CALL FOR SESSIONS
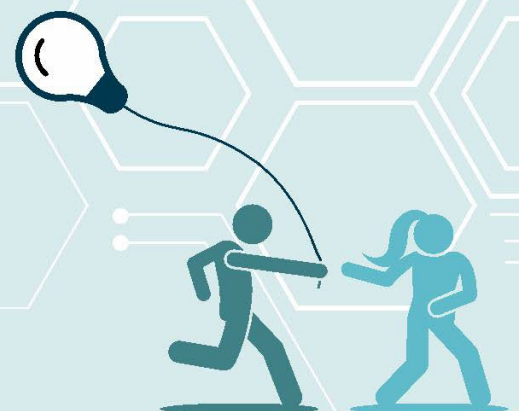
LABOR.A® 2023, 27 September 2023, Berlin and online

"WORK IN PROGRESS: THE NEXT STAGE OF THE SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION!"

"WORK IN PROGRESS: THE NEXT STAGE OF THE SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION!"

Trade unions, businesses, government bodies and civil society have set out to shape the transformation of our economy and the way we live and work towards more sustainability. Today, many organisations and groups throughout society are addressing issues of sustainability. Government bodies, unions and corporations are developing strategies and solutions in order to meet the challenges presented by this transformation.

One thing is clear: the socio-ecological transformation is a responsibility for the whole of society. It can only succeed if the the perspectives, experiences and resources of many players come together. What is at stake here is nothing less than social cohesion. We therefore want to address all the aspects relevant to the socio-ecological transformation by looking at the following questions: Who has a say? Who makes the decisions? Is the burden fairly distributed? How can we increase opportunities for everyone?

Last year the theme of LABOR.A® was "Decent Work in Transformation." Discussions focused on the challenges and rules for a transformation that is a "work in progress" and many practice-based experiences and findings were presented.

This year, we want to take the discussion a step further by addressing new challenges that have emerged in the interim, as well as identifying and (where necessary) expanding the scope for action. We also want to discuss new findings and dig into topics that have been blind spots. And we want to understand what elements in the current discussion are just hype and spin, and what is actual reality in the industry.

We would like to use LABOR.A® 2023, our platform for the "Work of the Future," to create new contacts and connections, to share knowledge, and to help elaborate concrete ideas and suggestions that can be applied on a broad scale.

We are therefore inviting existing and potential new partners to apply for a session or for the Market of Ideas and to collaborate with us. Let's work together to create the programme for LABOR.A® 2023!

CALL FOR SESSIONS AND EXHIBITIONS AT THE ONLINE MARKET OF IDEAS AT LABOR.A® 2023

We launched the LABOR.A® conference series in 2018. From the beginning, it has been a platform for sharing ideas for how to shape the world of work, while also functioning as an open laboratory.

Every year, LABOR.A® brings together players from think-tanks, government bodies, trade unions, academia and businesses. It is a collaborative project that is also sustained by the contributions of our programme partners.

Last year, more than 70 partners contributed to the programme, hosting sessions and taking part in the online Market of Ideas. Some 1,500 participants followed the programme on site and on screen.

WANTED:

YOUR IDEAS

The LABOR.A® 2023 conference is being held on **27 September** as a hybrid event at Café Moskau in **Berlin**. It will be streamed live on www.labora.digital.

You are invited to share your visions for a sustainable and fair society of work, to present scientific findings and examples from the everyday practices of your organisation or business, to collaboratively develop prototypes, and to set up or expand networks with like- or differently-minded people.

The topic for this year's LABOR.A® is "**Work in progress: the next stage of the socio-ecological transformation**!" and should be reflected in programme contributions for sessions and in exhibitions at the online Market of Ideas.

All session proposals must be submitted by at least two collaborating partner organisations.

For the sake of programme diversity, each applicant group is invited to submit just **one** session abstract.

To give you some guidance, on page 4 you will find a range of topics that we think are relevant for the next steps of the socio-ecological transformation. Of course, any new perspectives and proposals that tie in with the theme of our conference are also welcome!

We look forward to your submissions!

WHAT WE OFFER

There are two ways you can participate in LABOR.A® 2023:

You can host a *session,* in the form of an interactive video conference with a duration of 45 minutes. It is important to us that programme partners collaborate with each other, which is why applications must be submitted by at least two organisations.

The sessions should be designed so that it is easy for both on-site and online audience to participate in the discussions. Recordings of the sessions from the last LABOR.A® can be found here in our media centre.

You can use the *Market of Ideas* to present your topics and projects online.

All of the exhibition pages will be accessible after LABOR.A® 2023 on the conference website. The online version of the 2022 Market of Ideas can give you an impression of what this will look like.

The closing date for all submissions is 15 March 2023.

The Hans Böckler Foundation covers the costs of the on-site event as well as streaming expenses. Any fees and travel expenses for speakers and session chairs are the responsibility of the programme partners.

More information about the event can be found on our conference website.

Applications for programme contributions (sessions) and exhibitions at the online Market of Ideas can be submitted here: https://labora.digital/2023/call/

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the "Work of the Future" (Arbeit der Zukunft) research group:
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TOPICS AND QUESTIONS WE HAVE ON OUR MINDS

Participation and social justice

The only way to successfully face the challenge of climate change is to ensure that the transformation is a fair process in which everyone has a chance to participate. This raises the following questions:

- How can both the costs and the opportunities of climate change be fairly distributed?
- How can we safeguard social security institutions, such as pension and healthcare systems, under the conditions of ecological transformation?
- How can we protect particularly vulnerable groups (in certain industries, professions, and parts of the population)? How can we involve them in the decision-making processes of transformation?
- How can we ensure social and ecological standards for working conditions along global supply chains?
- What successful formats for participation exist, for example in municipalities / regions, educational institutions or businesses?
- How can we boost everyone's confidence in the possibility of a successful socio-ecological transformation, particularly given recent crises?
- How can good jobs be created and secured in regions undergoing structural transformation?

Digitalisation as enabling technology

Digital and socio-ecological transformation are not just two processes running side by side, but are closely related in many areas, particularly in the world of work. This is the context in which digital technologies promise to help solve the ecological crisis. In fact, however, the digital transformation leads to greater consumption of energy and resources, at least at first. Many digital innovations are neither socially nor ecologically sustainable, e.g., planned obsolescence, software developed cheaply rather than with energy efficiency in mind, precarious jobs in the gig economy, or discrimination by means of artificial intelligence.

We want to focus on ideas and findings about digitalisation as enabling technology and ask questions such as:

- How can we make digital innovations serve social and ecological objectives? How can we ensure that they are designed in a participatory manner?
- How can they contribute to decarbonisation (e.g., smart power grids) or to sustainable transport (e.g., on-demand public transport services?)

- How can digital applications help make value chains ecologically and socially more sustainable?
- What approaches exist for collecting the data needed for a circular economy?
- How can we ensure that social and ecological sustainability is already part of the design stage of digital technologies?
- How can we promote energy-efficient software and ensure that hardware is repairable and recyclable?

Skilled labour and a job market free from discrimination

Equality, inclusion and equal opportunity in the job market are crucial for social cohesion. Furthermore, the transition to a decarbonised economy and lifestyle can only succeed with a sufficient number of well-trained, skilled workers who are willing and able to cope with the transformation to a sustainable economy and society. These workers are needed right across the board, in the production of goods and food, in industrial manufacturing, in skilled craftsmanship as well as in education and in child, elderly and handicapped care.

Since transitioning to green technologies requires both old and new skills, there will be the intermittent need for more skilled labour. In some areas, additional or different qualifications will be required, while other segments such as coal mining will disappear completely and the workers in question will have to retrain for new jobs. In addition to in-company training programs, this also requires qualification and retraining measures not tied to specific businesses. More training is also needed to meet the demand for skilled workers.

- What models are available for qualification and retraining programmes not tied to specific companies?
- In order to develop strategies and measures to recruit skilled workers, we need to be able to estimate the future demand for skills, based on concrete, regional and sector-specific labour force monitoring. What monitoring approaches not only take into account demographic developments but also current and potential changes in how care work and gainful work is distributed between the sexes as well as between private and public? How can technological developments and the transformation to a sustainable, climate-neutral economy be included here?

- How can people without vocational training be persuaded to take up such training and provided with the support they need, even when they are older than the average trainee?
- How can we ensure that more young people – both so-called top performers and so-called low achievers – take up vocational training?
- How can instructors and teachers cope with the growing heterogeneity among trainees and students (achievement level, age, culture of origin, gender, health status)?
- What forms of training and support exist for instructors and what forms need to be created?
- How can diversity be honoured? How can we promote the inclusion of vulnerable groups (e.g., the severely disabled) in schooling and vocational training, as well as at work?

Housing and social infrastructure

Housing is a key issue in the socio-ecological transformation. Apart from the question of making affordable housing available for everyone as a public service, new working and living realities are increasingly placing new demands on housing construction and space usage concepts.

- To what extent have housing needs been altered by changes in usage (e.g., remote work, in-home care and unpaid care work as well as pandemic lockdowns)?
- What impact does reduced on-site time have on the consumption of resources – for example, in terms of commuter traffic and transit times, or energy footprints at home and in the office?
- How can the housing of tomorrow be made fair and sustainable, both in terms of equal access to housing as well as of local supply structures?
- What does this mean in terms of energy-efficient building methods and resource-saving construction?
- When urban densification becomes an important means of avoiding voracious land consumption for new buildings, what does this mean for our cities? Which strategies exist for creating local supply structures?
- How well are we set up for migration? How can we succeed in creating attractive structures for urgently needed skilled migrant workers? What about refugees?
- How do we deal with the city/country dichotomy? How can rural areas be made more attractive as a place to live, even if there is much to be said in favour of cities, including their carbon footprint?

- How can we create inclusive, age-appropriate and affordable housing? What about sustainability? What role does the new notion of non-profit housing (*Neue Wohngemeinnützigkeit*) play in this?
- Buildings (in use and in construction) are responsible for nearly 40% of global carbon emissions. How can the costs for lower-emissions construction and the energy-efficient refurbishment of existing buildings be shared out fairly? How can landlords be given incentives without increasing the rent for tenants?

Working and living: new models for prosperity

The discussion about degrowth, about shrinking economies to protect the climate and alternative models for prosperity and qualitative growth is in full swing. We would like to contribute by asking the following questions:

- What do viable models of prosperity look like?
- How can prosperity be ensured even if we have fewer resources at our disposal?
- How can we motivate as many people as possible to get involved in this discussion?
- How can we tap into opportunities for healthier work environments and a better balance between paid, care and volunteer work?
- What flexible work arrangements are also ecologically sustainable? How can they be made accessible to as many groups of workers as possible?
- What implications does this objective have for the relationship between working and living?

Turbulent times – crisis as the new normal

Given the developments of recent years and the current challenges that we are facing, sometimes the new normal appears to be a state of multiple, intensifying crises and constant change. The urgency and speed with which these developments challenge habitual lifestyles and mindsets, sometimes even demanding a totally new approach to how we live, makes the situation all the more challenging for everyone involved. We would like to take a closer look at this complex state of affairs, draw on experiences and practical examples for dealing constructively with crises and transformation processes, and also identify what doesn't work.

- How do we deal with the constant pressure to change? What conditions need to be in place for us to be able to successfully handle crises and transformation processes? What demands does this place on participation processes and those involved in them? Can these players become pilots of change?
- What motivates us as citizens, workers and members of society to make a contribution to solving the climate crisis?
- What is the role of work in the transformation process, e.g., the workplace as undergoing as well as triggering change, as bringing together different perspectives and interests, as a site of social discourse and as a prerequisite for transformation?
- How can people be made more resilient in times of constant upheaval? What support do they need? What innovative, unbureaucratic approaches exist?

- What do we know about former transformation processes, about the transition of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) into the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)? What is the long-term impact on the mental health of the population? What factors promote transformation processes? What factors hinder them?
- What have we learned from the Covid-19 pandemic about how to handle crises and exceptional circumstances? Has the world gone back to how it was, or have we gained something from what we went through in the pandemic? What is new or better?
- What new or even unusual alliances can point in new directions? How can players and groups with seemingly different interests and traditions work together? What examples are there of this being successful?