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TIE-Newsletter

I can't breathe

„This scream against oppression, but also for life, stands for our struggle as a whole. The racist violence and the current global crisis is a wake-up call. It illustrates that we need to conquer a world in order to live in solidarity, because our present reality is not unity but division. Despite all claims to the contrary, the current crisis has a face of class, gender and racist oppression.“

These opening words of our previous newsletter are still true. Many of us feel shaken by insecurity. The Pandemic and current crisis are affecting our lives, our working conditions, and our relationships with each other. Companies are using the pandemic to bulldoze forth with the fundamental restructuring of supply chains. At the same time, we are witnessing the destruction/reconstruction of legal systems and political structures in many countries. Hence the conditions for all our political struggles are changing. Nevertheless, the crisis also provides openings for new perspectives.

TIE Bildungswerk e.V., Niddastraße 64, VH, 4. OG, 60329 Frankfurt

Email: info@tie-germany.org

Website: www.tie-germany.org, www.exchains.org

Facebook: TIE Bildungswerk, TIE Global

Instagram: [tie_germany](https://www.instagram.com/tie_germany), [tieglobal](https://www.instagram.com/tieglobal)

Twitter: [tie_germany](https://twitter.com/tie_germany)

Donation account: TIE Bildungswerk e.V.

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This newsletter reports on various experiences of labour activists in the TIE Global network, in the workplace, in trade unions, and in society as a whole:

- countering massive restructurings along the garment supply chain and searching for new forms of working together on a global scale,
- opposing so-called labour law 'reforms' in India, and state violence in France,
- protesting sexist repression in Sri Lanka,
- keeping up commemoration and organising material support as an important aspect of trade union work during the pandemic in Bangladesh,
- negotiating working conditions along the orange juice supply chain in Brazil, and building a new trade union network along the wine supply chain,
- searching for ways to influence the shaping of digitalisation in the workplace.

We hope these reports can be used to inspire common discussion.

Support our network!

The TIE Global newsletter is always about thanking all our loyal friends, donors and supporters, too: Without your support, the TIE networks would not be able to act in an independent and self-organised fashion. However, the current pandemic crisis presents us with major challenges.

Since March 2020, contact restrictions forced us to call off numerous activities that the funding of our network is



based upon, thus posing a major threat to the fundamental functioning of TIE Global. Therefore, we are asking you to continue supporting our work and to help us maintain our independence in the future. Any contribution will be much appreciated, as it will increase the chances for our being able to overcome the crisis and keep alive our international trade union work.

You can directly transfer donations to the account named above, or click the donation button on our website www.tie-germany.org.

Feedback and comments on this newsletter are always welcome! Enjoy reading!

In solidarity,
TIE Bildungswerk e. V.



ExChains Garment

Companies Globally Use Corona Crisis to Push on with Restructurings

The workers in garment production and retail are deeply affected by the Corona crisis. Factory and store closures, layoffs, and work intensification are only the most immediate adverse consequences.

Moreover, struggles about company and supply chain restructurings in production and sale are imminent.

Inditex, mother group of Zara, is planning to close a total of 1.200 (profitable) stores globally within the next few years, while investing 2.7 billion Euro in expanded digitalisation of the value chain and in new digital store applications. The Spanish fashion TNC wants to digitalise each step from production to sale, and to digitally control every single work procedure, in order to speed up procedures, cut costs, dissect and rationalise work procedures even more deeply than they already are. The aim is to create the most



profitable value chain for each single order respectively, and thus to maximise profit.

During the introduction of new technologies in European stores and logistics, workers already felt the impact of how this strategy translates into working conditions: their work has become more monotonous, dense, unhealthy, and precarious.

At the same time, Inditex' Swedish counterpart H&M is implementing its digitalisation agenda in Germany, working on the fast-track introduction of new technologies and work procedures. Concurrently, a profound reconstruction of the H&M store network is underway, including massive job cuts, store closures, and intimidation activities against works council and trade union members, or even complete councils.

Common Demands from Europe and South Asia

These restructurings have provoked new collective efforts and explorative movements within our network. In Europe, activists are striving for international cooperation, enabling colleagues from different countries to put on the agenda and to press home demands regarding the restructuring and shaping of technologies. The idea is to incorporate workers' needs and interests in the development of new technologies from the beginning, so technologies can contribute to making work easier and more interesting, and to enhancing workers' creativity and skills in the process.

This perspective opens up new spaces for labour solidari-

ty. Struggles around the supply chain restructurings are being spread throughout the network. By further integrating their suppliers into their digital systems, retail companies are pitting them up into even fiercer competition with each other, thus rationalising work processes even more massively – with corresponding consequences for workers.

Negotiations on the shaping of technologies in Europe will have a direct impact on work and production in South Asia, and vice versa, which is going to make technologies key areas of dispute, with spaces for new common demands along the value chain opening up. Therefore, in 2021 we will be researching for and developing new ideas for cooperation along the garment value chain. As a tool to enter into discussion on these developments with the store workers, activist Zara workers are currently preparing a comic on restructurings in the stores and along the supply chain.

During the current crisis, we have gained important experience that we can draw from for the struggles ahead. For instance workers, works council and trade union members at German H&M stores have been supporting the Indian trade union GATWU in their fight against H&M supplier Gokaldas Exports in Srirangapatna since June 2020. Negotiations with management, store actions, and public campaigning created pressure on the Swedish TNC to obstruct the factory closure and to enter into direct negotiations with GATWU. This is a valuable experience regarding the future dispute around supply chain digitalisation.



India: Protest against Labour Law ,Reform‘

The so-called labour law ,reform‘ in India is exemplary for the current political restructurings around the globe. The new labour law regulates collective agreement negotiations, labour struggles etc. „The reform is a frontal attack on the labour movement“, states Gautam Mody, general secretary of NTUI trade union federation active in the ExChains network. Since the neoliberalisation of the Indian economy in 1991, workers‘ and trade union rights have repeatedly been attacked and restricted, but now their very existence is at stake, including the fundamental right to organise. Not surprisingly, the government is using the Corona crisis to justify the attack, as are companies when demanding more flexible and less protected workers. To them, trade union organisation is a mere obstacle.

On November 26, the major Indian trade union federations, traditionally linked to the respective political parties, together with the independent NTUI, called for another general strike protesting the government’s labour law ,reform‘ and declaring their determination to fight back the attack on labour rights.

Planned ,Reforms‘

The Modi government has been planning the change in labour laws for a long time. It wants to dismantle occupational health and safety regulations, facilitate contract work, weaken minimum wage regulations, reintroduce day labour, and erode the legal foundation of trade union work in general.

The work of trade unions in India was regulated, until recently, by the *Trade Union Act* and the *Industrial Disputes Act*, defining conditions for registering a union. Once registered, a trade union could only be stripped of its registration for reasons of grave misbehaviour, for example if internal structures were undemocratic or the board misappropriated

member fees. The new *Industrial Relations Code* now includes a paragraph ruling that unions can lose their registration for *any* violation of the law.

Vague Paragraph Jeopardises Existence of Trade Unions

NTUI assesses this paragraph as „vague, and ultimately shifting power relations to benefit the companies“. A stripped registration would imply that strikes will be judged illegal, that workers cannot be represented by their trade union in court or in the workplace, and that union members lose all legal protection. The *Trade Union Act* used to protect workers from accusations to have conspired against the company when they committed the ,crime‘ of organising collectively. This protection is now on the line.





ExChains Garment

The TIE network ExChains works on connecting retail workers and garment factory workers along the global supply chain in Europe and South Asia. Mutual solidarity is vital to the worldwide struggle against exploitation and poverty in the industry. In *ExChains*, TIE has been working together with independent regional trade unions since 2002. These are currently: FTZ&GSEU in Sri Lanka, NGWF in Bangladesh, GAFWU in Chennai/India, GATWU in Bangalore/India, ver.di in Germany, MIT in Spain, and SI-Cobas in Italy.

The network develops joint strategies for supporting workers' self-organisation and building trade union practices along the supply chain. Additionally, the production countries' trade unions work together regionally and develop new approaches towards organising. In German retail, we explore new union approaches facing challenges such as precarisation, company tactics to divide workers, cheap labour, and the transformation of labour by digitalisation.

Hence, the new labour laws are a threat to Indian democracy, too. Trade union organising is being criminalised, and the freedom of association is at stake. To Gautam Mody it is clear: „Capitalism does not need democracy to function. It is trade unions and workers who have a need for democratic rights. Without them, no labour movement can exist.“

Sri Lanka: Protest against Sexual Harassment and Violence

Whether in the workplace, in public, or in domestic quarantine: Women are frequently suffering sexualised violence. According to the United Nations, at least 35 percent of all women worldwide have undergone assaults or attacks at least once in their lives.

The fight against sexual harassment and violence is also a fight of the labour movement. On November 25th, the *International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women*, our colleagues of FTZ&GSEU in Sri Lanka staged a protest, demanding immediate implementation of the new ILO convention 190 which targets sexual violence in the workplace. The Sri Lankan government, as many others, has not ratified this convention so far.

„Sexual harassment is taking place everywhere,“ the trade union denounces, „in the public as the private sector, in the formal as the informal sector, and it is being covered up.“ Particularly in the private sector, male superiors are using sexual harassment and attacks as a management tool to control women workers. This must not be tolerated any longer.

All human beings have the right to a life unaffected by violence and harassment. In the current crisis, the importance of health keeps being stressed. But only a workplace free from sexual harassment and violence can possibly be a healthy workplace. Thus a labour movement that fights for healthy working conditions, must also fight sexual harassment and violence against women.





ExChains Orange Juice

Three Brazilian companies are making up for 80% of production in the global orange juice market, while Germany is the second largest buyer. Workers in orange picking are predominantly labour migrants from poorer parts of Brazil. They often work and live under appalling conditions, and sometimes even slave-like labour relations. This is why TIE, together with ver.di union, works council members of German food retailers, as well as Brazilian trade unions, has initiated a trade union network along the global orange juice supply chain in 2015, using experiences from the garment network. The orange juice network aims at organising concrete actions in the workplace and strengthening trade union

„Never Again“: Commemoration of Worker Killings, Bangladesh

On November 24, 2012, a deadly fire at Tazreen garment factory in Dhaka, supplier of C&A, Li&Fung, and Walmart, killed 113 workers and injured 150. Only five months later, on April 24, 2013, the most fatal factory disaster in Bangladeshi history to date, the collapse of the Rana Plaza building, killed 1.113 workers and left over 2.500 seriously injured.

On the anniversary of the Tazreen fire, the NGWF trade union federation commemorated the victims in a protest rally. The Tazreen fire and the Rana Plaza collapse were no accidents, but worker killings, caused by companies who ignored their obligation to provide safe and healthy workplaces and thus must be made accountable. Yet, not a single factory owner has been held liable so far.

Many surviving workers are still suffering from the consequences today, unable to work for their livelihood. Injured victims and killed victims' families are still struggling for decent compensation payments. None of the payments made so far have met ILO standards.

Corona: Health Is Priority No.1! Is it?

In the pandemic, there is a lot of talk about health being priority No. 1. In many countries, though, this does not apply to the world of labour. In spite of the *Bangladesh Accord for Fire and Building Safety*, introduced years ago in the aftermath of the fatal factory disasters, a myriad of conditions is still detrimental to workers' health in the textile and garment industries today: risks to workers' health and even lives, unhealthy working conditions on a daily basis, inappropriate wages that do not pay for healthy nutrition or acceptable housing.

This fact was sadly highlighted when the pandemic started: multinational retail companies, local supplier companies, and government all refused to act accountably by paying the owing wages. Workers suddenly had to cope without income which caused

action along the supply chain in orange picking, processing, and sale. For the first time, Brazilian trade unions of plantation workers and industrial workers are now working together across organisational boundaries.

ExChains Wine

The TIE ExChains network is currently building a second agricultural network, along the global wine supply chain, based on experiences from struggles of workers on Brazilian orange plantations and in German retail. The rural workers' trade union CSAAWU whose main area of organisation is the Western Cape province of South Africa, is part of the network aimed at strengthening the struggles of local workers as well as German retail workers. New occasions for co-operation between South African and Brazilian rural workers, and their colleagues in the VidaViva network of Mozambique, shall enable

immediate destitution for many. Trade unions and activists bridged the gap by organising relief supplies to reduce hunger. The conclusion is not new: it takes us nowhere to rely on the accountability of companies and governments – to change workers' conditions, it takes workers' solidarity and strong trade unions.

ExChains Orange Juice

Negotiating Working Conditions in Times of Pandemic

In Brazil, many digital meetings between trade unionists in agriculture and in industry were held during the last few months. Together, the participants initiated the development of a „complaints app“, allowing workers to directly feed information about working conditions and labour law violations to the trade unions, get information through the network via newsletters and radio broadcasts, and organise collectively. At the same time, they managed to negotiate working conditions.

Mappings Expanded, Results Implemented

The rural workers' trade unions of Piratininga and Botucatu in the state of Sao Paulo started negotiations with Louis Dreyfus company in October. The subjects for negotiation – including problems and suggested solutions – were identified and developed by the plantation workers in preceding health mappings. As agreed between the trade unions and the company, these mappings had been conducted with 350 workers on the plantations Morrinhos and San José, amounting to 60 percent of the total workforce. In 17 workshops, orange picking workers had been able to discuss their problems without having to fear repression or income cuts, because superiors had been excluded from participation, and the mappings and workshops were treated as



common work within the Global South and along the entire supply chain, ending up in German food retail.

VidaViva

The TIE network VidaViva uses health issues as a trigger to organise workers. Work-related health problems are globally on the rise. Companies want workers to believe that all it takes to endure work is a more balanced diet and regular exercise while at the same time work organisation keeps being trimmed for efficiency, and the pressure keeps rising. In the VidaViva network, workers are developing solidarity-based strategies to counteract pressure and gain control over their workday. However, we do not just want to make workplaces healthier, but to organise trade union resistance against ever increasing company impositions on workers' lives. Since 2003, we have developed various instruments for education, self-research, risk analysis, worker oriented benchmarking etc. in order to develop workplace strategies. In Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Colombia, Mozambique, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Turkey, and Germany, over 100 unions from various sectors are active within VidaViva.

Rail sans Frontière

Workers and activists from Morocco, Senegal, Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, France, and Spain are joining forces

paid working hours. The mapping results were passed on to the company production management in October, and a period of two months was set for both parties to monitor and review the negotiated measures for improvement.

Additionally, trade unions and company agreed to conduct mappings on four more plantations in the region of Botucatu with permanent workers and seasonal picking workers in 2021.



Company and Trade Unions Negotiate New Weighing Procedures

The mappings showed that the procedure for weighing the picked oranges is a key issue for workers, because non-transparent weighing can have grave impact on their wages. So far, the large sacks of picked oranges can't be stabilised in a way that enables precise measuring. Therefore, the weighing procedure is now being negotiated with the company. Presently, the Orange Juice Network is looking for models and procedures in the frame of an alternative benchmark, researching best practice solutions. By solving this problem, workers could gain more control over the production process.

Looking for a Model along the Complete Value Chain

Health mappings can invest workers with the power to identify problems in their workplace and develop suggestions for change by themselves. Therefore the trade unions in the network want to expand these experiences to the suppliers of Louis Dreyfus, and are currently negotiating the issue with the company. In case of success, this initiative would enable many more workers along the supply chain to participate, to analyse their conditions, and to enforce changes. In that case the Orange Juice Network would train more trainers who could then implement its various education tools in these workplaces, too. It might also become possible to establish a pilot model for a change of conditions along the entire production chain.

ExChains Wine

Survey on Poor Working Conditions along the Supply Chain

Covid-19 aggravates the strain of workers everywhere, in German food retail as on farms in South Africa. In Germany, a brief period of praising supermarket workers for their 'system-relevant' work passed without any relevant change to their conditions, and finally gave way to capitalist business as usual. Food retailers are experimenting with automatised supermarkets. Future prospects of precarious workers are darkening.

Covid-19 infection numbers in South Africa are the highest on the continent. The economy has declined by 51 percent between June and September. With 40 percent unemployed to start with, another three million workers lost their jobs during the pandemic so far, with women workers, older workers, and migrant rural workers most affected. Farm owners are restructuring their businesses, relying even more on tem-

Günstiger Wein, bitterer Nachgeschmack

WEINEXPORTE VON SÜDAFRIKA NACH DEUTSCHLAND

INFORMATIONEN FÜR GEWERKSCHAFTER*INNEN



in the network Rail without Frontiers. Existing contacts are also reaching out to North and South America, among others. Founded in Casablanca in 2010, the network supports and coordinates struggles against railway privatisations and for public services accessible to everyone. The activists exchange experiences from their mutual countries and support each other in labour struggles against repressions frequently occurring in the course of privatisations. The network wants transport companies to remain or to be reconverted to public property, in order to safeguard transport workers' rights and to guarantee accessible transport and mobility to everyone.

porary work, and driving workers from their housings. The fired workers are left with the 'choice' to pay for food or for habitation. Quarantine, though, can only be done with both. Thus, getting through the pandemic in South Africa, too, is a question of belonging to a certain class, nation, and gender.

New Alliances between South African Trade Unions in the Pandemic

South African trade unions have become a new social power in the country during the pandemic. For the first time since the Apartheid regime was ended, all major trade union federations united for common actions on October 7 when they took to the streets in protest against the ANC's insufficient measures. Even COSATU federation, closely associated with the ANC since they had fought the Apartheid regime together decades ago, is now publicly wondering whether supporting ANC is still the right thing to do.

Joint Study on the Wine Supply Chain

Concerning workers' conditions which had been poor even before Covid-19, TIE, in cooperation with the Rosa Luxemburg foundation, ver.di, CSAAWU, and TCOE, published a comprehensive study last summer. It can be downloaded from our website or

from rosalux.de/weinstudie (in German). Thus for the first time the situation of workers along the wine supply chain has been made accessible to a broad public of German speakers. Besides describing the problems, the study formulates steps necessary for change.

A Booklet for Workers in Germany and South Africa

To invigorate the common fight along the supply chain, TIE prepares two compact versions of the study: a version for works council members in German food retail stores already exists, while a version for farm workers is in the making. These versions shall acquaint workers with common and with diverging problems along the supply chain, and enable the development of practical ways for working together.

Explorative Meetings Online, and a Delegation to South Africa

In our preceding newsletter we presented our plan for direct exchange by a German delegation to South Africa in November 2020 which was obviously thwarted by the pandemic. Instead, the TIE network will now hold a series of online meetings on the wine supply chain in January and February of 2021. Participants from South Africa, Brazil, Mozambique, and Germany will meet (virtually) for the first time to build a foundation for common work in the future. Workers from Brazil and Mozambique are part of the process, highlighting the core strengths of the TIE network when it comes to addressing workers' actual problems from different perspectives. All three countries are sharing problems that workers must overcome, such as toxic pesticides in agriculture, an uneven distribution of land, and the extremely precarious situation of migrant workers. Pandemic situation permitting, TIE will organise the delegation with ver.di retail representatives to South Africa for July 2021. The delegates shall experience local conditions and enter into direct exchange on problems, mobilisation methods, health and safety issues, and strategies for resistance.

Building New Forms of Movement

Trade unions and workplace initiatives are facing huge challenges in practically each sector and country. Precarisation, global production networks, and new forms of work organisation have drastically changed the field of wage labour. Therefore, workers are coming up with new needs and demands, while trade unions are hardly able to supply them with possible answers or strategies. Our network, too, is confronted with new questions. In discussion with other initiatives, grassroots groups, and union activists, we are searching for escape routes from the crisis of the labour movement, and for ways of confronting the challenges caused by the current disruptions. Within a joint initiative of precarious workers' groups from many European countries, we are looking for new ways of labour organisation. Additionally, within the Lab of Precarious Workers (PrekärLab), Frankfurt/Germany, we are establishing a common local practice between precarious workers and activists in the fields of jobless workers' initiatives, social services, retail, and others.

Grassroots Unions in Europe and Worldwide

Within the „Réseau Européen des Syndicats Alternatifs et de Base“, grassroots unions and organisations

VidaViva

Corona Comic and a Growing Network in Colombia



Due to the pandemic, the VidaViva network in Colombia is holding its meetings virtually, looking for ways and methods to make the best of this period of limited possibilities. For one thing, existing materials are being revised in order to enable better descriptions of and mobilisations for the network. For another, a comic is being developed, discussing VidaViva health issues in the setting of the Corona pandemic.

The aim of the comic is to deal with the pandemic situation and its impact on workers' work, lives, and health. The virus appears as a character discussing with various other characters the question of who decides which pandemic measures a society will take: is it the virus itself, or it is societal structures? The point is to demonstrate how capital and state are using the pandemic to successively annihilate rights and achievements of the labour movement.

'Reform' in the Crisis Benefits Capital

Colombia has seen efforts to get rid of the eight-hour working day in order to enable important industries to expand production without having to pay for overtime. There is pressure to increase temporary and contract labour in order to support 'ailing' companies at the expense of workers. Describing the pandemic situation within this setting of capitalist exploitation and state control, the comic is being circulated in 10.000 printed copies. With its combination of pictures and text, it aims at triggering political discussion about the crisis among a multitude of workers.

In spite of the difficult conditions for trade unions and workers, the network keeps growing. Three trade unions have joined VidaViva recently: two public sector unions, and one from the food industry. All three are organised on the national level which is rare in Colombia where trade unions are usually organised merely on a regional level. This is a vital change, because by way of the new organisations, trainers can now be trained and the mapping strategy implemented on the national level.

from Spain, Greece, Switzerland, France, Germany, Poland, and Belgium have been working together continuously since 2003. The trade union activists of the network are working to counter the impositions of transnational capital with joint resistance. The network is fighting for the preservation of accessible public goods and services, for workers' rights, for a just distribution of social wealth, for social transformation replacing the domination of global corporations and financial markets. The participating unions and organisations are committed to the principles of independence, self-organisation, and grassroots orientation, and they deliberately question the capitalist system. The grassroots unions are also working together with unions and activists beyond Europe in the „International Labour Network of Solidarity and Struggles“ (ILNSS), see www.labour-solidarity.org.

Grassroots Unions in Europe

Diverse Movements against Repressive State Measures in France

In France, an authoritarian reconstruction of the state is progressing under the pretext of security in times of crisis. But in spite of Corona restrictions, protests are massive. The grassroots unions' network, the Yellow Jackets movement, and the anti-racist movement are actively fighting a planned law: The *Global Security Law* wants to introduce new police forces providing increased 'order'. Key subject of protest is the plan to criminalise the spreading of pictures showing police forces in action. This would practically amount to a photo and film ban on protesters and even journalists, and thus to liberty for brutal police action. None of the police brutalities that were publicly exposed during the last few years, could have been discovered without pictures made by witnesses. The same is true for „*Violences policières*“, a film watched and discussed by millions of people.

During the last few years, a democratic public emerged in an unprecedented way and grew to become a menace to the de facto legal immunity of police forces in France. The planned new law therefore marks an attempt for a backlash and a milestone on the way to an authoritarian regime. The origins of this attempt are very clear: the law was initiated by a member of parliament and former head of anti-terrorist units, and backed by the major police trade union whose members prevailingly vote extreme right.

The law was presented to the National Assembly in late November. On the same evening, as on the following days, several ten thousand people took to the streets in protest marches. Notably, the range of participants is broad and getting broader, including Yellow Jackets, student initiatives, journalists, lawyers' associations, filmmakers, the trade union federations Solidaires and CGT, anti-racist and ecological committees, Amnesty International, and the International League for Human Rights. The protests succeeded to build pressure, and finally the passing of the bill was suspended, and a revision of the controversial paragraph was promised.

Still, daily life remains difficult for political activists in France: massive curfews are in place, the public space is largely blocked, and general insecurity concerning future prospects with Corona is wearing people out.



Focus on Digitalisation

Seminars on Digitalisation in Industry

Digitalisation changes the way we work, communicate, consume; in short: the way we live. This consensus is being expressed everywhere in science, politics, and trade unions. Unfortunately, the story mostly goes like this: new technologies are a ‚natural phenomenon‘ or quasi-natural ‚technical progress‘. So, after phase one, two, and three, history is now proceeding to phase four – ‚Industry 4.0‘ – which of course we cannot stop, but must accept and ‚adapt‘ to. This perspective restricts the discussion to questions such as: Will this development cause job losses in the long run? Which qualifications and what data protection will we need in the future?

As workers and activists of TIE, Freudenberg, and others, we discussed issues of digitalisation on several seminars and meetings with scientists, and during workplace and research workshop visits. In our 2017 conclusion to these discussions, we expressed our discontent with the narrow perspective of the mainstream discourse on digitalisation, and decided to start our own series of seminars in order to:

1. develop our own understanding of the process, including the fact that technologies and technological systems do not arrive out of the blue, but are being manufactured. Societal interests and consequences are necessarily already woven into these systems. Therefore the question is not: Do we want progress or not?, but: What progress do we want?, and: How can we influence current and future technologies and use them towards our ends?;
2. find our own language on the issue of digitalisation;
3. define approaches for action on the shaping of technologies that takes place as early as the phase of their development, and address them in the context of society as a whole.

We then started to approach the issue focussing, firstly, on digitalisation induced changes in important fields of action, and secondly, on an anticipatory structuring of work.

In 2020, we conducted four seminars. The common discussion resulted in the assessment that processes of digitalisation do cause fundamental changes regarding work, control, employment structures, workers‘ self-conceptions, but also typical conflicts in the workplace, and instruments for interest representation. Additionally, processes of digitalisation are changing the organisation of complete value chains, our conception of democracy, cities and struggles related to them, as well as our needs, our communication, our consumption habits, and even the control and streamlining of the human body.

Concerning workplace changes, we developed a proposal for a modular factory or company agreement which aims at the changes named above and at shaping the future – concretely focusing on specific fields of action, but also allowing space for openness and fantasy. The following were identified as possible modular elements for such an agreement:

- Cornerstones for organising works council work
- Health, strain protection, and anticipatory risk assessment
- Health and good governance
- The right to qualification
- Anticipatory structuring of technologies and work, including a „social FSD“ (FSD: functional specification document) for shaping technologies from the phase of their planning

