ROAD TO AUTOMATION

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China recently surprised us with the process of automating its companies in which it begins to do without workers, a key competitiveness factor so far in Asian industry. This process of mechanization or creation of *"smart factories"* is caused by constant technological progress. Europe has already been developing this process in its manufacturing and logistics industry for some time. What is relevant is that the technological component is also beginning to be the factor for which some manufacturing companies in China compete.

The automated warehouses of Amazon or its attempt at sending packages by drones to homes, is a clear example that on this side of the pond these automation processes are also being imposed on activities which until recently were labor intensive. Added to this great giant is Ocado, online grocery store, which recently has developed a technology that allows you to pick and pack your products. This allows you to concentrate your factories in less space and avoid costs in workers.

Undoubtedly, these large technological investments are making

companies increase their profits and be much more profitable. But, to what extent is Europe prepared to assimilate the labor surpluses derived from this unstoppable process? Are the professional training and occupational training policies anticipating the new demanded profiles? It will be necessary to see if the positive impact that these processes generate in economic competitiveness are not hidden by the generalization of a dual economy where some workers are irremediably left out of the labor market due to the paradigm shift. Europe has already gone through many reindustrialization processes. Hopefully we have learned how to dampen and channel the unwanted consequences that these processes also entail. Technology brings progress and competitiveness. Employment, industry and training policies must ensure, for their part, that this progress is not enjoyed at the expense of the weakest and least qualified.

We leave you a video of how Amazon's smart warehouses work.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bwQm2rkwlT4

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