



## The Impact of Automisation on Sustainable Trade

### Overview

Today we are witnessing the beginning of a new era of affordable robotics as technology improves and automisation expands. Robots are even the focus of a new Legal Affairs Committee calling for EU wide rules and there are calls for the development of a robust Code of Conduct.

While these evolutions present businesses with dynamic new operating options, the technology poses important moral questions for the future of work. This session will explore whether robotics and automisation can make supply chains more sustainable by eliminating humans and compare the changes in quality, cost and timing to corporate responsibility for workers, NGOs and trade unions.

### Speakers

Moderator: **Darrell Doren**, Senior Director Sustainability – Foreign Trade Association

- **Tim Pike**, Deputy Agent and professional Economist – Bank of England
- **Tara Norton**, Managing Director – BSR (Paris)

### Session Highlights

- **Changes due to automation on different industries:**  
Globalisation and automation are changing everything: Huge companies like Apple, Microsoft etc. have the potential to disrupt any market with their technological evolutions. Many businesses feel safe and don't think it will affect them but that's not true: Automation is happening. The automation revolution taking place could disrupt all jobs. Affected businesses will include for example the automobile industry, grocery retailers, call centers, data analysis, hotel industry, etc.  
All human activity will disappear except more empathic jobs like nurses for example.
- **Social Impact of automation:**  
Human contact is still important and that's why all human activity shouldn't disappear in the coming years.  
The first thing we need to do is understand what's happening and acknowledge we're a bit in danger.  
We should anticipate this revolution and start providing support and capacity building to workers: they shouldn't learn by themselves how to use new technologies. The future skills

for workers in 2020 will include sense-making (having a deeper meaning of data), social intelligence (being able to connect with others and create a reaction), adaptable thinking and design mindset. There will be two job categories in the future: use the computer or tell the computer what to do

- **Modernization of developing countries:**

Lots of companies are moving production to Africa, looking for low-wage production. There is a desire to test things but the mass production seems pretty much alive. All countries will be self-sustained if everyone has access to the same technologies. However, it won't be possible for small countries to have enough land to manufacture robots.

- **Changes in the global supply chain**

From what we see, there's a desire to put some eggs in fewer baskets. Companies tend to be more sustainable and have their products manufactured in less different countries. The closer a supplier is, the more interesting it is for the company: close suppliers react more quickly and are able to change something if needed. This opportunity is lost when you have long supply chains.

You may include as many highlights as necessary!

### Quotes

- "In the history, only one job completely disappeared due to automation: Elevator Operator". Darrell Doren.
- "There will be two job categories in the future: use a computer or tell a computer what to do". Tara Norton
- „The future skills for workers in 2020 will include sense-making (having a deeper meaning of data), social intelligence (being able to connect with others and create a reaction), adaptable thinking and design mindset“. Tara Norton
- "Business models seem to become more individualistic: people want to create apps and launch businesses on their own". Tara Norton