Platform work and gender equality: key findings from EIGE survey

EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Vytautas Peciukonis | 21 March 2023 | Hybrid workshop on digital platform work: the implications for occupational safety and health
EIGE study on AI and platform work: thematic scope and methodology

AI-related transformation of the labour market
- EU-wide literature review and analysis of available statistical evidence.

Working conditions, work patterns and work-life balance of women and men engaged in platform work
- Online panel survey in 10 Member States (DK, ES, FR, LV, NL, PL, RO, SI, SK and FI). Sample size of ~ 5000 platform workers.

EU and national policy approaches to regulating platform work
- Country level case studies in the same 10 countries.
Gender equality concerns in platform work

Profile of platform workers: young, highly educated, and with care responsibilities, especially among women
- 42% - women, 58% - men; the average age - 31 years.

Much of platform work is split along well-known gendered lines, but gaps are smaller than in the traditional labour market
- Women dominate in childcare and elderly care services, men – in construction, software development or transportation.

Contrasting motivations to engage in platform work
- Women are more likely due to additional income or due to flexibility to combine work with family commitments. Men are more likely due to opportunities to work globally and expand their client base to different cities or countries.

Source: EIGE (2020). Online panel survey of platform workers. Of all platform workers (n = 4,932).
Unpredictable income and working hours are the main disadvantages of platform work

Drawbacks of working via online platforms

- Unpredictable income: 33%
- Unpredictable working hours: 29%
- Low or unfair pay: 15%
- High competition for tasks/work assignments: 15%
- Difficulties in securing tasks on platforms: 12%
- Poor access to social security: 12%
- Issues with clients: 11%
- Issues with the platform(s): 11%
- Difficulty to combine with household/family commitments: 11%
- Unfair ratings or disproportionate rating influence on work: 10%
- Lack of possibilities for skills and career advancement: 10%
- Stressful nature of work via online platforms: 9%
- Boring, uninteresting tasks or work assignments: 9%
- Poor health and safety conditions at work: 9%

Source: EIGE (2020). Online panel survey of platform workers. Of all platform workers (n = 4,932).
Platform workers are vulnerable to intersecting forms of unfair treatment

Reasons platform workers felt treated unfairly while providing services

- None: 23%
- Age: 21%
- Sex or gender
- Body shape or weight
- Language or accent
- Nationality or ethnic origin
- Religion or religious beliefs
- Illness or disability
- Sexual orientation or gender identity
- Skin colour
- Other

Source: EIGE (2020). Online panel survey of platform workers. Of all platform workers (n = 4,932).
The pandemic strongly affected platform workers and exposed their poor access to social protection.

The impact of COVID-19 on platform workers

- My household’s financial situation deteriorated
- I lost my paid job
- I had to work less because my job was closed/lost clients
- I had to work less because I was in quarantine
- I had to work less because I was sick
- My spouse or partner lost paid job
- I had to leave my accommodation because I couldn't afford it

Source: EIGE (2020). Online panel survey of platform workers. Of all platform workers (n = 4,932).
Policy recommendations

• Extend working hours regulations and work–life balance measures to women and men platform workers, irrespective of employment status, and promote equal sharing of care responsibilities between women and men.

• Ensure that women and men platform workers can access social protection, irrespective of their employment status.

• Address the legal uncertainty in the employment status of platform workers to combat disguised employment.
Let’s talk

Connect with us!

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come in for a chat!

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