

Call for Papers

“Post-Corona Visions for the Future of Work in Asia”

BACKGROUND

The pandemic is shaping lives across Asia and it will change the social and economic conditions for the coming decade. Analysing the social, economic, political, geostrategic, cultural and societal implications of this unprecedented crisis and developing visions for the time after COVID-19, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) – a German public non-profit organisation – is inviting scholars to submit contributions from all over Asia.

The rebuilding of supply chains, digitalisation across countries, the future of trade unions and workers as well as the implications of an incessantly proceeding automation will shape the future of the continent. Long-term and systematic analysis of visions for the future of work and the economy of tomorrow remains a staple of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung’s work. In this call for papers, we invite scholars, policy practitioners and experts from across Asia to share their insights and put the spotlight on the many aspects of Asia’s future and the visions for the world after COVID-19.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

We are inviting papers focusing on the following five research areas:

1) Supply chains

The COVID-19 crisis has shaken the structure of the global economy. Many supply chains are broken or are about to be restructured. Global demand has taken a major hit, a wave of factory foreclosures is taking place and vulnerable workers are bearing the brunt of this economic crisis. This pandemic-induced reassessment of existing supply chains makes the following questions timely and pressing: How can supply chains in Asia become more resilient and socially just? How can workers build up power in transnational corporations and global value chains and increase cross-sectoral collaboration? How can international supply chains be designed to improve social conditions in Asia?

2) Platform economy

The world’s most valuable retailer, *Alibaba*, carries no stock. And the world’s largest accommodation provider, *Airbnb*, owns no property. *GoJek* and *Grab* became super apps in

Southeast Asia and manage large parts of their users' payment. At the same time, the importance of more traditional platforms like intra-company freelance directories, subcontractors for day labourers or agencies for domestic helpers and construction workers persists. For this topic, we want to investigate how platforms change the agency of temporary workers and subcontract labourers. What are best practices to ensure fair working conditions and pay within platform economies? How can economy-wide and personal shocks be mitigated for platform workers? And what are future developments in this intersection between innovation, responsibility, and exploitation?

3) Workers and Data Protection

The future of the digital economy and its workers play a tremendous role in the development of the countries in Asia. With Asia at the forefront of digital transformation, we still have much to understand when it comes to the implications of digitalized economies. How is digitalisation transforming companies and value chains? Who creates, generates, captures, controls and uses data? What is relevant workers' data and how does it impact the future of work? How can workers and trade unions regain control over their data and use it effectively? What are relevant policy issues around data protection and how can data processing increase the quality of public service?

4) Automation

Digitalized manufacturing, AI-supported automation, 3D printing and jumps in energy efficiency have changed the rules of the game in the field of automation. Traditionally, automation promised a pathway to well-paying jobs for the middle class to facilitate greater social mobility for successive generations in the economy. As low labour costs and reduced regulation with all their downsides are losing their importance, competitive advantage low- and middle-income countries are struggling to create jobs in the secondary sector of the economy. What competitive advantages should policy makers focus on to prevent reshoring and to increase industrial capacity? Is leap-frogging a viable strategy for low- and middle-income countries? How will the middle-class jobs of tomorrow be created?

5) Just transition

COVID-19 has tragic consequences – threatening the lives of millions, economic devastation and the suffering of families and communities. Through the economic standstill it created a new normal. The restart of the economy should initiate the transition to an economic model centred on low-carbon development with ecological sustainability, social inclusion, and equity. How can we promote this just transition? How can we influence corporate transformation towards ecological sustainability (through trade union networks, collective negotiations, GFAs)?

With the expected changes in the different sectors, it is important to look at the kind of jobs created and whether they are equitable and decent. What kind of wages and social protection will the employees in the sectors get? Which parts of the workforce would be affected? What kind of skills will be required to enable workers to tap into the opportunities coming with new technologies or growth trends?

WHAT WE OFFER

- A suitable remuneration;
- The opportunity for authors to present their papers at a digital conference in October 2020 and to network with FES partners;
- Professional editorial counselling and copy-editing;
- Publication, distribution, and promotion of the final paper through FES in Asia.

WHAT WE EXPECT

- Policy papers including analysis and policy recommendations;
- Papers should have between 4,000 and 6,000 words (excluding footnotes and bibliography);
- Please follow an author-date system for references using the [United Nations Editorial Manual](#) or APA style citation.

HOW IT WORKS

If you are interested, please submit a 400-700-word abstract of your envisioned paper – including research question, policy focus and the design outline of the paper – to info@fes.asia by **Monday, 6 July 11:59 pm Singapore time.**

- Successful candidates will be informed by 13 July 2020
- A first draft should be submitted by 28 August 2020
- Final papers are due by 28 September 2020

For further questions, please contact Kai Dittmann (kai.dittmann@fes.asia). We are looking forward to your submissions!