



The Obsolescence of Labour? Philosophical-Political Reflections on Contemporary Manifestations of Labour

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Abstract

The coordinates of contemporary labour are in continuous and rapid transformation. On the one hand, precariousness and flexibility are watchwords in today's labour policies. On the other hand, the encroachment of working time into living time, as well as the accelerated platformisation and automation of workplaces, leads us to reflect on the issue of human dignity and freedom. Already in the middle of the last century, the philosopher of technique Günther Anders questioned whether the obsolescence of the human being does also concern the obsolescence of labour. In fact, he had already foreseen how contemporary workers are unfree not only because they are excluded from the ownership of "their" means of production or products, but because they do not overlook the whole of the production context in which they are integrated. At the same time, workers do not know the end product and its meaning - these remain "transcendent" issues. Against this background, we intend to discuss the extent to which the traditional concept of labour is obsolete through the analysis of its fundamental coordinates: space, time and relations. The main purpose will be to highlight risks and perplexities regarding the new dimension of labour. This will be done through the interpretative lens of political philosophy but without excluding transdisciplinary and intersectional insights.

Keywords: labour, workplace, malaise, automation, dehumanisation

1. Introduction

The literature on labour has traditionally been approached according to fragmentation by disciplines, especially economic and social ones. From the perspective of an overall vision, the philosophy of labour allows us to find not only a common thread in the transformation of the human labour dimension but also its ruptures and divergences. The contemporary dimension of labour has undergone such profound and sudden changes (especially after the recent pandemic crisis) that the question arises as to whether the traditional categories for understanding labour are still valid, or rather whether the concept of labour itself is still valid. With this regard, the preliminary reflections for a discourse on the obsolescence of labour can find inspiration in the prophetic insights of the German philosopher Gunther Anders. His

philosophy is not simply a philosophy of technocracy, but a philosophy of discrepancy (*Diskrepanzphilosophie*), i.e. the divergence between what has become technically possible and what the human mind is capable of imagining (Anders, 1956). Consequently, the Andersian philosophical technocracy deals with the dysfunction triggered by a technocracy that invalidates emotional life by forcing human existence into a condition of obsolescence (Mattucci, 2018). Within Anders' thinking on the antiquated nature of the human being also fits the considerations on the obsolescence of labour: the *Antiquiertheit der Arbeit* (Anders, 1980). In this sense, the question concerning whether the trade union struggle of today's workers is still proletarian or cannot be answered by reference to their economic standard of living, but rather by reference to their condition of freedom: considered in this way, hundreds of millions of workers are no longer proletarian in the strict sense. In this respect, workers are not free, for instance, not only because they are excluded from the ownership of “their” means of production or their products, but because they cannot be comprehensively aware of the totality of the production process in which they are embedded. Likewise, they do not know the final product or its function, which remains transcendent for them, nor do they know the beneficiaries of their work, its users or victims. All these things happen in a certain way behind the backs of those who work. This leads to a kind of isolation, which eventually results in a process of privatisation of the worker. If we wanted to take these preliminary considerations to their extreme consequences and apply them to our current contemporary dimension, the interpretative lens offered through a sceptical technocratic approach can also help us better understand today's mechanisms of cognitive bio-capitalism (Fumagalli, 2007), where the object of production is knowledge and information. In the aftermath of the crisis of the industrial-Fordist paradigm, traditional capitalism has witnessed structural and irreversible changes in the mode of production so that knowledge, space and time are now the two most relevant economic variables in determining economic dynamics. On the one hand, André Gorz has highlighted through his critique of economic reason (Gorz, 1992) how labour comes to be identified with life itself in our society. The way in which spatial, temporal and relational categories have changed is therefore fundamental in addressing the condition of workers. On the other hand, the recent literature discussed how the new pathologies of labour demonstrate the continued existence of exploitation and alienation (Jaeggi, 2017). From an empirical point of view, this prevalence of health-related diseases in a multidimensional sense is demonstrated by what have been termed the “Great Resignations” (Coin, 2023): for many, labour has become a major source of stress, exploitation, and instability, rather than fulfilment. With this regard, sociological literature highlighted the worldwide resignation movement after the pandemic not only as a desire to change careers, but as a response to a system that pushes workers to exhaustion. Resignations, particularly in sectors like healthcare and retail, are viewed as a rejection of poor working conditions. Therefore, the metamorphoses of labour need to be addressed with new critical interpretative lenses, conscious of the widespread and increasing malaise in the workplace (Ingarra, 2023). The main objective of the following reflections will be to try to answer the question whether and to what extent the concept of labour is obsolete and the consequences, addressing above all the most critical and problematic aspects.

2. Methodological Considerations

From a methodological point of view, the intention is to analyse through a systematic literature review the main philosophical-political reflections concerning the obsolescence of labour, starting with the insights offered by Anders and reasoning on their topicality. With a view to broadening the perspectives of investigation, an interdisciplinary approach will also be considered in order to find new possible interpretative connections and take inspiration from case studies. Specifically, we will proceed to review the main literature on the subject by first

addressing the issue of the obsolescence of workplaces and then the obsolescence of labour times and relationships. From a transversal point of view, the intersectional approach (Crenshaw, 1989; Grabham et. al., 2009) will also be taken into account to deal with discriminatory dynamics within the labour dimension. Indeed, a discourse on the transformations of contemporary labour cannot but concern how the needs of workers evolve in our globalised world and how discrimination also takes new forms under the influence of changing organisational contexts. The intersectional approach will allow us to understand the variable processes of labour rights metamorphosis originating from the intersection between two or more qualities of personal identity. In fact, the intersectional methodology in research examines how various social categories - such as gender, race, class, and age - intersect to create unique experiences of discrimination or privilege: rather than analysing these identities in isolation, intersectionality focuses on how they interact and shape individuals' lived realities. An intersectional methodology for analysing socio-political changes in the world of labour allows for a deeper understanding of how various social categories interact to shape individuals' experiences and opportunities within the labour dimension. By considering these overlapping identities, this approach highlights the ways in which power dynamics and inequalities are not uniform but are instead experienced differently depending on one's position within these intersecting systems. This framework is particularly useful for examining issues such as wage gaps, discrimination, and access to employment, as it reveals the complexity of social structures and the need for more inclusive labour policies.

3. The Obsolescence of Workplaces

In examining the spatial coordinates of contemporary labour, it is necessary to take into account which are the characteristics of today's workplaces: namely, automation and remotisation. In fact, the tendency to place labour performance outside both human agencies (through delegation to automation tools) and organisational facilities represents the other side of increasing automation of workplaces and a structural distance between the organisation and the workers. Anders predicted this phenomenon, identifying the trend towards an unstoppable and exponential increase in automation workers in the 21st century (Anders, 1992). However, it should be noted that the concept of automation today is to be understood in a broad sense, encompassing the use of every digital instrument that complements human actions. These include not only the now "traditional" material production machines of factories but also hardware and software tools, from computers to digital platforms and the essential e-mail boxes. As we have already pointed out, today it is the production of knowledge itself and of information that is increasingly the object of production and accumulation: Foucauldianly, the new biopolitics puts life itself to work. In this perspective, the awareness of belonging to a spatial dimension has been disappearing. Effectively, just think that the process of plataformization of labour and the addiction to digital tools in the working environments. It is a matter of fact that every current organisation, which is public or private, cannot do without technological instruments, starting with the simplest and most common portable devices. Thus, workplaces can henceforth be identified with digital places since today's labour goes beyond the traditional physical boundaries. In fact, working connections are built more and more in the digital sphere: a large part of labour is done through technological devices that in turn create a general hyper-connectivity (Hynes, 2021). The introduction of automated labour is in itself a revolution that, with only a small delay, took place at about the same time in the East and in the West and resulted in an apparent relief from the Taylorist system. Certainly, what Anders could not have foreseen is the advent of a global succession of events capable of giving an even further impetus to the obsolescence of workplaces. It is undeniable that the shift to a prevalent automated working environment has been accelerated by the state of emergency during the

pandemic. The above-mentioned spatial dispersion outside traditional territorial boundaries was indeed taken to the extreme consequences of the 2020s pandemic happenings. The motto in the pandemic perspective was indeed “working anytime, anywhere” (Ray, 2015; Dagnino, 2021). With this regard, it is interesting to highlight that these working conditions have been described even using the expression «ubiquitous labour» (Butero, 2021). The idea of ubiquity certainly recalls the absence of a relation between those who work and the physical space in which they are located. In the face of all the positive aspects that can result from the digital revolution, one must also critically consider the risks. Against this background, to better comprehend the consequences of the dispersion of labour from a spatial perspective, a category worth considering is what the anthropologist Marc Augé calls *non-lieux*, literally non-places (Augé, 1992). What we want to propose is the use of a particular category that can be useful in order to better explain what the physical and social working dimension has become from a post-pandemic perspective. In particular, Augé defines non-places in comparison with the anthropological places: non-lieu is therefore a space that holds the prerogative of not being identitarian, relational and historical. In the context of a disconnection between organisation, workers and workplaces, labour environments end up becoming non-places, in the sense that workplaces may be identified with dimensions in which the focus on the concrete person and humanity vanishes. At the same time, inequalities and discrimination also risk being exacerbated within labour dynamics in which the individual loses his or her belonging to a community. The structural platformization of society (Van Dijck et al., 2018) can obviously be found directly in the new types of contracts and affects those workers whose activity is performed through a platform that acts as an intermediary between employer and client. The digital space, which is both public and private at the same time, poses issues - also and above all political issues - of recognition and outlines risks concerning the new digital forms of labour (Mezzadra, 2021). Furthermore, the advent of digital platforms has revolutionised the labour market, introducing new ways of working that offer both opportunities and significant challenges: for instance, digital platform workers, also known as “gig workers”, operate in an environment characterised by flexibility and autonomy, but also by uncertainty, lack of protection and inequalities (Haidar and Keune, 2021). It is worth noting that there is certainly a counter-perspective, or rather a counter-narrative, on the obsolescence of the workplace that highlights its positive aspects such as progress. According to this view, automated workplaces can offer significant advantages, particularly in terms of increased efficiency, safety, and the potential for reducing the burden of repetitive tasks. Automation can streamline production processes, leading to higher productivity and lower operational costs (Bessen, 2019). This, in turn, allows companies to reallocate resources toward innovation and higher-skilled roles, creating new job opportunities in areas such as technology maintenance, programming, and data analysis. Additionally, such an innovation could improve workplace safety by reducing the need to engage in dangerous or physically demanding tasks, thus decreasing workplace injuries (Autor, 2015). Moreover, automated systems can help reduce human error, leading to better quality control and higher consistency in output, which benefits both businesses and consumers (Acemoglu & Restrepo, 2020). Nevertheless, the risks are just as great, starting with growing inequalities: because increased efficiency does not correspond to increased personal well-being. Among these inequalities, especially gender discrimination may be aggravated. Women are indeed required to be present in both the public sphere of labour and the domestic sphere of care. The symbolic violence against women, which sociologist Pierre Bourdieu mentions, thus emerges in a manifest manner when the boundaries between private and working life are also blurred for women (Bourdieu, 1998). They do not only have the burden of domestic and family care in the private space but also the burden of labour in the public space that encroaches on the household (Balbo, 1978; Barazzetti, 2006). In addition, workplaces reflect the gender discrimination that permeates the organisation. Consequently, as

outlined by gender organisation theory, organisations build places that reproduce and implement gender dynamics and gender order imposed by political and social systems (Acker, 1990; Ely and Meyerson, 2000). As a result, gender stereotypes are now at risk of being further exacerbated within organisations that profess to be gender-neutral but actually help perpetrate direct and indirect discrimination. Emerging inequalities are to be understood intersectionally and taking into account that the status of women goes back to a structural issue, which often intersects with other factors of discrimination. In this way, it is manifest how forms of biopolitical control have by no means disappeared but have changed guise. Direct controls in the workplace have been replaced by a control over life at labour that transcends spatial constraints. Such a phenomenon for women translates into a double presence and a double labour or in a vertical and horizontal segregation in the workplace resulting in the confinement of women in certain occupations or professions (Mintz et al., 2010; Rosti, 2006). But surely it is not only the gender aspect that is problematic. The automation of labour can exacerbate discrimination at the intersection of multiple identities, such as race, class and disability status. For instance, workers in low-income jobs, often disproportionately women and people of colour, are more likely to be replaced by automated systems, leading to higher unemployment rates in these groups (Atkinson & Wu, 2017). Moreover, algorithms used in recruitment and performance evaluations may reinforce existing biases, as they often rely on historical data that reflect discriminatory practices (Noble, 2018). This means that black women, already facing barriers due to gender and racial bias, may be further marginalised by automated recruitment tools that favour candidates from more privileged backgrounds (Benjamin, 2019). Additionally, the lack of access to training in new technologies, often more available to higher-income, predominantly male and white workers, widens the skills gap, disproportionately affecting those at the intersection of disadvantaged identities (Eubanks, 2018).

4. The Obsolescence of Labour Time and Relations

Focusing also on the temporal dispersion of labour, the main characteristics of this phenomenon are acceleration, flexibilization and precariousness. At first glance, a perspective wishing to highlight the positivity of such phenomenon would dwell on the consideration that flexible arrangements, such as remote work, flexible hours, or part-time options, can improve work-life balance, reduce stress, and enhance overall job satisfaction (Kossek & Thompson, 2016). Furthermore, for businesses, flexible times often lead to increased productivity, lower absenteeism, and higher employee retention, as workers feel more empowered and motivated (Bloom et al., 2015). Additionally, flexible work policies can attract a more diverse talent pool, allowing organisations to benefit from a broader range of skills and perspectives (Gratton, 2021). However, alongside these arguments there are also several concerns arising from the comprehension of labour time and relations as obsolete. Before the pandemic, the chronic acceleration of lifetime was already a constitutive element of our contemporary society as illustrated by the philosopher Paul Virilio, who coined the concept of “dromology” (Virilio, 1986). The Parisian philosopher introduced precisely the term «social tele-localness» to describe the contemporary type of “phantasmatic” sociality generated by the proliferation of virtual communities able to deconstruct the relationships of proximity and the unity of time and place of physical coexistence. The revolution of speed transforms the horizon of perception and human intelligence and sensitivity so as to also affect the relational aspect. In this perspective, it does not even seem too provocative by now to speak of time-eating and relationality-eating labour. In this regard, the philosopher Jean-Paul Galibert has coined the term “chronophagy”, which refers to the contemporary new face of capitalism's attempt to despoil our time (Galibert, 2012): we see it in the positive value attributed to productivity that leads us to consider it admirable to work non-stop and to glorify «hyper-labour»; or in the guilt

instilled and internalised by those who need to rest, but feel ashamed. This chronophagy is nothing more than a form of depredation of human life that can present itself with the reassuring faces of progress, organisational freedom and career success: it is a constant and pervasive appropriation that commodifies ever larger segments of our lives. Hyper-labour is central to the new chronophagic economy and politics due to its unprecedented rate of return. We, as consumers, produce the surplus value of the commodities themselves, through the labour of our cognitive capacities and imagination, raising the prices of commodities along the way. Within the labour dimension, the dictates of capitalism have also given rise to an encroachment of labour into all moments of life. Using a Foucauldian suggestion, the biopolitics of labour concoct ever more refined stratagems to take away ever larger portions of our time via the erosion of the boundary between free time and labour time. In fact, associated with the issue of speed that grips life, there is the phenomenon of the flexibilization of the individual, which the sociologist Richard Sennett traced back to the erosion of character (Sennett, 1998). In analysing the consequences of the new capitalism on labour, Sennett outlined the differences from the previous Taylor-Fordist system. In contrast to the Fordist model, today, thanks also to information technology, goods are not produced in mass, but flexibly, in relation to demand. First of all, the career is no longer characterised as a linear, obligatory and predictable path. Rather, it proceeds in ups and downs and implies the individual's ability to adapt to new demands and situations. The very term designating a profession no longer indicates something stable, implying an extreme variety and mutability of activities. It is all too easy to assume that this flexibility heavily affects the well-being of individuals. The erosion of stable career paths breaks the immaterial contract between employers and employees, fostering a climate of uncertainty and impermanence. The new capitalism celebrates adaptability, rapid learning and the ability to change roles and responsibilities quickly. This paradigm shift poses significant challenges to traditional notions of character. With the flexible specialisation of production, an attempt is made to get more varied products onto the market more quickly. Without addressing the economic analysis of flexibility, but only the subjective consequences, what seems instead interesting for our discourse is the identification of the system of power implicit in contemporary forms of flexibility. This is why Nancy Fraser questioned precisely, in the light of a re-reading of Foucault as a theorist of Fordist discipline, whether flexibility is the new discipline. In this sense, the American feminist and philosopher refers to flexibilization not only as a mode of social organisation but a way in which individuals shape their own identities. More precisely, it is a process of self-constitution strictly tied to a mode of social organisation. Just as networks redefine spatial relationships, flexibilization alters our understanding of time, emphasising transience and the fluid nature of modern life (Fraser, 2003). Closely linked to the element of flexibilization is finally the structural precariousness of today's labour. Precariousness in fact is a concept that, on a cognitive level, focuses and recalls by contrast the Fordist stability device (Nicoli, 2015). It is precariousness of both time and relationships. In the increasingly atomised post-pandemic society, physical spatial isolation also corresponds to isolation in uncertain times and precarious working relationships. Already Pierre Bourdieu warned us: precariousness is everywhere (Bourdieu, 1998). Precariousness would thus be, according to our interpretative key, the privileged form of labour in the society of performance, where precariousness is above all the result of the crisis of the contract in its public dimension as the fundamental social regulation device of the relations between capital and labour (Chicchi & Simone, 2017). Therefore, times and relationships become obsolete because they are fluid, losing consistency in the new organisation of labour. This antiquatedness also means a loss of the fight for labour rights. In other words, the relationality in representativeness and trade union confrontation is lost. The new conflicts in the workplace involve, in fact, people who are not actually representatives of two different classes, they are not victim against an executioner but are just two totally interchangeable members, playing two roles within an organisation or an

office (Benini, 2010). They are, properly speaking, phantoms, customisations with which employees try to translate the abstractness and inscrutability of relationships back into their living experience (Adorno, 1979). Against this background, the flexibility offered by new forms of organising worktime - such as remote work or telework - can amplify intersectional discrimination by deepening existing inequalities related to race, gender, class, and caregiving responsibilities. For example, women, particularly black women, are often expected to manage both paid work and unpaid caregiving duties at home, making it harder for them to perform effectively in remote settings. This creates additional stress and can result in reduced career advancement opportunities (Collins et al., 2021). In addition, flexibility can also reinforce unconscious biases, where employees who use flexible options are perceived as less committed, disproportionately impacting women and racial minorities who are more likely to utilise these arrangements (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). These dynamics can deepen inequality, further marginalising those already disadvantaged by intersecting forms of discrimination. Finally, intersectional discrimination is often worsened by precarious conditions, as those at the intersection of marginalised identities - such as black women, migrant workers, and individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds or with disabilities - are disproportionately represented in insecure, low-wage, and temporary jobs (Standing, 2016). For this reason, people with disabilities face increased discrimination in precarious labour environments due to the lack of stable employment, benefits and workplace protections: they find it difficult to claim better conditions, which further reinforces their exclusion from stable and decent work. These workers are more likely to be placed in temporary, part-time, or gig work, which tends to exclude them from essential benefits such as healthcare and legal protections (Barnes & Mercer, 2010).

5. Conclusive Remarks

On balance, it is appropriate to propose some concluding reflections in the light of our initial question. Therefore, if the spaces, times and relationships of contemporary labour environments have undergone profound changes, the labour dimension itself cannot but be disrupted. Traditional spaces, times and relationships are now obsolete, not only because they have transformed, but because they seem to have changed, leaving humanity behind. However, what we have tried to discuss is not so much to take a position as to present a critical view that raises doubts and risks in order not to view social change as uncritically positive. The same space-time coordinates with which we are accustomed to orient ourselves remain incapable of grasping the metamorphosis of labour: the technology, speed and distance that structurally permeates labour create a gap between human beings, their rights and the conditions in which “workers work”. The Promethean divide, which Anders mentions, is therefore also visible in the labour dimension in general. The expression Promethean divide means the gap between two products: the contemporary human being and the machine. This irremediable rift consists of the human inability to come to terms with the speed of transformation and the possibility of continuous updating and refinement of the products of technology. As a result, today's working society is unable to keep up with the traditional categories that make workplaces and times habitable. The human being is struggling to keep up with this irrepressible acceleration. This is why the labour society is turning into what the philosopher Byung-Chul Han calls the burnout society (Han, 2015). In fact, Han intended to help us read some forms of today's depression as “performance” depressions. As he observes, psychopathology adapts to culture: as the culture changes, new forms of psychopathology follow. Mental pathologies are daughters of the culture in which they are embedded, they are representative of certain ongoing socio-political events. In the society of performance, the human being becomes a project, constantly competing with itself in order to self-improve, like a small one-man company. Therefore,

burnout is the result of an absolute competition with one's own ego ideal, a sclerotization of the mechanism. The South Korean philosopher focuses with particular attention on the malaise of the late-modern individual in today's society, characterised by performance, competition and, above all, by the flattening of contradictions and the disappearance of negativity. In this perspective, the obsession with hyperactivity and the increasingly strong tendency to multitask come to produce disorders of a depressive and neurotic nature. Such expressions of malaise and fatigue are interpreted as the obvious consequence of the subject's inability to sustain the rhythms of post-capitalist hyper-production in a context in which there is no longer a social model imposed by the outside, but rather it is the subject himself/herself who has introjected it. We live in a burnout society, a society of fatigue, due to overload and dispersion: we are always overburdened and at the same time caught up in a thousand distractions. And because of this, we are tired, brain-drained, caught in the circle of the eternal return of the equal of performance and repetition. It is therefore not surprising why new work-related pathologies have grown out of all proportion and are increasingly psycho-social pathologies. Indeed, the lexicon concerning labour pathologies has rapidly expanded: from burn-out to mobbing and workaholism. They are all pathologies linked to the profound metamorphosis of labour (Jaeggi, 2017). The political-philosophical implications of this new pathologies of labour and the consequent new forms of alienation are, for example, outlined by the new generation of the Frankfurt School. Alienation has by no means disappeared, it has only also changed form: it is to all intents and purposes a lack of relationality, it is a "relation of relationlessness", as the philosopher Rahel Jaeggi writes (Jaeggi, 2014). Consequently, the attempt to bridge this gap between the profoundly changed dimensions in which labour and the human being are framed can only begin with a renewed awareness of this condition. This is the need not to give in to the temptation to keep up inhumanly with progress, but to critically address the issues of work today. To put it again with Han, it is about not abandoning oneself to a society without pain, or rather a palliative society (Han, 2021). To conclude, the question of my intervention whether the concept of labour is obsolete does not have a unique answer: it is obsolete in the sense that it has been undergoing an increasingly profound structural change in its places, times and relations. Workplaces are delocalised, time expanded and relationships precarious and blurred. Said otherwise, labour is obsolete because it is increasingly less human. On the other hand, it is not obsolete but in continuity with traditional labour patterns. Labour continues to produce alienation, new forms of alienation and in new ways, but always alienation. At the same time, issues of inequality, starting with gender inequality, have not become obsolete, but simply the forms in which they are manifested and invisible have changed: the intersectional methodology allowed a better understanding of the subtle functioning of these discriminations. In the continuous transformation of labour, inequalities changed and, in some cases, exacerbated, becoming structural. Nevertheless, the question of how to manage both non-obsolescence and obsolescence of labour is still open. As Anders teaches us, the current dialectic consists of this contradiction between rationalization and full employment: labour will continue to move forward and humanity to pursue it driven by the ever-increasing rationalisation of production and the paradoxical need to work anyway. A critical investigation rooted in political, pre-political and metapolitical issues is therefore still open and opportune. In particular, among the various future research perspectives opened up by the initial question on labour obsolescence, they certainly concern the opportunity to investigate the scenario offered by the spread of Artificial Intelligence (AI). In fact, the challenges offered by AI include the further and sudden change also of our dimension of labour, as well as the risks of an exacerbation of discrimination and inequality (starting with the monopoly of technology in the hands of restricted social groups and the re-production of the same inequalities caused by "human" intelligence). In the light of the above, it is by no means intended to offer a certain answer, but rather to keep questions alive and research open in order to critically keep pace with social transformations.

The open debate on these issues is crucial for stimulating political responses: notwithstanding, these responses cannot be given from above paternalistically. Policies addressing the contemporary obsolescence of labour should primarily focus on the active participation of workers in order to regain the human face of labour. Strengthening labour rights, such as ensuring fair wages, job security, and protections against discrimination, would create a more equitable labour environment. To foster bottom-up participation, policies should encourage the formation of workers' councils, unions, and collaborative decision-making platforms that give employees a voice in shaping workplace practices. This could be supported by laws that protect and promote collective bargaining and ensure that worker representatives are included in discussions on automation, remote work, and other structural changes (Katz & Krueger, 2019). In this way, organisations could be incentivised to adopt democratic governance models, where employees are actively involved in organisational decision-making, creating more transparent and inclusive labour environments that reflect the needs of heterogeneous human resources (Wilkinson et al., 2021).

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