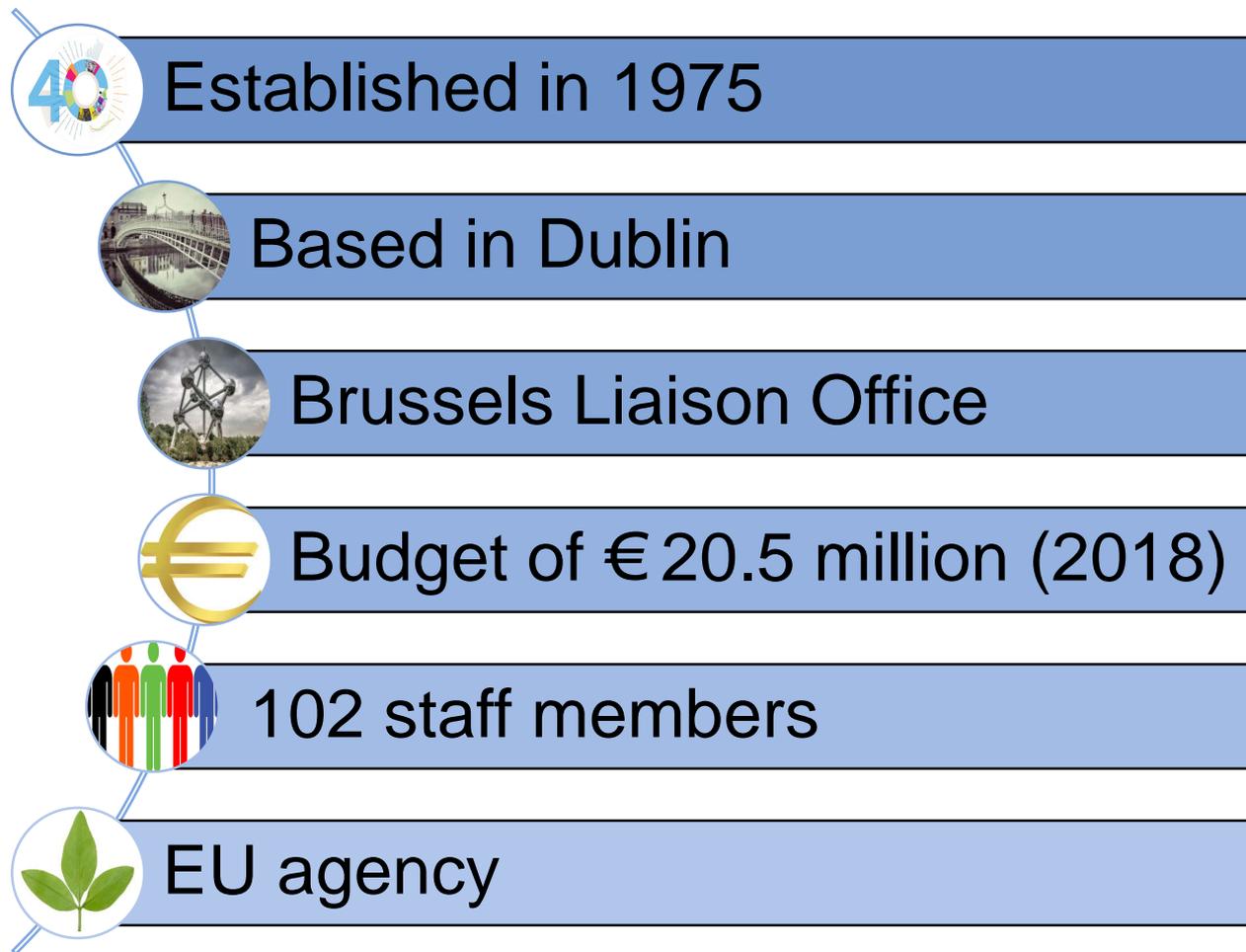


Coordination by platforms Implications on job quality

Workshop on Protecting Workers in the Online Platform Economy
Parallel session 3: Characteristics of online platform work and workers

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Brussels, 24 May 2018

About Eurofound

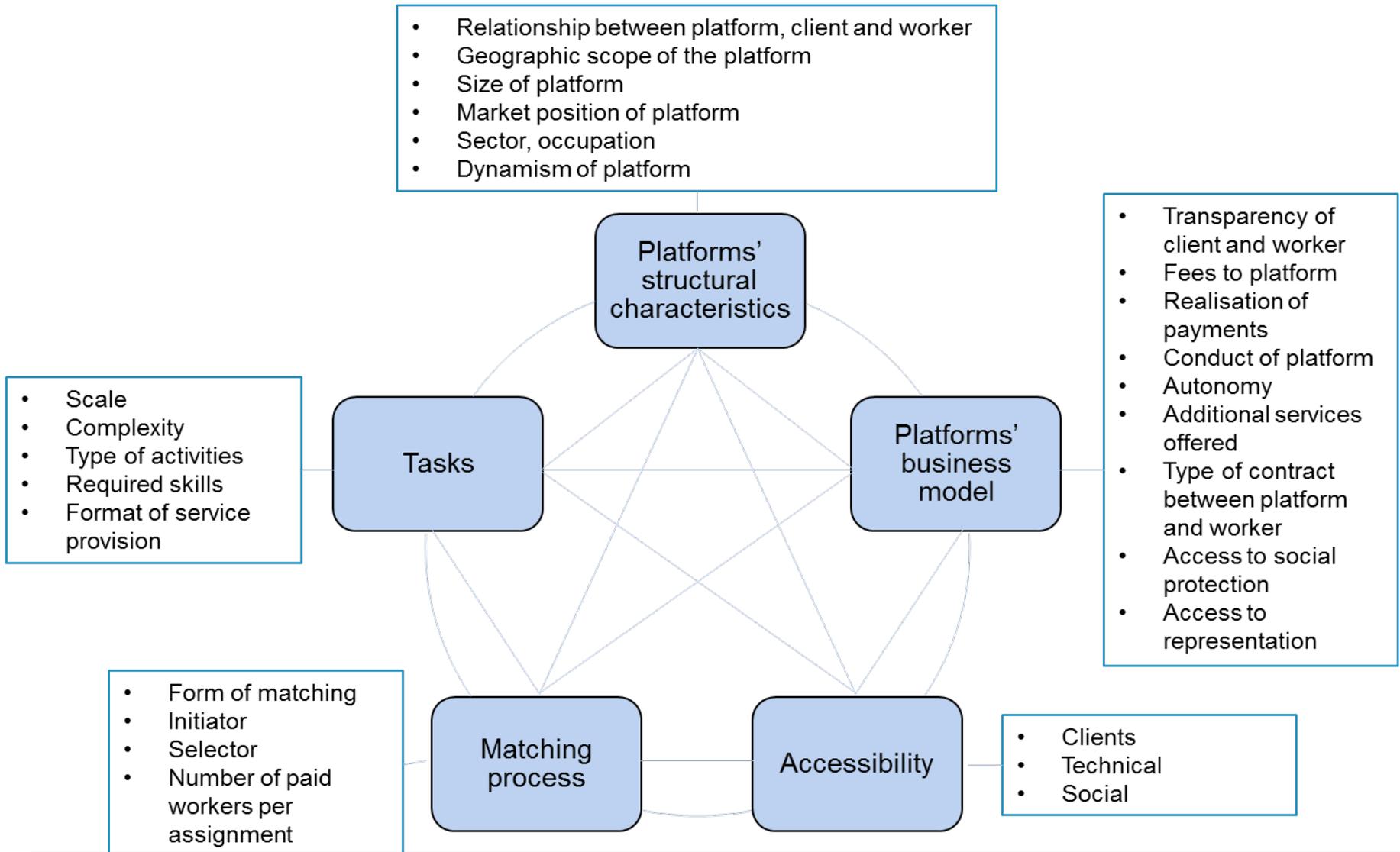


Eurofound's understanding of platform work

- Paid work organised through online platforms
- Three parties involved:
 - Online platform
 - Client
 - Worker
- To conduct specific tasks or solve specific problems
- Form of outsourcing/contracting out
- Break-down of 'jobs' into 'tasks'
- On-demand services

- No platforms for sales, accommodation, financial services
- No non-commercial transactions

Increasing heterogeneity within platform work



Impact on job quality (1)

- Labour market access
 - In general, low entry barriers
 - Technical and social eligibility criteria on some platforms
 - Ambiguous findings as regards discrimination
- Employment status
 - In general, legally unclear and determined by the platform
 - Main activity tends to be outside of platform work
- Social protection
- Representation
 - Some activities by traditional trade unions
 - Worker initiatives, but rather for information and exchange
 - Limited awareness (and interest?) of platform workers

Impact on job quality (2)

- Income
 - Unpredictability and insecurity
 - Unpaid working time notably in contests
 - Extent varies with the size of the tasks
 - Price competition in online tasks vs. market prices in local and high skill tasks
 - Often unclear taxation
- Working time and work-life balance
 - Strongly depends on whether platform work is the main source of income, but overall satisfied with work-life balance
 - Perception to need to be available at all times
 - Potential for long and anti-social hours (shift assignment)
 - Neglecting social and family life
 - Mentally occupied when not working

Impact on job quality (3)

- Flexibility, autonomy and control
 - Theoretical flexibility to select tasks, schedule, work organisation
 - High for contests and worker-initiated tasks
 - In other cases influenced by availability of tasks, algorithms, surveillance mechanisms, ratings
 - Information asymmetries
- Social and professional isolation
- Health and safety
 - Higher risks due to youth, inexperience, lack of guidance and measures in place, stress and work intensity
 - Locally delivered tasks: physically demanding, potential harassment, accidents, physical environment
 - Online tasks: computer and posture related

Impact on job quality (4)

- Work content, skills development
 - Limited in micro and locally delivered tasks
 - Good potential in online and higher skill tasks
 - Anecdotal evidence of limited intention to use platform work as skills enhancement
- Employability, transitions, career progression
 - Limited prospects in micro and low skill tasks
 - Stepping stone to self-employment in worker-initiated tasks
 - Portfolio building in contests
- Data privacy and data protection – data collection and use
- Intellectual property rights
- Conflict resolution mechanisms

Thank you for your attention!

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