



IYCW positions on digitalisation of life and work

3d Catholic European Social days, 19.3.2022
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Why do we speak about digitalisation?

- IC 2016: “social media and technology” to be tackled
 - discussions and actions in National Movements
 - “new forms of work”
 - implications of working from home
 - “being constantly online”
 - e-learning
 - international debates



International Seminar 2018

Young workers in the world of work
today – our vision for tomorrow

*Reshaping the Future of Work in the
midst of digitalization, ecological
change, precariousness and
unemployment*

*Bandung, Indonesien, 14. – 23.08.2018,
part Future of Work after Laudato Si*

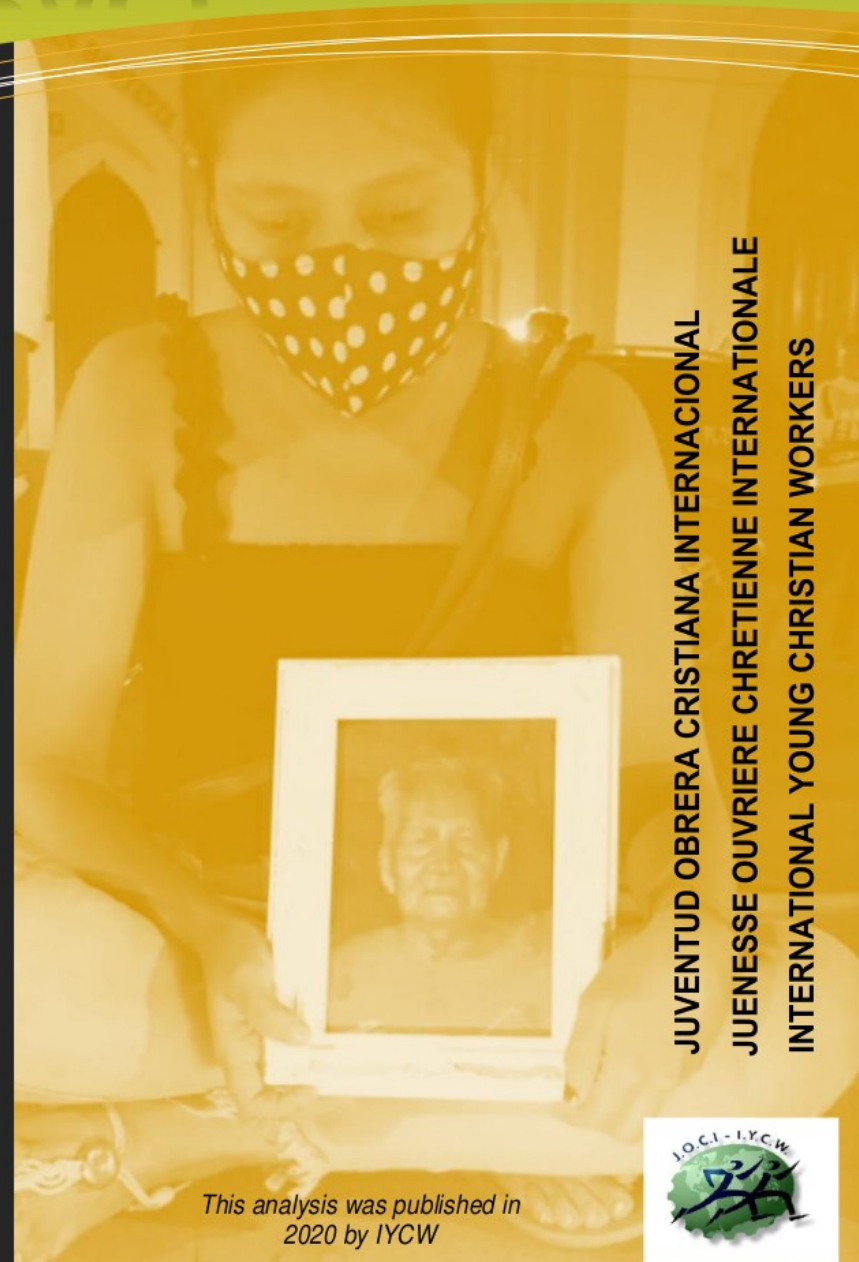


Analysis on Impacts of the Covid – published 2021

- based on testimonies and analysis
 - America
 - Asia
 - Europe
 - Africa

on Young Workers

IMPACT of COVID-19



JUVENTUD OBRERA CRISTIANA INTERNACIONAL
JUENESSE OUVRIERE CHRETIENNE INTERNATIONALE
INTERNATIONAL YOUNG CHRISTIAN WORKERS



*This analysis was published in
2020 by IYCW*



*„Le web prends
quasiment 80% de mon
temps”*

Moïse, Gabon

*“Digitalisation demands
a complex discussion,
[...] otherwise it will
harm us.”*

Silvia, Germany

- whole life is digital
- digitization boosted through pandemic





Internet
enables us to...



- communicate globally
- life and work while social distancing
 - it is a resource
 - How about its distribution?





Inequality in access...

- between countries
- between cities and rural areas
- between rich and poor

"In our country [...], there is almost no electricity, the internet is very expensive and sometimes very slow."

YCW Haiti





looking at “tele-work”



- saves travel – time
- melts boundaries between life and work
- tends to increase working hours
- who pays for the devices, electricity and Internet?
- who is responsible for a work-place (desk etc.)?
- how about OHS at home?
- affects team’s communication and organising





looking at "platform work"



"My main function is to digitise sheets from an online platform {...}. This way of working has certain difficulties in terms of labour law. There is no labour contract. The company does not provide social insurance, right to health care and pension payments. Loneliness limits the right to freedom of association, to organise, to group together on the basis of common interests and to be part of a trade union. The very form of employment is strategic in restricting the right to organise".

(Ana, Nicaragua)





looking at "platform work"



- How about social security?
- How to organize?
- How about the hours spent unpaid?

- Who is the worker?
- Who is the employer?





looking at work: digitalisation...



- enhances workers' global competition
- makes us wander: who is responsible?
- increases pressure:
 - everyone always reachable
 - “rapidifacion” – always increasing speed
- needs digital devices - what about working conditions in their production?

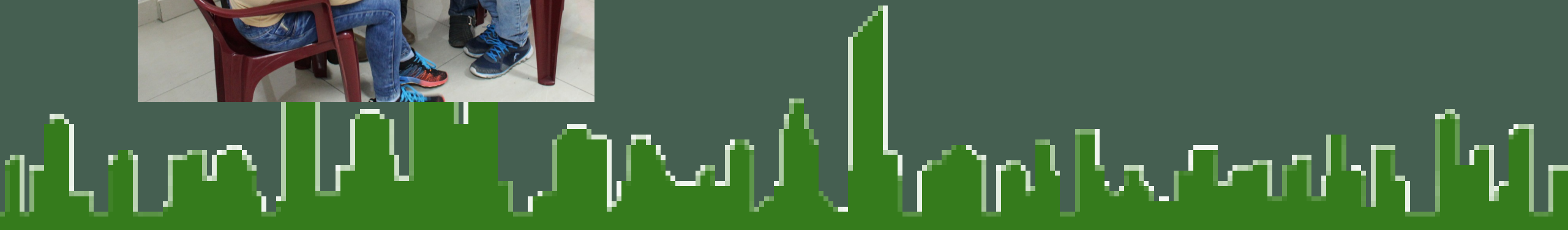




looking at social media



"Communication technologies encourage us to create superficial relationships. Violence and aggression without limits are experienced on these platforms and go unpunished thanks to anonymity provided by false identities. We also realised how the system in which we live takes advantage of young people and all the personal information". (YCW Spain - ICYCW)



“Social” Media...



- are an easy tool for communication
- can lead to superficiality
- are platforms for “fake news”
- create “bubbles” of same opinions
- are not for free: we pay with our data
- facilitate political manipulation



Who profits in this digital world?



- we pay with data
- monopolization enhanced
- taxes paid (or not) by digital services
- digital priority “lanes” for those who pay for it?– the question of net neutrality

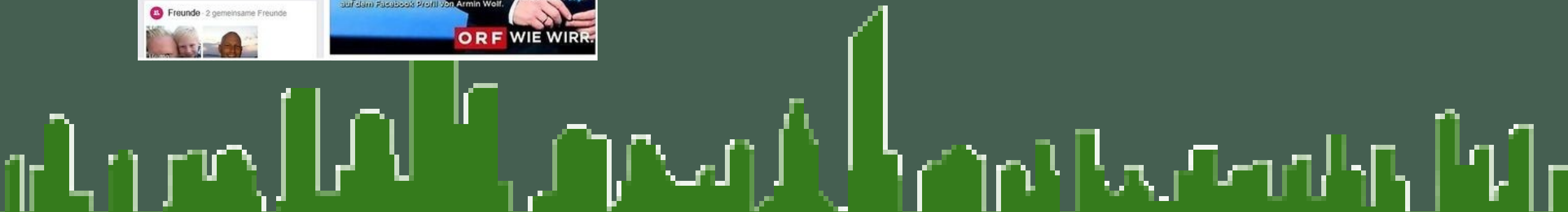


Asking: Who profits economically?

- “digital giants”
- who is already rich gets richer



“Technology serves capitalistic interests.”
(Bandung 2018)





asking about our ecology



- growing need for raw materials for devices
- growing waste
- growing need for electricity – data growing daily





What is our opinion?

- “Every young worker is worth more than all the gold in the world, since we are God’s children.”
- Human rights and workers’ rights are not to be separated. Denying human rights means to deny humanity.
- Clear contradictions to the value of **Justice** and **Solidarity**





what is needed...



- strong global social protection including Internet
- worker's rights to be updated and enforced
 - right to disconnect
 - clear regulations about employer's responsibility to provide material
 - to regulate and monitor platform work





what is needed...



- justice to be ensured
- "GAFA" to be taxed
- citizens to be in control of their data
- ecological boundaries to be respected
- ➔ Collective debates and awareness - raising





Thank you!



Why do we talk about Digitalisation?

- IC 2017: “social media and technology” one of the issues to be tackled
 - discussions and actions in NM
 - “new forms of work” – platform work, GIG economy
 - implications of working from home
 - “being constantly online”
 - e-learning
 - international debates
 - International Seminar in Bandung 2019 (cooperation with FoWLS)
 - our analysis about the impacts of the Covid Pandemic

→ **Our whole life is digital** (quotation from Ghabon: 80% of my time is online)

→ **Digitization is boosted even more through the Pandemic**

→ **we need to discuss it** (maybe quotation Germany: otherwise it will harm us))
broad topic. I will focus on mentioned aspects...

We see..

Because of the Internet, we can

- be in **global communication** (allows migrants to stay in touch with home)
- **communicate** and partly life and work while social distance is required
- it is a resource, a mean. **How about its distribution?**

"In our country, it is really not possible for the large majority of young workers to stay at home to work and to tele-work because there is almost no electricity, the internet is very expensive and sometimes very slow."
(YCW Haiti)

→ **unequality** in access to electricity and Internet

- between countries
- between cities and rural areas, etc.

1) Looking at work

a) **“teleworking”** (obviously a lot and will stay after Covid)

- however according to Eurostat increase from average 5% from 2017 to 12 % in 2020 – still not the majority

- saves time - travels to work-place
- boundaries between life and work shrink

- working hours tend to increase
- who pays for the devices, electricity and Internet?
- Who is responsible for a work-place (desk etc.) at home? (obviously more difficult if the flat is small)
- How about OHS at home? (Labour inspection?)
- Impacts on communication in teams and the workers' organising
- "monitoring" or you might say "digital spying" by employers on workers quite easy using technical devices and cases occur endangering privacy

b) plat-form work

“Mi función principal es digitalizar hojas de embarque desde una plataforma online {...}. Esta forma de trabajo tiene ciertas dificultades en materia de derecho laboral. No existe un contrato de trabajo. La empresa no ofrece un seguro social, derecho a la atención médica y hay falta de pago de pensiones. La soledad limita el derecho a la libertad sindical, organizarse, agruparse desde intereses comunes y ser parte de un sindicato, la misma forma de empleo es estratégica para restringir el ejercicio del derecho a la sindicalización.”

"My main function is to digitise sheets from an online platform {...}. This way of working has certain difficulties in terms of labour law. There is no labour contract. The company does not provide social insurance, right to health care and pension payments. Loneliness limits the right to freedom of association, to organise, to group together on the basis of common interests and to be part of a trade union. The very form of employment is strategic in restricting the right to organise.

Several issues in this testimony characteristic for “platform work”: seems to be self-employed/independent – many questions are there, among them:

- access to social protection
- how to organize?
- How about the hours spent unpaid? As a food rider waiting for an order, on an online platform looking for a suitable job example as translator
- The fundamental question: Who is the worker? Who is the employer? - discussion at courts, different decisions, but trend towards recognizing the

employment relation-ship. Also political debate and juridical proposals by European Commission in EU and in different member states – which is highly necessary, because:

- Platforms present themselves as providing a relationship, while
 - they define the conditions the work is done
 - can sanction the worker, give orders, control him
 - but not the responsibility an employment relation-ship should mean

c) Online shopping

- increases in the Pandemic
- often boosts precarious forms of work (platforms, delivery of packages)
- at many places, shops need to close because of the online concurrence.

As a whole: Digitalisation

- enhances workers' global competition
- enables a “company” to choose its holding independent from the workers
- makes us wander: Who is responsible? (quotation from Venezuela: *They wash their hands*)
- increases pressure:
 - everyone always reachable
 - “rapidifacion” – always increasing speed
- needs digital devices - what about working conditions in their production?

2) Looking at Social Media – not going to present that due to the time

“Descubrimos que las tecnologías de la comunicación e información nos impulsan a crear relaciones muy superficiales y selectivas en cuanto a las apariencias y al postureo que reina en este espacio. Descubrimos también la violencia y las agresiones sin límites que se viven en estas plataformas y que quedan impunes gracias al anonimato que proporcionan las identidades falsas en redes. También caímos en la cuenta de que las redes sociales generan situaciones que nos atacan de manera directa y minan nuestra autoestima, ya que no estamos preparadas ni tenemos habilidades personales para enfrentarnos a este mundo en el que todo vale. Y por último también nos dimos cuenta de cómo el Sistema en el que vivimos saca beneficio de las personas jóvenes y de toda la información personal y social que subimos a las redes.”

- are an easy tool for communication
- can prevent deep discussions and lead to superficialities (social threat)
- are platforms for “fake news”
- create “bubbles” of people sharing the same opinion (political threat)
- facilitate political manipulation through knowing our data

4) Asking who profits economically

- We pay with our data
- monopolisation even enhanced compared to “offline world”
- taxes – digital services pay at their place of holding, not where the profit is made – disadvantage towards SMIS
- digital priority lanes for those who pay for it? - the question of net neutrality

after all:

- ➔ those who already are rich get richer and profit much more from it
- “it serves capitalistic interests”*

5) Asking about impacts on our earth

- raw materials are needed to produce mobile phones and laptops – limited resources
- growing waste
- huge amounts of electricity needed – amounts of data growing every day

We judge...

contradictions to

- the **value of Justice**
- the value **of Solidarity**

Dignity as God’s children

Dignified Work entails its human dimension and should not obscure it

The right to organise is a fundamental workers’ right

(..)

What needs to be done...

- Strong and solidary Social Protection is needed worldwide including Internet and electricity
- worker's rights in the digitized world of work need to be updated including
 - measures to limit the working time and the right to disconnect
 - clear regulations about responsibility for employers to provide material needed for work
 - platform work to be regulated – ensure workers rights
- Collective debates: How to ensure everyone's access to Internet while respecting ecology's boundaries?
- Gafa to be taxed (Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon)
- Justice also in the digital sphere must be ensured and citizens must be in control of their data.