

IGF 2016 Workshop Report

Session Title	Digital economy and the future of work
Date	Thursday 8 December
Time	09:00-10:30
Session Organizer	Sophie Tomlinson, ICC BASIS
Chair/Moderator	Megan RICHARDS, DG Connect, European Commission
Rapporteur/Notetaker	Jennie Irving, ICC BASIS
List of Speakers and their institutional affiliations	Vint CERF, Google Helani GALPAYA, LIRNEasia Antonio GARCIA ZABALLOS, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) (remotely) Lillian NALWOGA, ISOC Uganda (remotely) Eli NOAM, Columbia University Lorenzo PUPILLO, Telecom Italia (remotely) Gabriela ROCHA, Laboratoria Vincenzo SPIEZIA, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
Key Issues raised (1 sentence per issue):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for all actors to identify and address skill deficiencies to better prepare work forces for the changes produced by the digital economy. • New technologies both create and destroy jobs; new work opportunities may need new training and new skills and retraining and support is needed for those losing jobs • As people are likely to have more than one career in their longer lifetimes, learning new skills and capabilities to adapt to new positions is crucial. • Better social policies need to be designed to mitigate the effects of displaced workers. • Education should include soft skills that employers need from their employees. • More opportunities for young people from low income families are needed in developed and developing countries alike.
If there were presentations during the session, please provide a 1-paragraph summary for each Presentation	<p>Vint Cerf, Google described how the social world we live in was like a biological ecosystem. A shift was taking place but participants in the ecosystem would adapt and learn how to survive. Mr Cerf also described how longer lives would necessarily change career patterns. As we were likely to have more than one career in our longer lifetimes we would need to keep learning new skills and capabilities to adapt to new positions. Technology creates and destroys jobs and the new work may need new training and new skills. It was important, however, not to try and jam people into pre-defined jobs; but rather fashion work for people to help them excel.</p> <p>Helani GALPAYA, LIRNEasia provided examples of how the digital revolution has created a huge market place for skilled work in the tech sector in Asia. Thanks to new digital platforms for free-</p>

lancing there were new sources of income. However, offline factors such as inability to prove income, thereby making workers ineligible for bank credit was making many unable to reap the full benefits of the new technologies. Many were forced to take up other part-time 'real world' jobs that often paid less.

Antonio GARCIA ZABALLOS, IDB highlighted a mismatch between the skills supplied by schools and universities and the demand for those skills by industry. As countries moved towards a more digital economy, there was an increasing need to bridge this gap. Actions that developing countries could consider, and development banks could support, included closer collaboration between governments, the private sector and academia to first understand the magnitude of the gap; and the involvement of the ministry of education to adapt or modify the curriculum so it provides young people with relevant skills for the digital industry.

Lilian Nalwoga, ISOC Uganda reported that there had been a 15% increase in Internet users in Africa in the last five years; and that mobile activity had also increased by 35%, demonstrating how more people are taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the Internet. However, whilst there are opportunities, Africa still needed to overcome many of its infrastructure challenges.

Eli Noam, Columbia University noted the following trends as key problems: under-qualified workers who did not have the right skill set to work with new technologies; over-qualified workers who were dissatisfied with their jobs; salaries, where young people who master the new technologies are often under-compensated for their large output of work and older people over-paid for under-producing. He suggested that the widening gap was not a skills issue but rather a compensation profile issue. He warned against the fact that we were moving towards a winner takes all economy where there was a big prize but only a few winners. As the digital economy was an unstable economy, it necessarily involves a level of risk that the older generations are least able to manage.

Lorenzo Pupillo, Telecom Italia shared examples of how smarter machines and smarter people can complement each other to create a mass of customized products and services. To cope with the digital transformation of companies and even entire industries, a strong public-private partnership is required to: promote the diffusion of new high skilled ICT jobs; support workers reskilling and retraining to take advantage of new ICTs and finally design better social policies to mitigate the effects on displaced workers.

Gabriela Rocha, Laboratoria described how Laboratoria identifies women from low income backgrounds in Latin America with potential but no access to formal education. Ms Rocha raised

	<p>the point that currently higher education was the most important path to high-skilled jobs. However, youth from low income families did not necessarily have access to higher education. Alternatives were needed to train and educate the population. Ms Rocha described how societies were obsessed with teaching technical skills but often forget about the soft skills that would enable students to grow in their profession.</p> <p>Vincenzo SPIEZIA, OECD described how the digital economy had the potential to enhance productivity, income and social well-being. It created new job opportunities in new markets, and increased employment in some existing occupations. Nevertheless, as digital technologies enabled the production of more goods and services with less labour, they also exposed workers to the risk of unemployment or lower wages. Vincenzo also stressed how innovation was the real driver of growth and job creation and new technologies should be actively fostered in order for this growth to continue.</p>
<p>Please describe the Discussions that took place during the workshop session: (3 paragraphs)</p>	<p>Co-organized by International Chamber of Commerce Business Action to Support the Information Society (ICC BASIS) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the workshop brought together representatives from diverse stakeholder groups to explore the future of work in the digital economy. It addressed how the digital economy was driving, shaping and challenging workforces and the types of jobs which were key to inclusive growth.</p>
<p>Please describe any Participant suggestions regarding the way forward/ potential next steps /key takeaways: (3 paragraphs)</p>	<p>In order to have a future of jobs, a future of trust on the internet is needed. Having no internet; and no skills is a huge problem for developing countries. Training and access needs to include helping people to move up the value chain.</p> <p>More policies should be adopted to foster growth and employment in new economic activities enabled by digital technologies; to provide training to help workers make the transition to new jobs; and to help ensure job quality in the digital economy. Technology should be “inclusive”. It should not leave anyone behind.</p> <p>To overcome challenges, particularly in developing countries, efforts are needed to improve the digital infrastructure which is a key pillar of the digital jobs strategies.</p>