



*European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)  
The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)  
Joint Press Release – 11 December 2015*

**Social partners in Local Government declare “Wealth gains of digitalization have to be distributed fairly among all citizens”**

While digitalisation can foster more jobs, well-being and improve the lives of many citizens, it impacts directly the local and regional governments and their employees, in terms of skills, training, infrastructure, deployment and the forms of work. Spectacular wealth gains that digitalisation is expected to generate, at least for some groups of society, must also be re-distributed fairly among all members of society.

The Social Partners in Local and Regional Government, European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) are committed to work together to multiply the benefits and minimize the risks of digitalization at the workplace.

In a first joint declaration they note that social dialogue is the most appropriate leverage to address the qualitative and quantitative aspect of digitalisation. Digitalisation in the public sector has to be an open and transparent process and consultation, adequate training has to be provided to workers not only on ICT but also in relation to skills and workers rights. Digital technology at the workplace must service to empower and support workers, through greater autonomy and work flexibility and improved quality of public services delivery.

Malin Looberger, Chair of the CEMR Expert Group on Local and Regional Governments as Employers, explains. “The continuing development of the digital society is facing local and regional governments with significant challenges and changes. The public sector must be prepared and ready to give the process a good role and to influence and adapt to the new terms and conditions for the public services and the works in it.”

Mads Samsing, Chair of the EPSU Standing Committee Local Government Committee says: “ Digitalisation has an employment dimension and a social impact. Digitalisation influences on the number of jobs, the quality of jobs and relation between the public sector, citizen and businesses. But while the European Commission addresses the issue of digitalization of local and public administrations, it fails to adequately address the employment dimension. We will do that as social partners”.

CEMR and EPSU are determined to develop further following action points:

- Explore the changes to the work process caused by digitalisation;
- Assess the actual benefits enabled by digitalisation for workers and services delivery;

- Consider the information and training needs for workers at different stages in the implementation process and for different groups within the workforce;
- Identify how workers feel about the loss of personal/ telephone contact with clients after the introduction of digital systems;
- Monitor the incidence of muscular-skeletal conditions in the workplace;
- Monitor the incidence of psycho-social conditions in the workplace;
- Implement monitoring of sickness absence after the introduction of digital systems;
- Identify examples of good practice in the implementation of digitalisation;
- Facilitate the sharing of good practice.

*Link to CEMR-EPSU working document on a Joint Declaration on the opportunities and challenges of digitalisation in local and regional government: <http://www.epsu.org/a/11865>  
This Declaration has been discussed under the joint project “New forms of service delivery for municipalities, the contribution of social dialogue and good practice for well-being at work”. And adopted as a working document until the final discussion in the official social dialogue local and regional government.*

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**EPSU is the European Federation of Public Service Unions.** It is the largest federation of the ETUC and comprises 8 million public service workers from over 265 trade unions; EPSU organises workers in the energy, water and waste sectors, health and social services and local, regional and central government, in all European countries including the EU's Eastern Neighborhood. EPSU is the recognized regional organization of Public Services International (PSI). For more information please go to: <http://www.epsu.org>

The **Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)** brings together more than 150 000 municipalities, cities and regions federated through 60 national associations from 41 European countries. It therefore constitutes the most representative association of local and regional governments in Europe.