



**European Foundation for the
Improvement of Living and
Working Conditions**

The tripartite EU agency providing knowledge to assist in the development of better social, employment and work-related policies

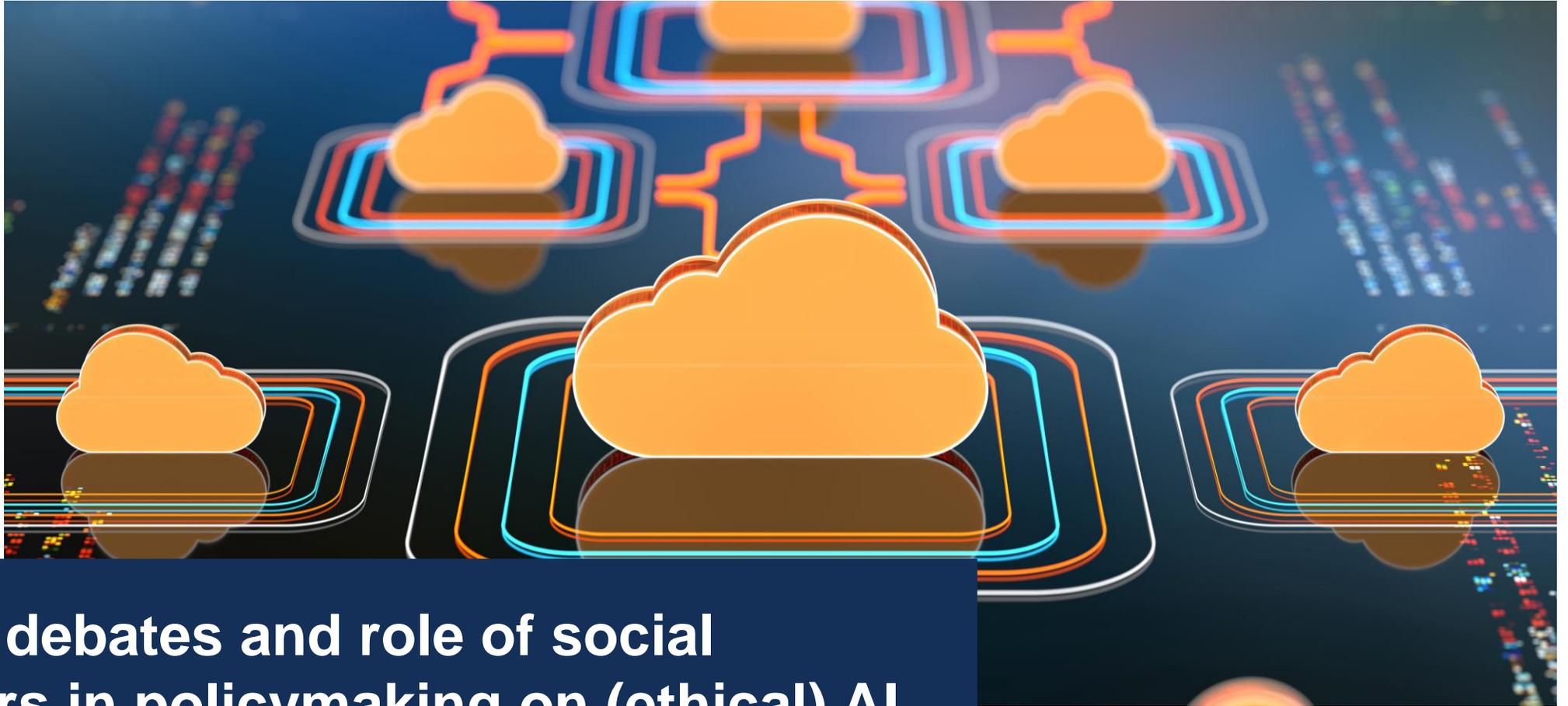
Ethical digitalisation at work

15 October 2024

TransFormWork 2 Dublin Roundtable

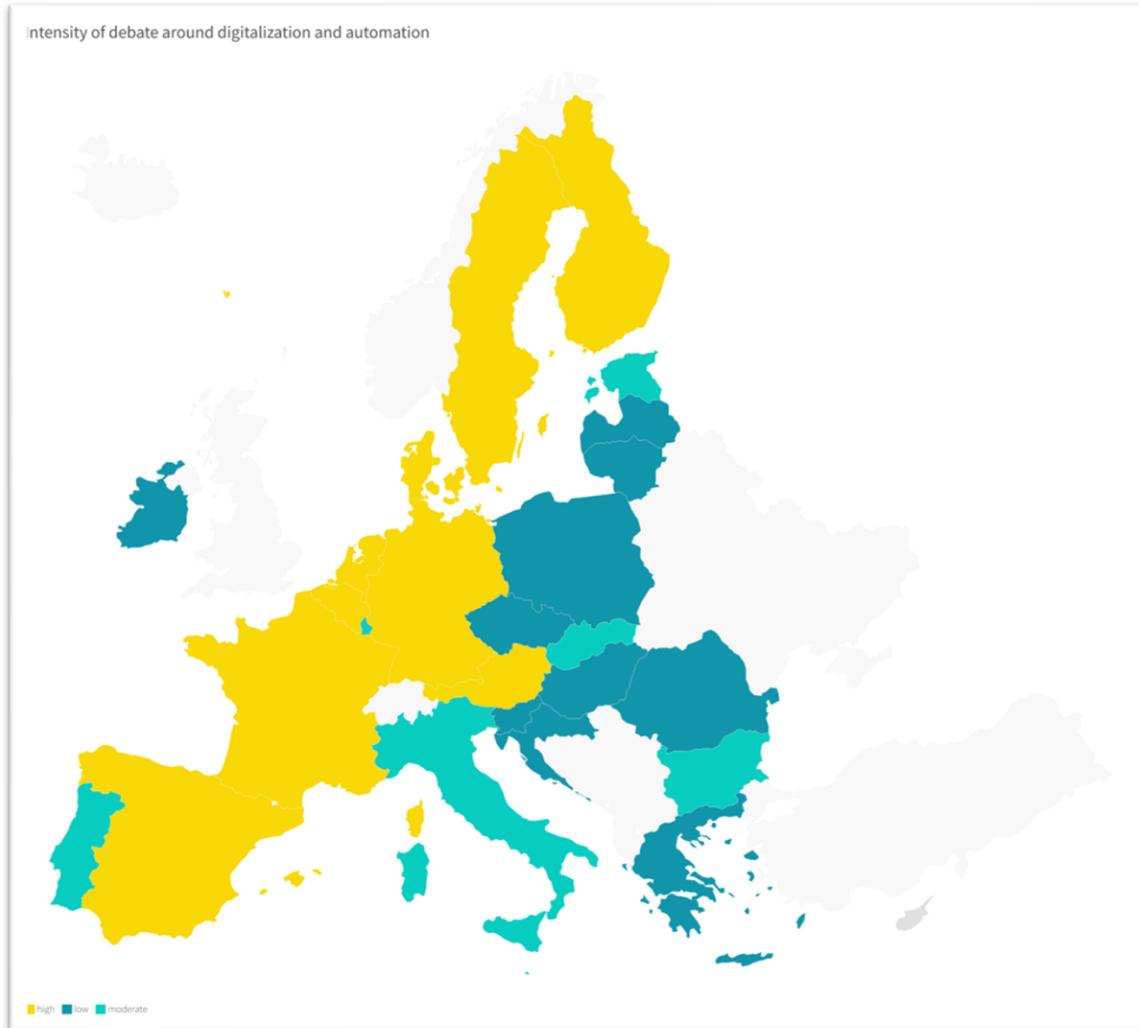
Sara Riso, Eurofound





Policy debates and role of social partners in policymaking on (ethical) AI

National debates on (ethical) AI



- Eastern and Southern countries – relatively new debate, governments and social partners mainly concerned with issues linked to level of digitalisation and skills
- Western and Nordic countries (+ Spain!) – debate dates back to mid 2000s, with both social partners and governments increasingly focusing on ethical implications of AI

 **Eurofound report: Ethics in the digital workplace**

Policy stakeholders' views: concerns arising from AI

Areas of concern	Government(s)	Employer organisations	Trade unions
Skills development and adaptation	Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden	Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden	Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden
Data protection and privacy	France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden	Denmark, Poland, Sweden	Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Poland, Sweden
Transparency, accountability and trust	Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden	Denmark, Finland, Poland, Spain, Sweden	Denmark, Finland, Poland, Spain, Sweden
Discrimination and potential biases	Netherlands, Sweden	Denmark, Spain, Sweden	Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Poland, Sweden
Mental health and new psychosocial risks	Sweden		Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Sweden
Threats to collective bargaining			France, Spain



Eurofound report: Ethical digitalisation at work: From theory to practice

Involvement of social partners



- Social partners' involvement in setting standards and policies varies, often consultative
- Limited focus on ethical issues in collective bargaining agreements
- Greater attention to these issues in sectors with widespread use of advanced technologies, like banking and financial services

 **Eurofound report: Ethical digitalisation at work: From theory to practice**

Existing levers to regulate AI, algorithmic management (and employee monitoring)

- **GDPR**
 - Scope for MSs to introduce more specific rules in the employment context (Art.88)
- **EU employment law on information and consultation** (Directive 2002/14/EC)
 - DE, ES, FR, NL,.. - Explicit mention of AI or algorithmic systems in national legislation on information and consultation
- **TPWC** (Directive 2019/1152)
 - IT - Obligations for employers to declare use of AM, purpose, logic, type of data and parameters used
- **Remote Work Regulations:** New rules shaping monitoring practices (BG, CY, GR, PT)
- **EU Anti-Discrimination law** - Equality Framework Directive 2000/78/EC; Race Equality Directive 2000/43/EC; Equal Treatment Directive 2006/54/EC
 - ES - Non-Discrimination Act (Law 15/2022) also applies to discrimination arising from the use of AI and massive data management
 - PT - Law 13/2023 introduces information rights in Labour Code in the context of use of AM and AI to avoid discrimination

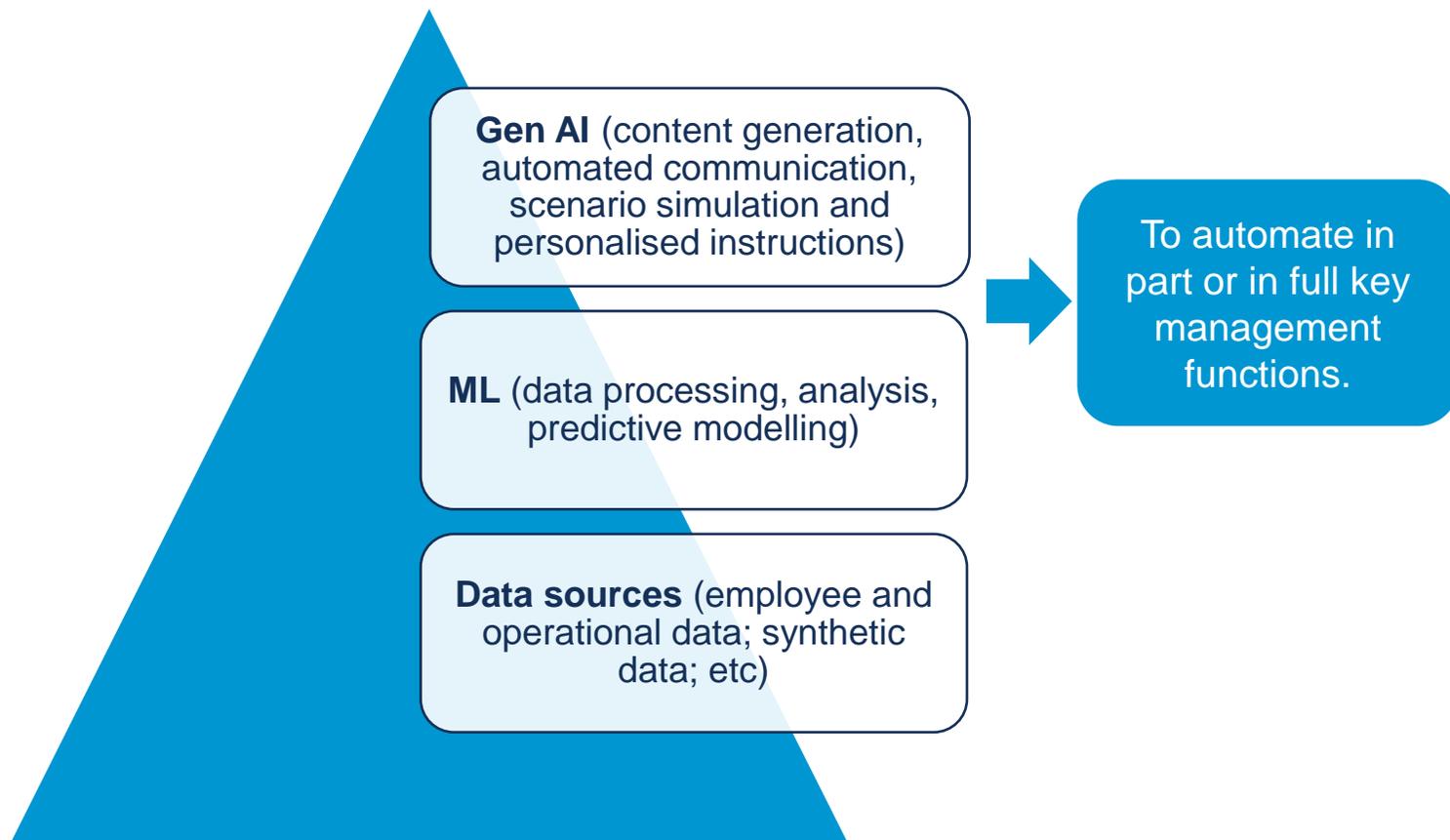


Eurofound articles: [Employee monitoring: A moving target for regulation](#); [Regulatory responses to algorithmic management in the EU](#)



Understanding AI and its impact in the workplace: an ethical perspective

Machine learning (and Gen AI) fuelling the new AI wave...



Enabling technologies: IoT, cloud computing, edge computing, RPA, data analytics, robotics, ...



What is an AI anyway? / Mustafa Suleyman / TED

Exploratory case studies: unpacking new concepts ...

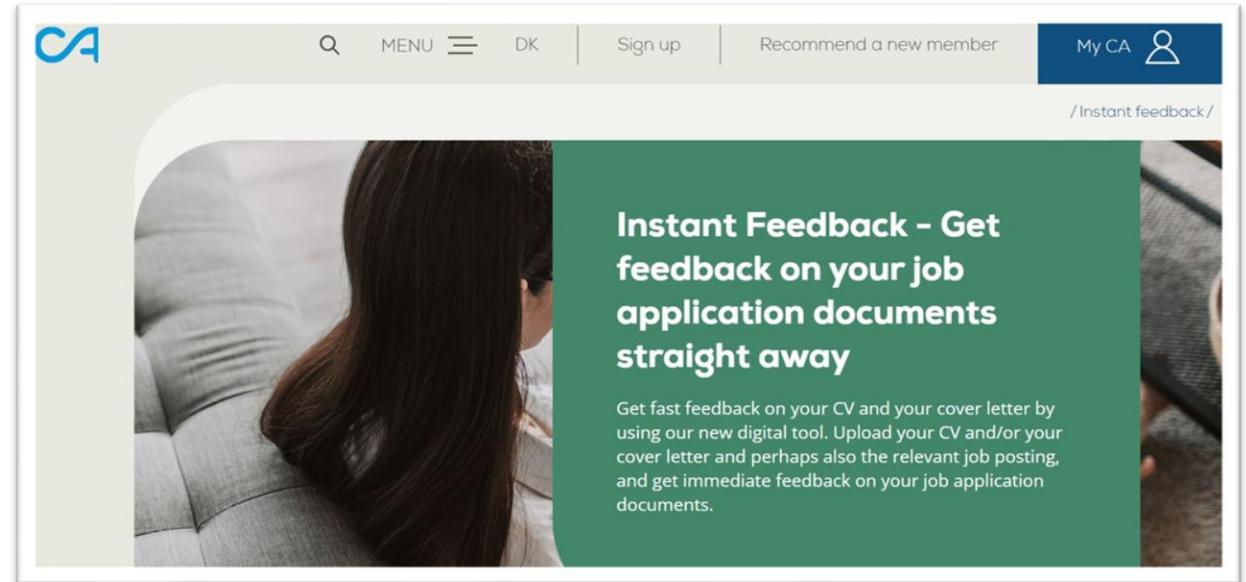


Algorithmic management

Machine learning

AI automation

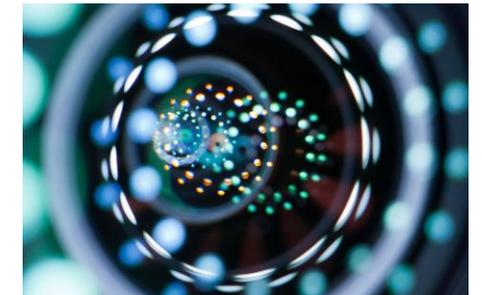
AI augmentation



Eurofound reports: Human-Robot Interaction: what changes in the workplace?; Ethical digitalisation at work

Examples of common AI use cases: Just the beginning?

- **Chatbots** for advising customers and automated routing of questions.
- **Autonomous guided vehicles and mobile robots** in warehouses and manufacturing.
- **Computer vision systems** for object identification on assembly lines.
- **AI-based solutions** for product quality control.
- **Machine learning-based systems** for screening job applications, providing routine feedback, matching job posting.



What's holding us back?

Opportunities

1. Productivity gains.
2. Greater physical safety.
3. Enhanced accuracy and reduced human errors.
4. Improved production processes or service delivery.

Obstacles

1. Limited investment in training and reskilling.
2. Limited worker involvement.
3. No ethical thinking and human centricity in technology design and implementation.



AI: Are fears just fears, or could they turn into reality?

- AI mostly **used to augment work**, rather than eliminate jobs.
- Future plans for tech adoption in companies show **job cuts are not ruled out**.
- **Employees' stressors:** fear of job loss, greater monitoring of activities, skills obsolescence, tech complexity or unreliability.

Looking ahead: new Eurofound research on AI

- Guiding research framework (2025)
- 2024 EWCS data (new indicators: cobots, gen AI, collaborative work platforms, algorithmic management, ...) (2025-2026)
- Case studies on algorithmic management (2026)
- Monitoring of legislative developments (2025-2028)
- Mapping social partners' initiatives and developments in collective bargaining (2025-2028)





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Thank you!

Sara.Riso@eurofound.europa.eu