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The Threat of Physical & Psychosocial Violence and Harassment in Digitalized Work

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Section I Rise in risks of violence against women and men in the world of digitalized work

Section II Social partners and academics' responses

Section III Existing ILO codes of conduct and standards, preliminary recommendations

Risk areas

(a) working in contact with the public;

(b) working with people in distress;

(c) working with objects of value;

(d) working in situations that are not or not properly covered or protected by labour law and social protection;

(e) working in resource-constrained settings (inadequately equipped facilities or insufficient staffing can lead to long waits and frustration);

(f) unsocial working hours (for instance, evening and night work);

(g) working alone or in relative isolation or in remote locations;

(h) working in intimate spaces and private homes;

(i) the power to deny services which increases the risk of violence and harassment from third parties seeking those services;

(j) working in conflict zones, especially providing public and emergency services; and

(k) high rates of unemployment. (ILO 2016b: 40)

Further risk areas

- poor human resources management
- poor organization of work, including lack of clear rules and responsibilities
- inadequate assignment of tasks
- unrealistic production targets
- poor communication
- poor labour relations
- discriminatory practices (ILO 2016b: 40).

Digitalized management methods

- The use of big data and algorithmic distribution of work;
- the use of people analytics and digitalized profiling to make decisions about hiring/firing and in appraisals;
- the use of 'own-contract' or bogus self-employment contracts to disguise employment relationships while blocking workers from having basic rights such as holiday and sickness pay in gig work;
- tracking and monitoring productivity and using data accumulated to make human resource decisions;
- the use of technologies to replace aspects of work or jobs altogether;
- the normalisation of interruptions and expansion of working time in offices;
- the 'always on' culture of work and boundary permeability, where workers are expected to be available by phone or email throughout the weekend and evenings and related practices and expectations.

Online gig work

- Work obtained by online platforms, work itself also online
- Homes, cafes, libraries
- High rates of preparatory work, reputation management
- ‘Double burden’ for women
- Racism, overwork, wage theft, domestic violence

...if I am ill, automatically my reputation breaks down. For me this would be a violence. Because if I'm a normal freelancer, I can ask a colleague to do my job. For example, I was working as a journalist, if I were ill, I could ask my employer to accept that another colleague does my job. There is no chance in crowdwork, if you lose your reputation. That is another problem, you can't take the reputation from one platform to another one. (ver-di)

Offline gig work

- Organization of work digitalized but work carried out physically
- Streets, homes
- Bogus self-employment, pressure to work harder/faster, no guaranteed income, stress, violence

Now everything is digital there is much less freedom and much higher control, thus meaning we are much less 'independent', even though our contracts say we are totally free and independent. (IWGB)

Drivers speed. There is a high rate of psychological violence because of the inability to earn enough money based on this work. Issues with local police and cases of bribery. (Argentina)

Very little protection from violence for riders despite the working conditions are risky, constantly at risk of having an accident or being attacked. (FAU Berlin)

Office spaces

- People analytics, electronic performance monitoring, wearables for wellness
- Discrimination, lack of access to data, stress, 'always on', work intensification

Workers need the right to rest. Working in a permanently sped-up working framework leads to serious increased risks of PPVH. (IG Metall)

To avoid an institutionalised misbalance of power, it will be of upmost importance to establish workers' data rights. (UNI Global Union)

Automation and Industrie 4.0

- Offices, factories, warehouses, landfills
- Automation, computerisation
- Worker monitoring, wearables
- Cloud computing
- Machine-to-machine communications (IoT)

What impact will these changes have on people's workloads? Is work going to be easier or harder? More stressful? Will there be more work? (IG Metall Arbeit 2020 in NRW)

We're aware that the tracking might be used to put pressure on us to work faster, and it might be used to sack people. But lots of us feel that we don't care anymore. Because physically we just can't do any more. (Warehouse Operative)

What are social partners doing about it?

- ***ver.di*** mediafon
- ***IG Metall*** Bezirksleitung NRW, Projekt: 'Arbeit 2020 in NRW' Better Work 2020; Fair Crowd Work
- ***IWGB, FAU Berlin*** Rebel Roo, rider campaigns, protests, working toward collective bargaining
- ***UNI Global Union (UNI)*** 'Top 10 Principles for Workers' Data Privacy and Protection'
- **Turkopticon:** interface-mediated labour politics, online forums

Interviewed for report:

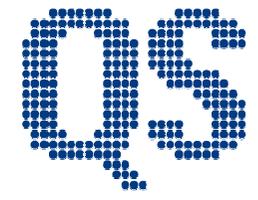
- Maurizio Atzeni, Researcher at the Centre for Labour Relations, National Research Council of Argentina.
- Christina Colclough, Director of Platform and Agency Workers, Digitalization and Trade, UNI Global Union, Nyon, Switzerland.
- Mags Dewhurst, Vice President, Independent Workers Union of Great Britain (IWBG) London.
- Bernard Gero Preuhs, Media Division, Freie Arbeiterinnen Und Arbeiter Union, Berlin, Germany (FAUB).
- Mark Hodge, consultant for Institute for Human Rights and Business, London.
- Patrick Loos, Organizer, IG Metall Bezirksleitung NRW, Projekt 'Arbeit 2020 in NRW' (Better Work 2020), Düsseldorf, Germany.
- Six Silberman, Projekt Secretary, IG Metall IG Metall, Düsseldorf, Germany.
- Veronika Mirschel, Head of Freelancer Department, ver.di, Berlin, Germany.
- Gabi Schilling, Lead Coordinator, IG Metall Bezirksleitung NRW, Projekt 'Arbeit 2020 in NRW' (Better Work 2020), Düsseldorf, Germany.
- Anagha Tambe, Director of Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule Women's Studies Centre, Savitri Phule Pune University, Pune, India. ==

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HUMANS AND MACHINES AT WORK

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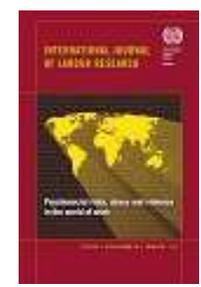
Edited by Phoebe Moore, Martin Upchurch & Xanthe Whittaker



Quantified Self

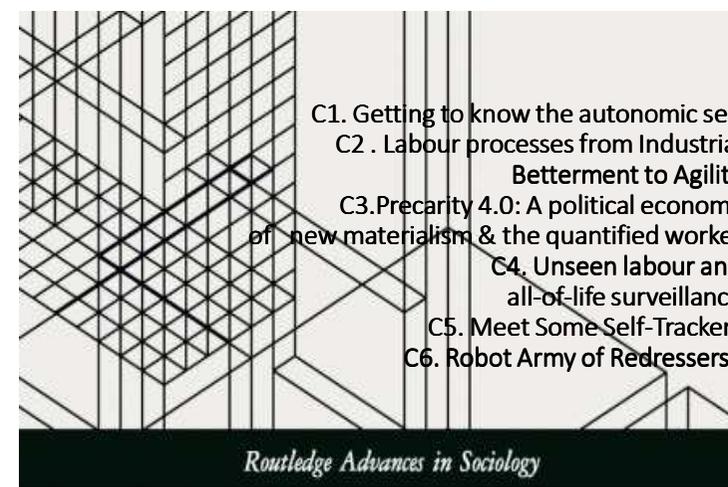
self knowledge through numbers

'...real change will happen in individuals as they work through self-knowledge... of one's body, mind and spirit... a rational [path]: unless something can be measured, it cannot be improved' Kevin Kelly, Wired & QS founder



QW Quantified Work

Self and other tracking through big data
pressure on us to work faster, and it might be used to sack people. But lots of us feel that we don't care anymore. Because physically we just can't do any more.' (Warehouse worker where wearable devices have recently been introduced)



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Phoebe V. Moore

