Fafo

Social partnership and digital transformation

systems are used to coordinate workers and work processes. We divide the digitisation process into three stages: implementation of a digital tool or instrument, use of data to analyse production and work processes, and change of production and work processes in light of the data collected. We also discuss how digitisation of work processes and organisation can be regarded as a form of automation of decisions, and highlight the importance of examining the question 'Why should we digitise?' We conclude this chapter with a discussion of the kinds of management that are promoted by digitisation, as well as the role of managers in digitisation processes.

In Chapter 4, we discuss the consequences of digitisation of work processes and organisation based on Norwegian and international research literature. The chapter provides an overview of how digitisation can affect work in different sectors and illustrates some of the challenges that workers, trade union representatives and the social partnership are facing in digitisation processes. The review shows that different actors encounter different challenges. For the workers, the challenges posed by digitisation are associated with influence, control and surveillance, distribution and changed boundaries. For the trade union representatives we find that increased polarisation in the workforce, new staffing and development strategies, erosion of community, changed skills requirements and changes in their power base account for the main challenges. For managers, digitisation means that new forms of management may threaten their legitimacy and that skills requirements change, either during or after the process. For the social partnership, digitisation represents a double challenge, which firstly tends to shift the power base towards the management, and secondly may make it harder to identify a clear counterpart.

In Chapter 5 we discuss the kinds of general challenges that trade unions face when working life is digitised, and we highlight some strategies and initiatives that European trade unions have implemented in their encounter with digitisation processes. In Chapter 6 we draw on previous research conducted by Fafo to summarise the experiences that Norwegian trade union representatives have had with digitisation processes.

Chapter 7 is a checklist of items that the social partners should consider in change processes. In this chapter we outline some key questions and challenges the partners may encounter when the enterprise goes digital. In Chapter 8 we use the same checklist to describe the rights and duties of the partners in processes of digital transformation.

This report has a dual ambition: it can be read as a quick introduction to digitisation and the challenges and tools that the partners have at their disposal. Readers who are seeking for rules and regulations can go directly to Chapter 8 and use it as reference. For those who wish to study this topic in more detail, we have added a number of text boxes that provide examples of adjoining issues, with further elaboration.