

CTU comment – Development of a Digital Strategy for Aotearoa

Future of Work Tripartite Forum, 23 September 2021

Digital industry transformation

Digital technology industry transformation plan (ITP)

- We agree this is important for New Zealand's future
- We have not participated in the ITP because of capacity constraints but watch with interest
- Need Just Transition where jobs are lost

Digital industry transformation

Digital skills

- Because digital technologies are everywhere, skills and accessibility are vital
- We and Business NZ have previously written to Ministers on ensuring people, including those already in the labour force, have the opportunity to acquire those skills
- Access to equipment and software
- Ensuring no-one is left behind

The impact on work – regulatory needs

The impact on work

- Digital technologies becoming deeply imbedded
- Some will meet increasing resistance unless concerns addressed

The impact on work – regulatory needs

Platform work

- International concerns at impact on the workers themselves, and downward pressure on others –
 - Wages
 - Employment security
 - Skill development and recognition
 - Quality of jobs
 - Health and safety
- Forum working on contractors, which may help, but further work needed

The impact on work – regulatory needs

Artificial intelligence used in

- **Hiring and performance decisions**
- **Monitoring performance**
- **Surveillance of workers and others**

- International concern in union movement and society
- Potential for bias in AI algorithms
E.g. discrimination against disabled job applicants;
racial biases in facial recognition software
 - Requires standards, and ability to audit source code
 - For both local and imported technology
- Privacy concerns
- Health and safety concerns from 'speed up' pressure
- Requires regulation and/or employment agreements, and full consultation before use at work

The impact on work – regulatory needs

Increasing expectations of workers' availability

- 'Always at work' can threaten quality of life
- EU right: "respect for private and family life"
- Should we recognise the right to "switch off"?

Working at home

- Welcome to many
- Needs careful consideration
 - Availability, work-life balance, privacy
 - Access to the right technology
 - Health and safety – ergonomic, speed-up

In conclusion

We welcome the Government taking a considered approach to these technologies

We're interested in participating in the development of the strategy, as resources allow