

NEW FORMS OF WORK PLATFORM WORK IN THE EU NEIGHBOURHOOD

Iwona Ganko and Eva Jansova
ETF

ETF RESEARCH

- ❑ 6 countries of the Eastern Partnership: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine
October 2020 and May 2021
- ❑ 6 countries of the Western Balkan region: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia
October 2021 and May 2022

PLATFORM WORK AS A NEW FORM OF EMPLOYMENT

A SHIFT AWAY FROM

- traditional one-to-one relationship between employer and employee,
- traditional full-time work contracts of indefinite duration
- traditional workplaces and work patterns

A SHIFT TOWARDS

- digitalisation
- information society
- flexible labour relations, remote employment and learning opportunities

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

DIGITAL MARKET PLACES

- Digital capital platforms connecting customers with providers who lend money, lease assets or sell goods (e.g., Amazon, Airbnb, Etsy, Ebay, etc.)
- Digital labour platforms connecting customers with professionals (freelancers) or contingent workers who carry out specific projects or assignments (e.g., Upwork, TaskRabbit, Freelancer, Amazon Mechanical Turk, Deliveroo, Uber, etc.)

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK PLATFORM WORK

All labour provided through, on, or mediated by online platforms in a wide range of sectors, where work can be of varied forms, and is provided in exchange for payment (EC, DG EMPL)

- Takes place on digital labour platforms – digital marketplaces for non-standard and contingent work (jobs are broken into tasks and contracted out, services are provided on-demand)
- At least three parties are involved in each transaction: online platform, workers, and clients
- Matching of workers and clients is digitally mediated and administered (although the algorithmic management can be of different degrees)

METHODOLOGY

➤ Desk research : country specific and region-wide

Analysis of quantitative and qualitative data

- Labour market indicators and legislation
- Data on atypical employment: self-employment, part-time employment, online work, etc.
- Level of digitalisation: internet penetration, digital skills, etc.
- Policy frameworks and strategic approaches

➤ Interview programme

➤ Stakeholder survey (WB6)

METHODOLOGY

Big data analytics: automated data collection and analysis

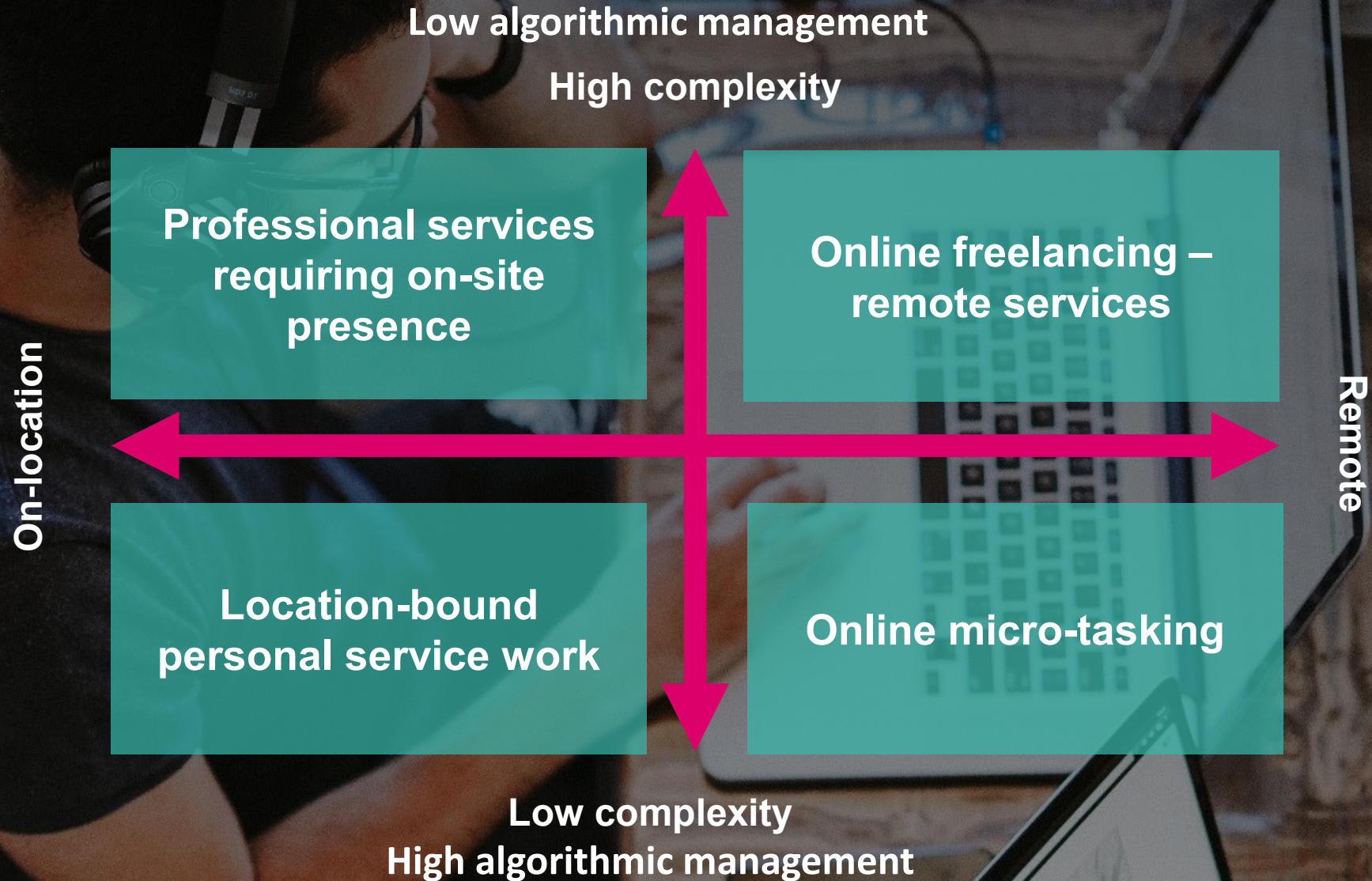
- Web-scraping of global freelancing platforms:

Eastern Partnership countries: Guru, Weblancer and Freelancer

Western Balkans: Freelancer.com, Guru.com, People Per Hour, Hubstaff Talent. Upwork could not be accessed

- Data analysis: coding of new variables for activity, gender and occupation
- Triangulation of three automatically collected data sources: web-scraped for the study, Online Labour Index (iLabour Project, Oxford Internet Institute) and Gigmetar in WB5 (Public Policy Research Center, Serbia)

PLATFORM WORK



POLICY DIMENSIONS

1. Digitalisation and technology (access, work organisation)
2. Labour market (working conditions, social security)
3. Education and training (career and skills development)
4. Evidence for policy making (access to information)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Technological advancements and digitalisation bring new economic and employment dynamics:** challenging standard full-time employment, augmenting remote work (teleworking), increasing short-term and flexible work and casual or project-based contracts, fostering work via online platforms
- **The Covid-19 pandemic accentuated pre-existing trends**
- **New forms of employment and platform work** grow thanks to new job opportunities with lower entry barriers, flexibility of work locations and schedules and requirements for practical skills rather than formal qualifications
- **Young people are the main actors**, particularly men from urban areas, catching new opportunities and enjoying better paid jobs than in traditional economic sectors

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **Informal work is widespread** and workers in new forms of employment are often not covered by social security, employment-related benefits or trade union protection
- **Inequalities are very pronounced**, particularly the gender divide in remote and on-location platform work: almost 70% of remote freelancers and over 90% drivers on ride-hailing platforms are men
- **High-skilled** (ICT sector and creative industry) **and low-skilled** (delivery and ride-hailing by mobile apps) occupations show the strongest labour and skills demand
- **Career development and skills and work experience** recognition is very limited within platform work despite existing on-the-job learning
- **Some forms of work are not recognised and evidence is fragmented**: there is no systematic and detailed data collection to fully understand the phenomenon and its potential impact

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Developing key competences in formal education and training: digital skills, languages, communication, learning to learn and entrepreneurial skills
- Supporting career management and providing counselling, including through Public Employment Services (PES)
- Enabling continuing training and adult education (formal, non-formal, informal)
- Fostering portability of work experience and skills gained on the job by recognising those acquired in new forms of employment and platform work: skills recognition, validation, certification

Contact details:

Iwona Ganko, HCD Expert – Labour Market Specialist, ETF, iga@etf.europa.eu

Eva Jansova, HCD Expert, ETF, eja@etf.europa.eu

Further information:

- European Training Foundation (ETF) (2021). The future of work – New forms of employment in the Eastern Partnership countries: Platform work. Turin: ETF. URL: <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/future-work-new-forms-employment-eastern-partnership>.
- European Training Foundation, Embracing the digital age: The future of work in the Western Balkans. New forms of employment and platform work. <https://www.etf.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/embracing-digital-age>