions, work-life balance, work environment and occupational health and safety. Within each of these topics, several unresolved issues are closely related to the digital transition. These issues include:

- Digital skills: to safeguard the employability of persons engaged in re-skilling or up-skilling pathways, or in transition towards new employment opportunities, the importance of adequate training for the acquisition of technical, as well as transversal (e.g. problem-solving; critical thinking; creativity) and social (e.g. human resources management; emotional intelligence) skills is emphasised.

- Disconnection: due to the increasing reliance on technological devices to perform remote work, it is necessary to establish both a right and a duty to disconnect. This can be achieved by assigning workloads based on clear objectives and trusting in employees' ability to self-organize.

- Artificial intelligence: the proper use of monitoring or automated decision-making systems in the workplace implies the supervision or review by humans of the decisions made through an algorithmic process, the assessment of specific risks related to the psycho-physical integrity of workers (e.g. cognitive fatigue), the prohibition of discrimination practices as well as compliance with the principles of transparency and legality.

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- Surveillance systems: the installation of remote worker monitoring devices, such as audio-visual systems, must adhere to European privacy laws to ensure human dignity. The EU Regulation *inter alia*, reserves to collective agreements the power to «provide for more specific rules to ensure the protection of the rights and freedoms in respect of the processing of employees' personal data in the employment context» (Art. 88(1), EU Reg. No. 679/2016).

According to the CISL, the most prominent content for trade union action lies in the design of a participatory process and a collaborative approach within the industrial relations, to implement the Agreement. The process should be activated at the national and/or company level and should follow the national industrial relations systems and practices (so-called adaptation principle). In conformity with the Framework Agreement, this process consists of the following stages:

1. «joint exploration / preparation / underpinning»: discussion on opportunities and risks of digitalisation, the impact on work as well as possible actions and solutions;

2. «joint mapping / regular assessment / analysis»: examination of the thematic areas related to the digital transition of work in terms of benefits and challenges as well as identification of possible measures to be taken;

3. «joint overview of situation and adoption of strategies for digital transformation»: development of digital strategies aimed at setting objectives in line with the outputs of the previous phases;

4. «adoption of appropriate measures / actions»: testing of agreed solutions by defining priorities, timeframes, roles and responsibilities of management, workers and their representatives as well as resources and support measures (e.g. expert advice);

5. «regular joint monitoring, follow-up, learning & evaluation»: joint assessment of the effectiveness of the actions undertaken for possible modifications or integrations.

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This document is primarily based on the experiences of national, sectoral and company-level bargaining documented during the implementation of the EFAD project. These experiences are considered in terms of their replicability, fostered by a cross-sectoral framework, whose most significant issues are addressed below.

In line with the Framework Agreement, concerning the impact of **artificial intelligence**, the potential of which still appears to be largely unexplored, joint and close assessments of the effects on the future of work and employment, and of **the possible rules of algorithm management** are deemed important, providing room for sectoral industrial relations and collective bargaining.

A key topic that also emerged during the project is the introduction of **new contract profiles linked to digitalisation**.

It is extremely important to continue developing digital transformation mapping, especially at the sectoral level. This is evidenced by recent national workers' contracts signed by leading national social partners in various sectors like graphics, chemical-pharmaceuticals and banking.

The chemical-pharmaceutical sector has also provided a framework of **guidelines for second-level bargaining in the area of digitalisation**, which is a valuable practice for the development of sectoral dialogue on this issue.

Furthermore, the possibility of establishing financing funds for companies implementing innovative training plans, particularly those related to new digital skills, is also relevant.

The investment in **continuous training**, especially joint training among social partners, including "tailor-made" asynchronous e-learning pathways for companies and workers is crucial.

In this sense, it would be appropriate, for example, to provide support for training courses financed by joint sectoral bodies between trade unions and employers (as in the case of temporary workers at Employment Agencies, for example) to allow the worker to attend the training in parallel with their professional activity. As a result:

- the worker improves their employability by reducing the periods of non-work;

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- pathways to support mobility between sectors are made possible;
- the worker can take charge of their career path.

In this case, asynchronous courses on crosscutting and digital skills were developed. The courses included joint monitoring by the social partners and consultative participation of employees in the evaluation and implementation of the training catalogue.

From these experiences, an effort is underway to create a **training booklet for skills recognition.** The assumption is that training, which includes digital skills, should be designed to meet the training needs identified through dialogue between social partners and workers.

In this regard, in the last national agreement of the metalworking sector, the social partners promoted a digital portal (METAPPRENDO), jointly developed by trade unions and employers. The companies can join this portal (by paying a fee) to offer training pills, training paths and certification of training with blockchain technology. In the agreement, a self-assessment questionnaire aimed at surveying and understanding the workers' needs related to digital skills, was also included.

As demonstrated by the latest renewal of the graphics workers' agreement, it is crucial to redefine and extend contract profiles based on current realities in the labour market. This should be a central aspect of the digital transition, and it should be done in close cooperation between trade unions and employers.

It is also highly recommended to establish joint observatories to oversee the digital transition process. This will enable the identification of new contractual profiles and the development of reskilling and upskilling programs for workers aged over 50.

Collaboration between social partners in the digital transition is, therefore, crucial to promoting a strategic perspective to provide workers in enterprises with skills that enhance their employability.

To anticipate and prevent the impacts of the digital transition on employment levels, it is important to promote the creation of national bilateral and joint committees as set, for example, in the National Collective Labour Agreement for the credit sector signed on 19 December 2019 (Art. 29).

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These committees aim to analyse the impact of new technologies and digitalisation, to identify the skills needs of the future and the emergence of new jobs and professional figures. **The ultimate goal is to safeguard employment and occupational levels by ensuring adequate occupational transitions throughout the worker's life cycle and, where possible, the so-called "generational relay".**

In terms of **health and safety**, it should also be considered that digital technological innovations are now at the forefront in many areas where they are being adopted for different purposes and uses. In the labour field, safeguards for employees using digital equipment are becoming equally crucial. In fact, the propensity of employers towards equipment and devices - especially individual and collective protection devices (PPE/DPC) - is clearly growing, making technological innovations (PPE-IoT) the most effective element to cope with exposure to accidents, as well as occupational diseases.

The limited knowledge of these equipment and devices, and the scarce awareness of the prevention potential they offer (making the costs of adoption real and worthwhile investments, on the ethical and economic front) are slowing down a more widespread implementation. This is a non-secondary factor that needs to be developed, especially in some of the most urgent areas. The direct and indirect forms of user resistance are fuelled by fears of the extent to which these safeguards may encroach on the privacy rights sphere.

This opposition is driven by understandable fears, but these cannot outweigh the benefits of prevention measures supported by comprehensive studies and statistics on accident dynamics. It is therefore a top priority to work on increasing knowledge and, with it, awareness of the opportunities that the digital transition is offering on the occupational health and safety front.

If the emergence of technological innovation and digital transformations in work and production processes, allows it to overcome the challenges that hinder the improvement of working conditions and business operations. If these developments can also significantly contribute to the sustainability of companies, which is crucial for maintaining competitiveness and prioritizing quality and respect for individuals. Then, it is essential to promote this process of change more than ever before.

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The European Strategy 2021-2027 focuses on digitalisation for prevention. It urges everyone, starting with the social partners, to initiate a process of "change management", to seize opportunities by confronting and overcoming obstacles.

It is evident that any difficulties encountered in the use of technology and digital innovations for risk prevention and protection should not cast doubt on their benefits. However, it is crucial to prioritize the safety and interests of users. To achieve greater effectiveness, it is important to involve all actors of prevention in a participatory model. This includes employers, workers' representatives, but also the company's HR, and the organizational and strategic departments.

Regarding **remote work**, it is essential to include in collective bargaining agreements joint training courses for employees **who work at least partially outside of their company's premises** and supervisors. This aligns with the **National Protocol on Agile Work, which was signed by the social partners and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy on December 7, 2021**.

The training activities must focus on developing technical, organizational and digital skills required for the proper usage of work tools. In parallel, they should also focus on imparting human resource management skills to promote a culture of trust and empowerment among workers in attaining objectives assigned by managers.

The Protocol itself provides the relevant guidelines for collective bargaining in the private sector, and provides for the identification of a «disconnection zone in which the worker does not perform work».

Based on the experiences developed by collective bargaining in our country, which were analysed and discussed during the project's workshop activities, the CISL acknowledges that the European Framework Agreement on digitalization still holds significant value today. This is because it was created through a comprehensive dialogue between employers' associations and trade unions, thus highlighting the importance of social dialogue and the role of social partners.

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The CISL endorses the remedial and participatory approach to the digitalisation of work aimed at adequately responding to the worker's new demands for protection while increasing the competitiveness of the production system.

For this reason, **the CISL considers it important to reopen a dialogue with the employers' associations to support the transposition and translate jointly the European Agreement. The actual implementation of the Agreement will have to take place through collective bargaining,** according to the guidelines shared in the Agreement itself.