

Comments on ‘Labor market opportunities for women in the digital age’ by Christiane Krieger-Boden and Alina Sorgner.

- (1) Digitalisation has already had a significant impact on labour markets and the effects of this process are likely to increase in the future. Given the existing differences between men and women in the labour market, with income inequalities and discrimination over opportunities for promotion and types of career, it is important for economists to explore how digitalisation might affect these gender differences. This short note provides an introduction to the substantial (167 page) study by Sorgner, Bode and Krieger-Boden (2017) [S, B & K-B] that provides a detailed analysis of the possible effects of digitalisation for the G20 countries. Readers of this summary should consult the major study if possible, but for those who are unable to do so, this summary might benefit from some expansion.
- (2) There is a reference to the results of Frey and Osborne (2017) for the US, which concludes that 47% of the US labor force faces a very high risk of digitalisation of their jobs. The analysis is not disaggregated by gender, so this does not provide any direct evidence of the likely effect of digitalisation on women’s jobs in the US. However, Frey and Osborne provide the methodology for the S, B & K-B study using digitalization probabilities, and (without going into technical details) it would be helpful to give a general idea of what this involves.
- (3) Figure 1 presents Gender-specific risk of digitalization of occupations by gender for eight of the G20 countries that reveal very different patterns and it would be interesting to see the plots for the remaining twelve G20 countries, if the authors would provide them.
- (4) The data used in the study relate to 2012, though the study was published in 2017 and I wondered if the authors had seen any developments worth noting since the paper was published?
- (5) Making Policy recommendations for the G20 group inevitably involves a high degree of generality, but the authors have managed to avoid worthy aspirations and suggest a number of specific policy ideas, some based on research findings.
- (6) Overall, the research summarised in this short note by Krieger-Boden and Sorgner represents an important contribution to the analysis of the the gender effects of digitalisation and deserves to be widely noted.

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