

Call for abstracts for a special issue

Economy 4.0 – The digitalization of labor from a gender perspective

The journal *Gender a výzkum / Gender and Research* announces a call for abstracts for a special issue on *Economy 4.0 – The digitalization of labor from a gender perspective*, edited by Annette von Aleman, Julia Gruhlich, Ilona Horwath, and Lena Weber.

Technological innovations have always been discussed as a catalyst for social innovation. The discussion about the "4th Industrial Revolution" (also known as "economy 4.0" or "digitalization of work") is not an exception here. Many assume that the smart technologies, automation, robotics, cyber-physical systems, cloud- and crowd work are fundamentally transforming the organization of professions, work, working conditions, and the structure of the labor market. Additionally, the increasing use of cell phones, computers, and data clouds contributes to the blurring of traditional boundaries between private and professional life. So far, however, we know little about the social changes triggered by the new technological developments – this applies in particular to its impact on gender relations, which are connected to the division of public and private spheres. Current discussions on the digital transformation of work take place at the interface between the social sciences, economics and engineering, and they usually focus on male-dominated industrial sectors as well as supposedly disembodied and allegedly gender-neutral occupations. Feminist research has shown, however, that such approaches tend to disguise inequalities related to gender, race, and class, as well as the mechanisms which support them.

Looking at the "economy 4.0" from a gender perspective, we argue that we urgently need a broader (and intersectional) perspective to address the pressing issues of gender inequalities at local and global levels of labor. The forthcoming thematic issue aims to open up a space for gender research that challenges and overcomes the androcentric and Eurocentric biases of work and technology research. We welcome articles that focus on (but are not limited to) the following questions:

- Which professions and industries are in the focus of digitalization? To what extent is the public or scientific discussion about digitalization gendered?
- How are views about gender and gender relations reproduced (or not) in technical development in the course of digitalization? Do digital work arrangements contribute to gender neutral work interaction?

- Which role does digitalization play in the field of vocational education? Is the educational link between technology and masculinity questioned or reinforced?
- Does economy 4.0 have an impact on so-called women's jobs (e.g. in education, health, nursing)? (How) Are they affected by digitalization?
- Does economy 4.0 improve the workers' work-life balance (and in which way), and is it able to induce a change of partnership and/or family roles?
- How are industrial relations, and in particular the influence of trade unions, affected by the economy 4.0, and how is this, in turn, linked to gender relations at local and global levels?
- Which impact does economy 4.0 have on global gender (in)equality? Are there national differences in the developments?

If you are interested in publishing a paper in the forthcoming thematic issue, please submit your abstract (max. 250 words) by **30 June 2019** to genderteam@soc.cas.cz and to the addresses of the guest editors: annette.alemann@uni-paderborn.de, julia.gruhlich@uni-goettingen.de, Ilona.horwath@uni-paderborn.de, leweber@mail.uni-paderborn.de. Please write '**Economy 4.0**' in the subject line of your email. Articles may be submitted in English. We will announce the decisions on accepted abstracts by the end of **July 2019**. The deadline for submitting full papers is **31 January 2020**. Papers will then be peer-reviewed. We also welcome book reviews and conference reports and relevant news on the topic of 'Economy 4.0'. The thematic issue is planned for publication in *Gender a výzkum / Gender and Research*.