

In tech we trust

A. S. Enbuske

A. S. Enbuske (2020). *Gerontechnology* 19(Suppl); <https://doi.org/10.4017/gt.2020.19.s.69883.4>

Purpose Today, digitalization is being introduced on a large scale in the Swedish welfare sector, often without analyzing the consequences for the work environment. In the upcoming decade, the Swedish welfare sector is facing major challenges due to the ageing population and a shrinking labor force, which results in reduced tax revenues. When, looking at the demand side, the welfare services need to recruit 500 000 new employees - almost 200 000 employees to compensate for the demographic change and more than 300 000 employees because of retirement, according to The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting, 2018, p. 23). Seen from the supply side, Statistics Sweden estimates a growing labor shortage among welfare professionals. (Statistics Sweden, 2017, p. 44). Also, due to bad working conditions within elderly care, about 25 percent of Kommunal's members consider changing occupation. (Kommunal, 2018, p. 4). In this situation digitalization is looked upon as one important solution on the labor shortage. Consequently, the SKL hopes the technological development will replace more than 70 000 employees due to improved efficiency within the services. (Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting, 2018, p. 35). This article presents the results of a survey carried out by Kommunal, one of Sweden's largest trade unions, focusing on trade union safety representatives' involvement when employers introduce new digital systems and surveillance techniques in workplaces. **Method** The increase in the use of digital systems and surveillance technique has raised Kommunal's concerns in connection with the workers' working environment. To get a better picture of the situation, Kommunal designed a survey to all senior safety representatives, focusing on digitalization and personal integrity at the workplace. A survey on digitalization, working environment and personal integrity at the workplaces was conducted. **Results and Discussion** The results show a situation characterized by i) an extensive exclusion of work environmental questions when introducing digital techniques; ii) an absence of impact assessments in connection with the introduction and implementation of digital systems at the workplace; iii) a lack of knowledge about the impact of surveillance in connection with personal integrity among the safety representatives; iv) a variation of experiences of surveillance across fields; v) a need of empowering the workers and limit the employers' monitoring of work. (Spånt Enbuske, 2019).

References

- Cedefop. (2017). Skills forecast Sweden 2018-2030. Retrieved from <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/skills-forecast>
- Kommunal. (2018). Personal som stannar – en rapport om arbetsmiljön inom äldreomsorgen (art.nr. 978 91 7479 703 9).
- Spånt Enbuske, A. (2019). Digitalisation, work environment and personal integrity at work. *Transfer: European Review of Labour and Research*, 25(2), 235-242. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1024258919851928>.
- Statistics Sweden. (2017). Trends and Forecasts 2017.
- Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting. (2018, p. 23). Sveriges viktigaste jobb finnes i välferden. Rekryter-ingsrapport 2018. Åtta.45.
- Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting. (2018, p. 35). Sveriges viktigaste jobb finnes i välferden. Rekryter-ingsrapport 2018. Åtta.45.

Keywords: digitalisation, welfare sector, working life, labor shortage, trade unions

Address: Swedish Municipal Worker's Union – Kommunal. The Research Department. Stockholm, Sweden

Email: Anna.Spant-Enbuske@kommunal.se