

EADT (summary ATM oriented)

ETF Automation and Digitalisation Workshop was located in Madrid, the workshop was held in the premises of the NH Hotel (Madrid).

The attendance was composed by some representatives from both the Ground Handling world and the ATM universe. It was easy to notice that the vast majority of the attendance were experienced unions activists, some of them were totally dedicated to the negotiating aspect in their respective countries, others were still working in the above studied activities.

After a self-introduction of all the participants of the workshop, we were presented by Henrik Bay-Clausen, 3F (DK), a powerpoint showing us how the ground handling evolved from manual work to robot/automatic oriented work, these evolution in this field of work were at first a real progress for both health and the workers efficiency. But now the jobs are at stakes by cost-efficiency oriented improvement such as the introduction of drones to inspect buildings or self-driving snowplow on Scandinavian airports.

How to answer to the evolution of the jobs, how to resist to the new time-pressure of digitalization ?

We've got to find the several obstacles of the ever going willingness to cut the cost i.e. social acceptance or acceptance of the customers. Regarding safety and security, who take the responsibility if it goes wrong ? Are the airport constructed for the new technologies ? Is the business case good ?

Finally one of the strategy may be to accept that we don't know if there is a limit or not, we've got to prepare ourselves to discover the new jobs that will come. We must support lifelong training and education, and also get our share of the profit while keeping our DNA regarding health and safety.

Then, Lionel Fulton, the project expert, summed up the excellent document EADT (ETF Automation & Digitalisation toolkit). Overall the impact of automation and digitalization on jobs is still blurry; there is wide range of estimates from 47% to 9% depending on the studies.

Three waves of impact according to PwC,

1. Algorithm wave: automation of simple tasks early 2020s
2. Augmentation wave: interaction with technology at 2020s
3. Autonomous wave: automation of physical labour and manual dexterity and problem solving in real-worlds

Some are less likely to be automated than others : Van drivers vs Aircrafts pilots for example.

A High-level expert group expressed a vision regarding a job polarization to be expected: they foreseen more highly skilled jobs and more low-skilled jobs (because no business case efficient) meaning fewer jobs in the middle range of skillfulness which have been automated. To say it again but in a different way, if the workforce is cheap, no need to look for automation, if the workforce is too complex, experienced, skilled, it's then too expensive and hazardous to invest in automation.

There is also obstacles: Public acceptance, Political Opposition, cost of investment regarding the benefit.

Then we split the attendance in two groups, one was ground handling oriented, the other one was ATM oriented. The objective of our activities oriented workshop was to let the members express their ideas and finally extract a consensus on the beginning of a strategy.

At the end of these activities, Marcello Di Giulio, presented our policy about the change management, how to lobby within both industry and agency to steer the technological improvement.

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