



System Initiative on Shaping the Future of Education, Gender and Work

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ECONOMIC
FORUM

Preparing for the Future of Work

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Project Overview

The World Economic Forum's System Initiative on Education, Gender and Work is leading a wide-ranging project on the Future of Work to bring clarity and advance debate on the topic. This will be through the dissemination of accessible, balanced and sector-specific knowledge as well as the development of actionable insights to help business and government manage the transformation under way.

Promoting a positive and proactive approach to managing the future employment, jobs and skills landscape

The issue

As technology develops at an accelerated pace, cognitive abilities and tasks that were once thought to be reserved for humans are increasingly being carried out by machines, causing growing concern about the impact on jobs and the subsequent risks for government, business and people.

Globalization, demographics and geopolitical transformations are already making a significant impact on the work landscape. Although a number of new work opportunities are emerging, people are ill-prepared for these roles.

Reskilling, upskilling and redeployment of human capital could bring people and technology closer together, empower the individual and emphasize human skills and capabilities. There is a window of opportunity for individuals, business and government to understand and proactively manage the transition to a new future.

Objectives

To address these challenges, the Forum's Future of Work project aims to:

- Influence a more positive outlook on the transformations under way
- Shape and share new knowledge on trends, opportunities and the pathways for successful adaptation
- Support responsible and responsive action by government and business

Core activities

The Future of Work project focused in 2017-2018 on insight generation and the development of tools. In 2018-2019, the focus will be on multistakeholder adaptation and action. Specific areas of work include:

- **Eight futures of work: Scenarios and their implications:** Development of potential, but realistic, visions of the future that show what the work environment could look like under various factors and policy choices. These scenarios help frame the other activities in this project.
- **Towards a reskilling revolution:** Proposal of reskilling pathways for human capital in disrupted industries and jobs to migrate to growing jobs or industries, collaborating with a wide range of data providers, to offer a realistic and specific view of reskilling and upskilling opportunities.
- **Industry and policy-maker roadmaps:** Guidance for industry leaders and policy-makers on managing the transition to the new world of work. Roadmaps include industry and country profiles derived from the Future of Jobs Report, mapping of viable job transition pathways by industry, a review of best practices for reskilling and responsible displacement of workers, and recommendations for transitioning to a new world of work.
- **Industry-level action:** A network of intra-industry task forces will be set up to prepare for the future of work. Each task force will bring together leaders in each industry to accelerate the future-proofing of workforce management, following the shared agenda in the industry roadmaps.

The role of the Forum

The World Economic Forum provides a neutral platform to encourage public-private as well as inter and intra-industry collaborations on promoting an efficient adaptation to the Future of Work. Through this project, the Forum seeks to bring clarity to this vital issue and aggregate emerging information in a structured way. This will be done by developing thoughtful consensus that can help key decision-makers take a longer-term and more ambitious view of their capacity to positively shape their processes and outlook in the context of the emerging changes.

Communities involved

Companies, governments, academics and civil society are the core stakeholders in the project and will be engaged through dialogue and expert consultations.

System Initiative partners: The project will identify and draw on the knowledge of key partners of the System Initiative on Education, Gender and Work on jobs of the future, reskilling pathways and roadmaps that demonstrate strategies to efficiently react and respond to changes in the short term as well as to proactively shape the long term.

Global Future Council: The project will leverage the expertise of thought leaders from academia, government, business and civil society that constitute the Global Future Council on Education, Gender and Work.

Future of Work Industry task forces: Senior business executives and key representatives from civil society and education and training institutions will collectively form an industry task force. Members of the task forces will participate in physical and virtual meetings to develop industry-level action plans and regularly assess progress and collaboration across the project component areas.

Engagement opportunities

Private sector

- Gain competitive advantage by foreseeing the impact of and adapting to the drivers of change
- Set the agenda on the issues and gain visibility as a thought and action leader
- Actively contribute to the identification and development of reskilling pathways to reduce the negative impact of change on the workforce
- Design the action agenda for business and government to mitigate risks and leverage new opportunities
- Potentially engage with the System Initiative's other projects on education, gender and work

Public sector

- Gain insight on the jobs and skills requirements of the future workforce
- Explore and design policy options to encourage workforce adaptation that offset the negative impact of drivers of change and harnesses new opportunities.
- Explore partnerships with the private sector for the successful implementation of reskilling models

Contact information

For more information, contact Saadia Zahidi, Head of Education, Gender and Work System Initiative, by email at Saadia.Zahidi@weforum.org.