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The analysis of the future of work is sandwiched between two megatrends. On the one hand, there is the renewed hyper-globalisation in the services sector, reinforced by progress in digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence, and on the other hand, there is a relocation of production and services linked to the imperative of the green transformation. Two tendencies that reflect the tension between the ‘ever-faster, ever-further’ and the idea to control time and space.

Before the pandemic, Richard Baldwin stated that telework, associated with the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI), would lead to a new wave of globalisation, this time in the service sector. Baldwin used the term ‘telemigration’ to refer to people who would, therefore, live in one country while working for a company based in another. The development of project-based work could facilitate this development. By their nature, teams change according to the project and can easily integrate employees of a company and collaborators of different statuses.

Which workers are we talking about? Both those from rich countries who might relocate and those from poorer countries who could more easily work from their home country. This indicates an extreme individualisation, where work is seen as self-realisation without the idea of the collective, except for the management which organises its teams virtually and changeably. At first sight, this is a possible win-win situation. But it is only at first sight. Nothing guarantees, in the medium term that the telemigrant workers of the North will keep their high wages and good working conditions in the face of increasingly open competition and of companies that have learned to control a globally dispersed workforce, a kind of human cloud!

This trend towards deterritorialisation also affects sectors thought to be relatively protected, such as education and health. For these sectors, the progress of AI is also a major challenge, as in the case of medical diagnostics. Some studies predict job losses in the tens of millions. Even if this type of forecast is repeated with each technological novelty and ultimately proves to be exaggerated, what is important here is that these are essentially service jobs, a proportion of which are medium or highly skilled. It is a fragmented and globalised world of work subject to technological change.

In contrast to this vision of the future of work is the vision of a radical transformation of modes of production and consumption to meet environmental challenges. It considers that technology alone will not succeed in curbing the environmental crises. **This approach is not about consuming more, but about consuming better (and less).** It is not about replacing fossil-fuel cars with electric cars, but about rethinking our mobility. Production and value chains must be reduced and relocated as locally as possible. Strategic autonomy and the slowdown in international trade are indications of the possible development of more self-centred regional mega-blocks, even if this does not reverse the trend towards the globalisation of services for the moment. Technologies are becoming energy efficient and resilient. Working time is again becoming a central issue, as is the question of the value of work. Hard jobs with poor working conditions and low pay are being abandoned, while, since the Covid-19 crisis, new generations on the labour market are demanding meaningful jobs. Social and democratic participation is essential.

In short, these two visions of the future of work are clearly antagonistic in their views of space and time. But is it possible for one or the other to become dominant? Can they coexist? Or can we think of a synthesis? In my opinion, the two trends are too strong for one to completely dominate the other, but they do not have equal weight and the climate issue as well as the upheavals it brings will have a growing impact. A synthesis, however, seems difficult because the fundamentals are so different. There remains the possibility of an unstable cohabitation with certain areas of convergence and others of strong tensions.

For our reflection on the future of work, this forces us to think pluralistically, with different competing models, based on different visions. With no hope of synthesis, but **with the ecological imperative becoming more and more prevalent, progressive forces and trade unions will have to propose differentiated strategies to consider this plurality of work realities.**