



Panel discussion on “platform work”

Platform work: what benefits?

- ▷ Flexibility for workers
 - “microentrepreneurs” who seize control of their own schedules and “chart their own destiny”
- ▷ Improved opportunities to work
 - workers get access to more possible client-employers
 - client-employers get access to more labour
- ▷ Platform work can provide more security (and taxation revenue) than casual labor in certain emerging economies

What safety risks?

- ▷ Lack of employer protection
 - benefits of a safety bureaucracy: safety training, safety management system
- ▷ Surveillance by the platform leading to psychosocial risks
- ▷ Alienation
- ▷ Low ability to organize to defend collective rights
- ▷ Increased inequality: food delivery vs Kim Kardashian
- ▷ Economic risk of low demand borne solely by worker, possibly encouraging risk-taking behaviours (fatigue)

Panelists



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PLATFORM WORKERS

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Categorisation of digital labour markets in the platform economy

Cloud work (web-based digital labour)

1. freelance marketplaces
2. microtasking crowd work
3. contest-based creative crowd work

Gig work (location-based digital labour)

4. accommodation
5. transportation and delivery services
6. household services and personal services



Adjusted WES model: Challenges for platform work			
Work dimension	Employment dimension	Social relations dimension	Other indicators
Autonomy in the allocation of tasks	Employment status	Representation	Undeclared work
Autonomy in work organisation	Determination of the employer	Participation in decision-making	Cross-border work
Surveillance, direction and performance appraisal	Contracts (incl. type, termination, contractual information provision)	Supportive management and social support	Data protection
Task complexity	Social protection	Adverse behaviour and equal treatment	
Work intensity and speed pressure	Earnings (incl. wages, fees, price setting)		
Emotional demands	Working time		
Physical environment	Career opportunities		
	Training and skills		

Analysis of OSH risk factors

Workplace

Worker's address

- ▶ Same risks as teleworking: those related to environment conditions as such as ventilation, noise, light, as well as to the workstation: chair, table and computer equipment. Besides, distractions and difficulties of separating personal life from work.
- ▶ Need for a risk assessment as in the workplace.

Work outside home

- ▶ Risks derived from displacement: traffic jams, accidents, insults or harassment at activity place.

Working time

- ▶ The more number of hours, the higher remuneration.
- ▶ The platform does not impose limits, it is the worker who limits their availability time.
- ▶ Low financial compensation. Long hours to get minimum wage.
- ▶ Permanent search for tasks linked to registration on various platforms.
- ▶ Need to accept tasks to maintain assignment.
- ▶ Immediacy of the service.
- ▶ No vacations, no weekly breaks, no digital disconnection, no paid leave.
- ▶ Possibility of performing tasks 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

International

- ▶ Need to agree on minimum regulations.
- ▶ Good practices: French Code du Travail, Law AB-5 State of California.
- ▶ Locally executed jobs versus globally executed jobs.

Tools

- ▶ Computer, tablet or mobile to contact the platform.
 - ▶ Computer equipment and display screens to perform the tasks.
 - ▶ Vehicle: car, motorcycle, bicycle, scooter, etc.
 - ▶ Other tools: home repair, chair and table, etc.
- They can cause both physical and psychological damage (anxiety, stress, etc.)

Business and customer control

- ▶ Online reputation that influences task distribution.
 - ▶ Loss of privacy.
- They can cause both physical and psychological damage (anxiety, stress, etc.).

Remuneration

- ▶ Free realization or in exchange for a price.
- ▶ Low prices.
- ▶ No minimum remuneration guaranteed for availability.
- ▶ The platforms may or may not affect the prices of the services.
- ▶ Platform commission.
- ▶ Remuneration for work performed properly.
- ▶ Economic insecurity generates dependency on the platform.

What OSH specific risks do digital platform workers encounter?

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/summary-digital-platform-work-and-occupational-safety-and-health-overview-regulation-policies-practices-and-research>

Examples of platform work	Physical risks	Psychological risks
Parcel delivery	<p>Ergonomic risks, related to physical overexertion or repetitive manual tasks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle or bicycle accidents • Slips, trips and falls • Workplace violence • Exposure to extreme weather temperatures • Exposure to hazardous substances or biological materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working hours • Isolation • Bullying, verbal abuse, harassment • Anxiety • Depression • Stress • Nomophobia and phubbing • Exposure to violence, crime, abuse and illegal content when working • Excessive workload and time pressure • Work addiction • Sedentary lifestyle
Handiwork	<p>Exposure to hazardous substances (e.g. lead, asbestos, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in awkward positions or performing awkward manual tasks, increasing the risk of MSDs • Lifting heavy or awkward objects • Exposure to electricity, extreme temperatures or noise • Working at heights • Slips, trips and falls • Working with various tools 	
Online content review	<p>Ergonomic issues, due to inappropriate setting of the workstation, including the visual display unit, keyboard, desk and chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged sitting and sedentary behaviour • Excessive screen time 	
Remote programming	<p>Ergonomic issues, due to inappropriate setting of the workstation, including the visual display unit, keyboard, desk and chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged sitting and sedentary behaviour • Excessive screen time 	

Factors aggravating OSH risks (by risk level)

<https://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/summary-digital-platform-work-and-occupational-safety-and-health-overview-regulation-policies-practices-and-research>

Factors aggravating OSH risks	Parcel delivery	Handiwork	Online content review	Remote programming
Employment status	High	Low	High	Low
Algorithmic management	High	Medium	High	Medium
Professional isolation/social support	Medium	Medium	High	High
Work-life balance	Medium	Low	High	High
Job/income insecurity	High	Low	High	Low

Digitalisation and platformisation

“La conexión permanente al dispositivo móvil, los tiempos de descanso y la monitorización constante: Digitalización e intensificación del trabajo”. Oscar Pérez Zapata. Departamento de Gestión Empresarial. Universidad Pontificia de Comillas

Trends amplified by platforms

- **Precariousness:** material and symbolic insecurities
- Cognitive and emotional **efforts**
- **Constant and immediate measurements** that feed decisions: technology and apps
- **Paradoxes of flexibility and autonomies**

Consequences

- Undesirable influence on **workload and stress**
- Hyperconnectivity adds to “**techno-stress**”
- **Intrusive features of technology**, such as spatial and temporal accessibility, are predictors of anxiety, isolation, and sleep deprivation
- The **continuous demands of technological adaptation** pose a risk to mental health
- Working with technology increases the **probability of burnout**
- Working with technology can cause “**technoaddiction**”

Top trends in AI

	Robotics	Neural Networks	Artificial Vision	Fuzzy Logic	Natural Language Process	Expert Systems
Industry	X	X	X	X		X
Agriculture	X					
Bio-medicine	X	X			X	X
Construction Civil Works	X		X			
Industrial Maintenance	X		X	X		X
Education		X			X	X
Transport/Logistics		X		X		X
Business Management		X			X	X
Finance		X				X
Environment		X				
Security			X	X	X	X

New trends impacting OSH

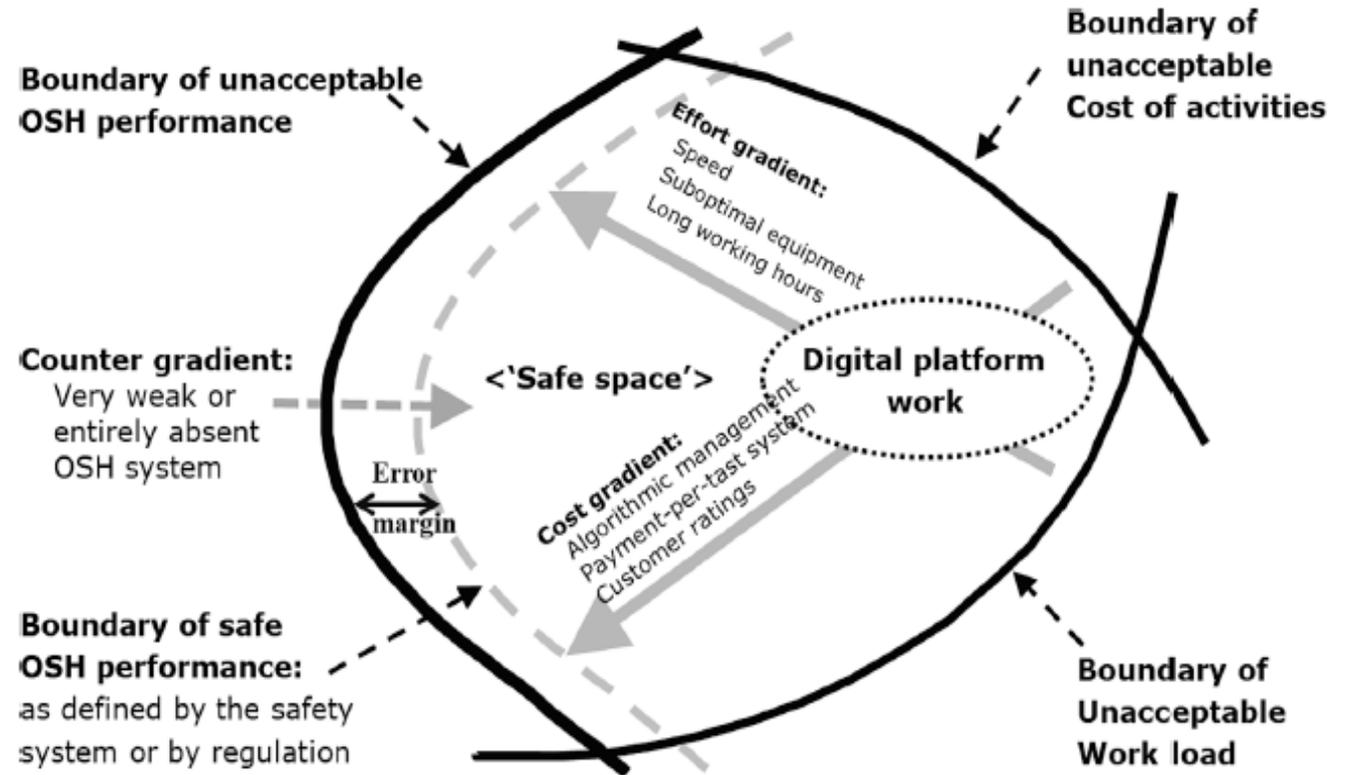
- Intelligent machines are the primary drivers of the digital transformation.
- Concerns about privacy, data integrity, transparency and trustworthiness of new technologies. Latest ICT developments enable organizations to gather real-time information on certain safety risks, especially between humans and machines.
- Information flows
 - Three kinds of information pass among the components of the system:
 - Human information
 - Machine information
 - Environment information
- Key enabling technologies
 - Current technologies
 - Internet of Everything
 - Ontology and semantic interoperability
 - Assurance algorithms
 - New technologies
 - Digital twins
 - Real-time collision avoidance
 - AI-assisted behavioural analysis



OSH and Digital platform work

Migration towards the boundary of unacceptable OSH performance in digital platform work.
Cost and effort gradients push young workers' activities towards the boundary of unacceptable OSH performance.

Adjust from Rasmussen's (1997) drift to danger'-model. **Working conditions and safety in the gig economy – a media coverage analysis** Marie Nilsen, Trond Kongsvik, Stian Antonsen.





The future of work does not depend on technology, it depends on us, on being able to agree on a new social contract.

#FuturodelTrabajo de #OIT100

Thank you very much for your kind attention... and remember:

Today, the machine may be “intelligent” but ...



Finnish Institute of
Occupational Health

Learning at platform-mediated work

Laura Seppänen, Finnish Institute of Occupational Health

6th SAFERA Symposium, Rome, June 2022



Key features of platform work (in relation to learning)

- Heterogeneity of platform workers
 - Basic digital skills are needed
- Heterogeneity of tasks/projects/gigs
 - <https://tyoelamatieto.fi/en/articles/ListOfDigitalLabourPlatforms>
- Interaction and transactions mediated by algorithms
- Temporary nature of platform work
- Workers are responsible for their learning

Types of learning

On-the-job learning as responses to challenges of platform work

- Telling about problems to platform representatives
- Discovering the algorithmic mechanisms of the platform
- Knowing the “tricks” to maintain a good reputation on the platform
- Crossing boundaries by taking new roles

(Seppänen, Toiviainen & Hasu 2022, forthcoming)

Social learning

- Individualized working structure, isolation
- Some platform companies may diminish social structures because of risk of being considered employers
- Social media communities
- Training possibilities can be made available (e.g. WorkerTech)

Fair work on platforms – REITA | Finnish
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