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Governments need to Collaborate and Educate for a Stronger Future

Education and collaboration are the keys to success in an ever changing technological world. This is the major takeaway from the afternoon session at the 2018 Trento Economics Festival with speeches from Aleksi Jantti, Deputy Mayor of the City of Tampere, Finland and Stefano Scarpetta, Director of Employment, Labor and Social Affairs at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Janetti began his speech by explaining that the shock from the failure of Nokia was not as big of shock as it seemed. Tampere was prepared because of the resilience developed through the city's tradition, knowledge and culture. The city of Tampere has a rich tradition of industry dating back to the 1820s and has seen multiple industrial revivals since the 1970s. Since the 1960s the government has invested heavily in its citizens providing excellent education services through universities and vocational programs. Recently three universities have merged together and two vocational schools have combined to bring research under one roof and provide more classes and chances for students to learn. The third being a culture focused on collaboration. Janetti says cooperation between local and national governments is important but also cooperation with the European Union.

Scarpetta opened his speech by describing how people work has changed and that the digital economy is spread out allowing people from all over the world to work together. Not only have the gaps within countries shrunk but also the gaps between countries as well. The jobs that are being destroyed are highly concentrated in specific sectors and specific areas. There is great uncertainty in this prediction but the OECD predicts that over the next 15 years, 40% of jobs from the OECD countries will be gone. Low skilled jobs and entry level jobs are the most at risk. However, the thought that just because a job can be automated it will be automated needs to be abandoned. There are vested interests such as governments, trade unions and corporations which may prevent a total automation take over.

Scarpetta like Janetti calls for education and collaboration as solutions to the problem of technological shocks. Scarpetta said "We are aware of the jobs at risk, we know change will happen. We need prevention policies". The prevention policies Scarpetta is referring to are lifelong learning policies and other human capital investment policies popular in the Nordic countries. Scarpetta called for education systems to provide a minimum level of computer education and wants to see more action from the government with heavy input from the private sector which he believes is not involved enough in the policy making process.

Watch the interview with Aleksi Jantti: <https://youtu.be/WaCAQdMbCww>

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