DFK statement to the European Commission

Executives call for a readjustment of the growth strategy EU 2020

The EU is off course with regard to its employment as well as research and development goals. Within the framework of the consultation for the appraisal of the Europe 2020 strategy for intelligent, sustainable and integrative growth, the association DIE FÜHRUNGSKRÄFTE – DFK is calling for a readjustment and concrete goals, particularly with regard to the effects of the demographic change and the digitalisation of the workplace as well as the creation and protection of jobs. The DFK is registered with the EU commission as a lobby functioning as the political voice of executives.

Modernisation of the workplace

No concrete answers to changes to the workplace due to digitalisation (Industry 4.0, Cloud and crowd workers, liquid organisations, smart factories, the Internet of Things, etc.) are being provided on national or European level. The needs of the employees in particular will undergo a fundamental change, and that at all hierarchy levels. This area will determine whether Europe will remain competitive in the world or not.

Modernisation of education and advanced training

According to a study by Oxford scientists, 47 percent of all jobs in the USA could be threatened in the next ten to twenty years despite digital growth. The technological change will place new demands on education and advanced training. Skills that were previously needed are now losing their importance while others are rapidly gaining it. Europe must therefore put much more effort into digital education.

Modernisation of ICT production

The EU also views information and communications technology as important levers for growth and productivity for the entire economy on their own merits. The productivity gap between the EU and the USA can be explained to a large degree by low investments as well as the low use of ICT. Even the average data speed in European mobile communications continues to merely be half as fast as in the USA.

European companies are practically non-existent in the value chain in the new data-driven economy. The EU is about to fall behind in this area, leading to negative consequences for the entire community. So far the European Commission has not yet attempted to counteract this significant trend in competitiveness.

Modernisation of the infrastructure

The potential of information and communications technology will be a key driver of growth, innovation and employment by 2020. A high-speed broadband infrastructure is another decisive factor the future viability and competitiveness of Europe. A package of measures consisting of well-balanced European regulations, sufficient incentives for investment and targeted sponsorship or participation by the European nations is also required. The goal of comprehensive broadband coverage across Europe can ideally be achieved using optical fibre as well as an optimised mix of technologies consisting of fibre-optic connections, DSL connections and radio solutions during the transition period. A basic broad-
band network connecting to every European household is to be ensured by the European political system.

Modernisation of digital civil rights

The further development of the "International Internet Law" has remained unsuccessful as of yet. A European agreement must be adopted speedily. Personality rights must also apply in the digital world. An IT security roadmap is to be gotten off the ground at the European level. There must be uniform high-level data protection regulations at the European level. Companies must comply with the data protection regulations of the respective countries in which they are active on the market.

The digital revolution is taking place faster than many politicians and economists want to accept. The revised EU 2020 strategy must be geared toward this in all respects and must be quickly and decisively implemented in the interests of Europe’s competitiveness and citizens.