A checklist to responsible
use of algorithmic sytems

CO-GOVERNANCE
GUIDE

PSI PUBLIC SERVICES
INTERNATIONAL

Friedrich
Ebert
Stiftung

THE WHY NOT LAB

The guide is a checklist of 27 questions that you should ask management in connection with the use of digital systems in the workplace.

There are 8 themes in total — in the beginning follow the questions in the order they are written.

Go through the guide and take note of questions that have already been — or could be - answered by your national laws and/or collective agreements.

For example, in some countries, management is required to inform you of how your data will be collected and why. This means you should be able to understand the purpose of the digital system they are using (Theme 1, Question 1: Has management informed you?).

8

CO-GOVERNANCE

7

TRAINING, SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

6

SYSTEM ADJUSTMENTS

Skip questions you don't feel are relevant for now.

You may find that the manager you ask cannot answer some, or all, of your questions. That's ok. Agree on a deadline for when they should provide you with a response.

1 TRANSPARENCY & PROCUREMENT CONTRACTS

2 RESPONSIBILITY

3 HARMS AND BENEFITS

4 DATA PROTECTION

5 RIGHT OF REDRESS

1 TRANSPARENCY, TENDERS AND CONTRACTS WITH SUPPLIERS

1 What digital systems does the employer use that affect the workers and their working conditions? What is the purpose of each of these systems?

2 Who designed and owns these systems? Who are the developers and vendors?

3 In which parts of the workplace will each of these systems be used and which groups of workers will be affected by them?

4 Have the affected workers been clearly informed about each system's purpose and instructions via the trade union, published announcements, intranet or similar?

5 Have the union representatives been consulted?

6 Who are the responsible managers for each system?

7 Can the responsible managers explain how the systems work, what the instructions to the systems are, how the results are obtained, and what data the systems have been trained on?

8 How have you ensured that the systems are in compliance with existing agreements/ policies in the workplace , such as work environment, data protection, equality and human rights? Is this documented?

9 How do you ensure that compliance is maintained when the systems change or new functions are added?

RESPONSIBILITY

2

10 Has management carried out impact assessments before the systems were introduced? If so, who was responsible? Do the workers and/or their representatives have access to these assessments?

11 Have the workers and/or their representatives been consulted as part of the impact assessments?

12 Do you plan to regularly reassess the systems for unintended effects/ impacts?

13 What improvements to the workers working conditions and wellbeing do you foresee that the use of the system(s) will lead to?

③

HARMS / BENEFITS

DATA PROTECTION & RIGHTS

14   Does the data collection, storage, access, analyses and/or offboarding conform to national data protection regulations?

15   If data is moved to other jurisdictions, how does this affect workers' rights?

16   Does the use of digital technologies conform to other relevant laws such as International Human Rights and anti-discrimination law? Can management document this?

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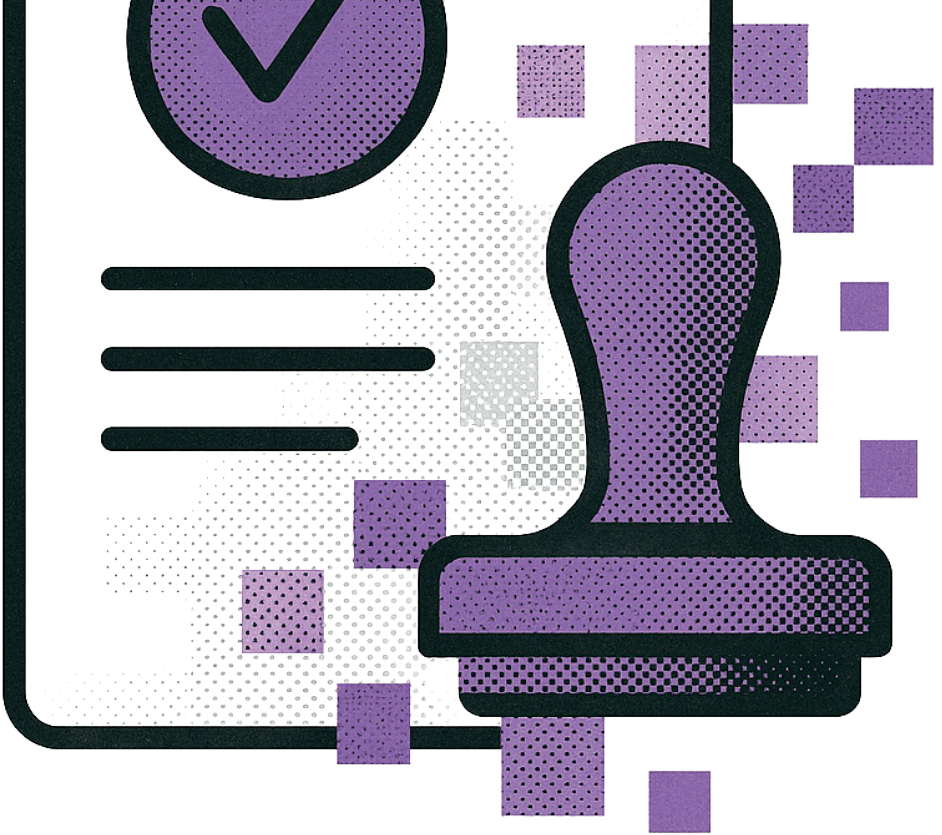
RIGHT OF REDRESS

17   How do you ensure that workers have the right to challenge or complain about decisions made by management with the help of algorithms?

**18**   Have these been clearly communicated to workers?

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SYSTEM ADJUSTMENT

19 What arrangements, mechanisms and procedures are there in the contract with the suppliers of the systems, if the systems do not meet their objectives, harm workers or produce other unintended results? How will you log your assessments and adjustments?

20 Do you log what adjustments are required and what solutions the developers propose?

21 Can workers have access to the developers' responses, including any compromises that have been agreed between, for example, system efficiency and fairness?

TRAINING, SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

22   **Which training policies can ensure that workers always have the skills and competences necessary to adapt to new tasks and working methods?**

23   **What is management's attitude towards supporting disrupted workers in finding new career paths within or outside the workplace?**

24   **What skills and competences do management (and workers) need to implement, manage and assess the digital systems in a responsible and knowledgeable way?**

25 What mechanisms can be introduced so that the workers are involved in the governance of digital technologies on an ongoing basis?

CO-GOVERNANCE
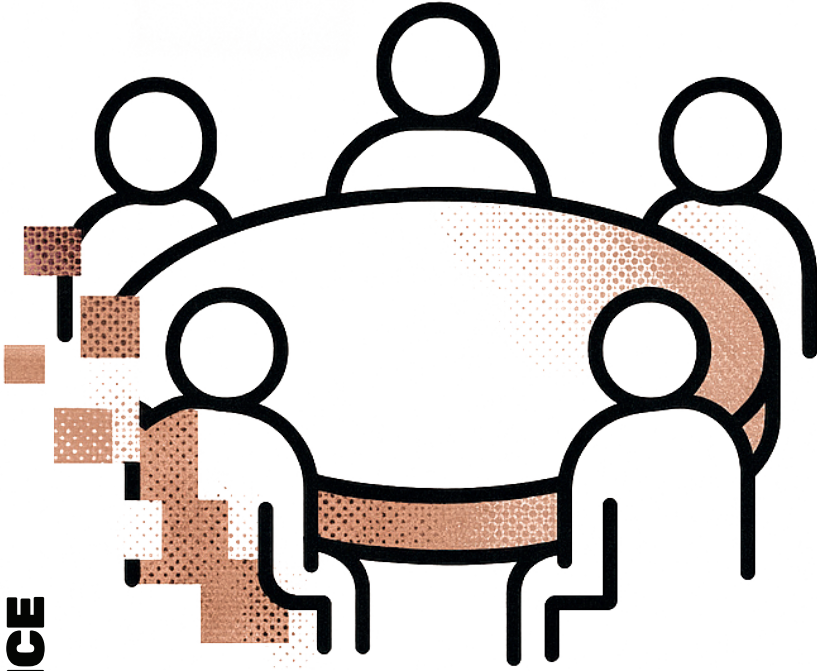
26 How can workers and management share the benefits realised through the use of digital technologies, for example via investment in training programmes, reduced working time or higher wages?

27 Has management considered establishing a whistleblower system that can be used by workers and management to report system failures or suspected system failures?

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REFORMULATE QUESTIONS INTO COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT LANGUAGE

"Who designed and owns these systems? Who are the developers and vendors?"

could be reformulated to:

"Management must, prior to the implementation of digital technologies, provide all workers with information about the developers and/or suppliers who have access to the workers' personal data and/or personally identifiable information."

This Guide was developed by Public Services International Global Union Federation in collaboration with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung & Christina Colclough from the Why Not Lab for use by unions around the world.

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