

Led by machines

Algorithmic Management and Workers' Rights

Launching of the FEPS Nordics Digital Programme

Thursday 21 September 2023

10:00 – 17:00

LO offices, Barnhusgatan 18, Stockholm

With the digital revolution, the workplace has seen a rapid introduction of digital technologies for gig work, remote work, surveillance, and algorithmic management of workers. Some of the consequences of this transition have become clear. For instance, digital technology has facilitated a split in the labour market, with jobs increasingly 'lousy or lovely'. But contrary to employment status and precariousness, what is less obvious are the effects of digital tech on the nature of work itself across the labour market.

It has already been shown that ubiquitous surveillance causes stress and anxiety among workers and decreases trust in the workplace. There are also emerging signs that the use of algorithmic decision-making systems is accompanied by profound shifts in workplace management, the exercise of power, and workers' rights. This is especially visible in the platform economy but is spread widely across the economy, including in more 'traditional' sectors.

Challenges of algorithmic management

During this public event will bring together researchers, policymakers, trade unionists and other stakeholders from the Nordic countries to discuss the following:

- The challenge algorithmic management poses for safeguarding workers' rights
- If AI developments are a potential threat to the Nordic model, for instance, by increasing inequalities and/or reducing workers' co-determination
- To what extent the tech revolution is being felt on the work floor in Sweden
- What are the political implications at both the Swedish and European levels

Partners in Digital Research Programme

The Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS), Tankesmedjan Tiden, Kalevi Sorsa Saatio, Tankesmien Agenda, CEVEA, Arbejderbevægelsens Erhvervsråd (ECLM), Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Nordics and the Cooperation Committee of the Nordic Labour Movement (SAMAK), with the support of Nordics trade Unions, came together for a Digital Research Programme to investigate these developments and their effects.

Programme partners:



With the support of:



Agenda

- 09:15 – 10:00 *Participant welcome and breakfast*
- 10:00 – 10:05 Opening of the conference by moderator **Maria Arkeby**, Deputy Manager, Tankesmedjan Tiden
- 10:05 – 10:30 **Welcoming words**
Taking charge of digitalisation by building progressive competence and capacity
- **Elisabeth Brandt Ygeman**, *Kanslichef*, LO Sweden
 - **Johan Sjölander**, Manager, Tankesmedjan Tiden
 - **Jan-Erik Støstad**, Secretary General, SAMAK
- 10:30-11:00 **Keynote speech on the political implications of the digital revolution**
- Speech by **Gunilla Svantorp**, Member of the *Riksdag*, Social Democratic Party of Sweden
- 11:00 – 12:00 **Are algorithms in the workplace a threat to the Nordic model?**
Introduction by **Antti Alaja**, researcher and contributor to the study [Rethinking Social Risk in the Nordics](#)
- Followed by discussion within the panel and Q&A with the audience:
- **Thorben Albrecht**, Policy Director, IG Metall
 - **Birte Dedden**, Director for ICTS, Uni Europa
 - **Lauri Finér**, Director, Kalevi Sorsa Foundation
 - **Harry Pitts**, Senior Lecturer in Politics and Director of Business Engagement & Innovation in the Department of Humanities & Social Science, University of Exeter
- Moderator: **Asbjørn Sonne Nørgaard**, Director, Cevea
- 12.00 – 13.00 *Light lunch*
- 13:00 – 14:00 **The Swedish approach to the tech revolution, what is happening on the work floor?**
Introduction by **Jenny Wrangborg**, Swedish Union of Commercial Workers, author of [Människa-maskin-arbete](#) (Man-machine work)
- Followed by discussion within the panel and Q&A with the audience:
- **Victor Bernhardt**, Ombudsman för Digital Markets, Swedish Trade Union Unionen
 - **Bertil Rolandsson**, Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology and Work Science, Göteborgs Universitet, Institutionen för sociologi och arbetsvetenskap
 - **Fredrik Söderqvist**, Economist, LO Sweden and author of the paper [Will there be a Nordic model in the platform economy?](#)
 - **Anna Spånt Enbuske**, Research Officer, Swedish Kommunal

Moderator: **Maria Arkeby**, Deputy Manager, Tankesmedjan Tiden

14.00 – 14.30

Coffee break – Fika

14:30 – 14:45

Keynote speech on the ‘Digital Just Transition for workers’ (via recorded video)

Speech by **Nicolas Schmit**, European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights and responsible for improving the labour conditions of platform workers and the directive that addresses transparency and oversight of platforms' algorithms

14:45 – 15:45

Regulating platforms and AI: what does the EU do to stand up to Big Tech?

Introduction by **Tereza Østbø Kuldova**, Research Professor, Work Research Institute, Oslo Metropolitan University

Followed by discussion within the panel and Q&A with the audience:

- **Samuel Engblom**, former Swedish state secretary responsible for higher education, research and space policy
- **Miapetra Kumpula-Natri**, MEP and rapporteur for *A European strategy for data*
- **Linda Larsson**, researcher, LO Sweden
- **Anna Milanez**, economist, OECD
- **Johanna Wenckebach**, Director, Hugo Sinzheimer Institut for Labour

Moderator: **Gerard Oosterwijk**, Digital Policy analyst, FEPS

15:45 – 16:00

Closing remarks

- **Kristina Birke Daniels**, Director, Nordic Office of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
- **Maria Maltschnig**, Director, Karl Renner Institute & Vice-president, FEPS

16:00 – 17:00 *Reception with drinks and bites*