Doctoral (PhD) dissertation

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15 March 2025

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The impact of digitalisation on the employment relationship in the European Union and global context

Doctoral (PhD) dissertation

Draft for preliminary defence

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Budapest, …… …… 2025

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1. Background and Rationale

Digitalisation involves integrating digital technologies into different organisational functions, such as manufacturing, management, and communication, to enhance efficiency, improve decision-making, and streamline operations. This technological revolution has transformed employment relations in a great way since the rise of automation, artificial intelligence, and advanced data analytics, which has altered work structures and skill requirements and affected how work is carried out. This has, in return, affected the associations between organisations and employees in aspects like career growth, working conditions, and job security (Marti & Puertas, 2023). To advance economic development, the European Commission has underlined the need to use computerised innovation while mitigating any issues such as job cuts and skill gaps. Policies like the Digital Single Market Strategy aim to create an environment that encourages digital innovation while ensuring workers have the skills they need to succeed in a digital economy. Policies like the Digital Single Market Strategy aim to create an environment that encourages digital innovation while ensuring workers have the skills they need to succeed in a digital economy. The 2019 European Company Survey (ECS)[1] extends to smart data on what digitisation means for employment opportunity levels throughout Europe. The survey examined EU businesses with ten or more employees from 2016 to 2019. It was demonstrated that highly digitalised businesses had a significantly higher likelihood of expanding their workforce during this period than less digitalised businesses. Just 30-34 percent of enterprises with limited digitalised processes experienced human resource development, contrasted with 40-43 percent of profoundly digitalised enterprises. This proposes that the creation of new net businesses in Europe might result from digitalisation (Brodny & Tutak, 2021).

The ECS did, in any case, likewise show that enterprises encountering slower digital change tended to hold solid jobs at more prominent rates. Due to the increased disruption brought on by digital changes, this suggests that labour reorganisation may be required. The survey found that entrepreneurs who embraced digitalisation had higher future expectations than the other 22%. Among them, 42% planned to expand their workforce. This highlights future

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[1] The European Company Survey explores the strategies deployed by companies to meet their skill needs, through recruitment, HR development practices and work organisation; with special emphasis will be put on the impact of digitalization, available here: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/projects/european-company-survey

job opportunities driven by advanced tools while acknowledging the complex impacts of digitalisation. (Brodny & Tutak, 2022)

Employment patterns have been impacted by digitalisation, even outside of the EU. Digital transformation has been adopted by businesses to boost productivity and competitiveness in both developed and developing economies. Nevertheless, this change has additionally ignited stresses over job loss and the need for retraining or upskilling workers to satisfy advancing business needs. Moreover, digitisation fosters interconnected work relationships, extending beyond national borders, and emphasises the need for collaborative efforts to overcome shared challenges.

The speed at which digitisation has progressed lately affects numerous features of society, including workplace organisation. With numerous countries confronting both positive and negative impacts from these innovation leap forwards, the European Union (EU) has been at the very front of this advanced transformation. (Andreeva & Yolova, 2022) This research aims to contrast the impact of digitisation on employment relationships in the EU and globally with developments in Albania and identify potential future trends in the field.

The background and reasoning for this dissertation come from the developing meaning of digitisation in the labour market. The development of digitalisation, artificial intelligence, and remote work have changed corporate tasks and representative business relations. To support the monetary turn of events and seriousness in the worldwide field, authorities in the EU have focused on the digitisation of areas. Thus, a few endeavours and guidelines have been made to support digitisation and help the labour force acclimate to these changes.

1.2. The Case of Albania

In Albania, the adoption of digital work has also been fueled by the growing demand for cost-effective solutions from customers not only within the country but also from other nations worldwide who seek skilled professionals capable of delivering high-quality work at competitive rates. Satka, Zendeli, and Kosta (2023) express that this work's online nature eliminates geographical barriers, allowing Albanian workers to compete with other freelancers in a global marketplace. As a result, these media have become a vital source of income for many, offering opportunities that surpass the traditional jobs available in the local economy.

The utilised platforms for online work in Albania. They include Upwork, known for its broad range of job categories, from technical roles like software development and IT support to

administrative tasks and creative services (Gertenbach, 2024). Workers often prefer this website because it offers a working environment that is well structured with job postings that have clear details, payment terms, and a system that allows worker engagement in long-term contracts. For those workers who do not want to work full-time, the system has short-term gigs and ongoing projects, making it attractive to professionals looking for stability and consistent work. Fiverr.com, on the other hand, is more focused on micro tasks and creative services. It is popular among freelancers with creative skills like graphic design, writing, video editing, and digital marketing (Gertenbach, 2024). One of the reasons online workers favour Fiverr is its simplicity, which allows its users to showcase their "gigs," predefined services with set prices. This model enables the workers to define their scope of work and pricing, making it easier to manage expectations and avoid the complexities of bidding for jobs. Additionally, its emphasis on quick, one-off tasks appeals to clients and workers looking for efficiency and speed.

Albania's rapid adoption of digital platform work has outpaced the development of its legal and regulatory frameworks. For instance, Albania's Labor Code (Act No. 7961/1995), which requires workers to be formally classified as employees to receive benefits like health insurance and unemployment support, does not account for the growing gig economy, where platform workers like those in Upwork or Fiverr are categorised as independent contractors. As Çela (2024) highlights, these workers are excluded from standard benefits, leaving them vulnerable due to the absence of legal protections. Besides, workers' rights are often overlooked, and employers are not held accountable for fair labor practices.

Further, the rise of these platforms in Albania has some implications for the social welfare system. Traditional social security mechanisms are primarily designed for formal employment relationships and do not extend to gig workers (International Labour Organization, 2022). As a result, many online platform workers lack access to essential benefits such as health insurance, unemployment benefits, and retirement pensions. Kapisyzi et al. (2024) elaborate that the lack of a clear career path in this type of work further makes it challenging for long-term planning for these workers, as there are few opportunities for skill advancement or growth within platform-based jobs. Many employees face difficulty when they want to transition from short-term gigs to more stable, long-term work due to a lack of proper framework for progression or mentorship programs within the platform models (Kapisyzi et al., 2024). This exclusion from the social safety net worsens economic insecurity among

these online workers, which means there is a need for policy reforms that integrate non-standard forms of employment into the social protection systems.

Comparison to Hungary

Like in Albania, the shift to digital platform work in Hungary has been fueled by globalization and technological advancements, which are also similar to trends seen in other parts of Europe. Platforms like Upwork and Fiverr allow Hungarian workers to engage in global freelance markets where they access jobs ranging from technical support to creative services (Gertenbach, 2024). Other digital platforms, such as Uber, Bolt, and Amazon Mechanical Turk, connect labour demand with supply, which helps to facilitate direct interactions between workers and clients (Réka, 2019). This shift is part of a worldwide trend where online work is challenging traditional labour structures. However, as Bankó (2020) notes, even though this remote working has enabled some Hungarians to bypass geographical constraints by allowing them to offer their services globally, the continuous use has overtaken the advancement of labour laws in Hungary, which were initially designed for traditional, full-time employment. Like in Albania, the existing legal framework in Hungary still does not cover all aspects of digital work necessary for protecting online workers from exploitation by their employees.

1.3. Significance and Rationale for the Study

This research is essential as it helps to establish gaps in labour law regarding online workers. It also provides a basis for comprehending how technological advancements are affecting employers and employees alike and how the legal system must adapt to provide adequate protection and equity (Llorente, 2021). While nations like Hungary and Austria may have more advanced regulatory frameworks, the rapid rise of digital platforms still exposes limitations in their laws about work, whereas nations like Albania may struggle with creating even basic structures for remote work protections.

The study will also address issues such as work status, job stability, and access to social security, as online employers do not include these benefits. Further, the research findings will help legal professionals understand the consequences of digitisation and provide insights on how to advise clients on compliance and risk management strategies.

The results from this study may serve as a foundation for drafting new laws and guidelines to address hurdles that remote workers face. Since the research will highlight the insufficiencies in existing regulations, policymakers could use this information to modify current laws

in Albania or create new rules to ensure equity among all workers (Bezrukov et al., 2022). This would ensure that the interests of businesses, workers, and society are harmonised (Hünefeld et al., 2021).

1.4. Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of digitalisation on employment relationships in Albania. In addition, the research will explore the legal status, working conditions, and regulatory challenges of digital workers in other countries within the Western Balkans for comparison purposes to those in Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries, the EU, and the global context. The objectives include:

1. **To identify and analyse the characteristics and legal status of digital platform workers in Albania within the broader EU and Central & Eastern European context:** This objective aims to give an exhaustive overview of Albanian (to represent Western Balkans), Central, and Eastern European digital platform work. The types of jobs, working conditions, and employment status of digital platform workers will all be examined in the study. To do this, it will be important to analyse the existing literature, discuss with workers of digital platforms, and look at appropriate administrative structures (Andreeva & Yolova, 2022).

    Additionally, the research will analyse the regulatory challenges posed by digital labour platforms for nationally-based systems of labour and employment law aimed at recognising the lawful and administrative deterrents in adopting digital platforms, such as social assurance, work arrangement, and work standard requirements.

2. **To assess whether the working conditions of remote workers in Albania align with national labour standards in comparison to CEE countries and the EU framework:** This objective seeks to assess how well online platform jobs in Albania meet the working conditions set by the International Labour Organization (ILO). It will explore whether workers have access to social security, fair wages, chances for social interaction, and opportunities for personal growth (Reljic et al., 2021).

3. **To examine the effectiveness of national and EU regulatory frameworks in addressing the challenges faced by digital workers in Albania:** This objective will examine how Albania's labour laws regulate online work and whether they address legal uncertainties, social security gaps, and employee misclassification in an effective manner. It will also compare these regulations with EU policies and directives to identify if there are some shortcomings (García-Romanos & Martínez-Ros, 2023).

4. **To explore organisational strategies for platform workers in Albania and their potential for collective representation within national and EU labour frameworks:** This objective seeks to identify organisational strategies that remote workers can use to protect their rights and interests. The study will explore effective approaches, such as worker-led campaigns and collective bargaining, and provide guidance on how digital platform workers can strengthen their collective influence (Marcolin & Gasparri, 2023).

5. **To evaluate the effectiveness of Albania's public employment services and skills programs in supporting access to the digital labour market, in comparison with EU and CEE initiatives:** This objective aims to understand how effective government employment services and skills programs are in expanding people's access to digital platform jobs in Albania. The review will assess the reasonableness of current drives and make ideas for improving their ability to progress good work in the advanced economy.

The objectives will help to identify the gap that exists in the literature regarding digital platform work in the Western Balkans, especially Albania, where limited research has addressed the specific challenges platform workers face in this region. Unlike more established EU countries like Hungary, there is a lack of extensive literature on how its labour laws align with digital work trends. As a result, there are inadequate studies that could further back the legal classification of online workers as well as the formulation of regulatory frameworks in the country. This thesis aims to fill this gap by focusing specifically on the intersection of Albanian labour law and digital platform work and providing insights that could be useful in information for emending already existing labour laws and formulation of new regulations to protect these online-based employees.

1.5. Research Questions

In the present dynamic labour market, the impact of digitisation on the employment relationship is a significant subject not only in Western Balkans (Albania) but also in Central and Eastern Europe and globally (Tomashevski, 2020).

Principal Research Question: What are the primary characteristics and legal status of digital platform workers in Albania (as a representative of the Western Balkan countries), and how do they align with national labor standards, as well as labor policies in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the EU?

Research Questions:

1. What are the characteristics and legal status of digital platform workers in Albania, and how do they compare to those in CEE and the EU?
2. Do the working conditions of digital platform workers in Albania align with ILO standards, and how do they compare with CEE and EU labour standards?
3. How effective are Albania's national and EU regulatory frameworks in addressing challenges faced by digital platform workers?
4. What organizational strategies can digital platform workers in Albania use to protect their rights?
5. How effective are Albania's employment services and skills programs in helping workers access the digital labour market compared to EU and CEE initiatives?

1.6. Research Hypotheses

The structure of this research will be founded on various interconnected research fields, each of which examines the unmistakable feature of what digitalisation has meant for employment relationships in Albania and Central and Eastern Europe.

Hypothesis 1: Digitalisation has led to new forms of work in Albania, aligning with broader trends observed in Central and Eastern Europe.

It is assumed that new types of work, for example, the gig economy and digital platform work, have emerged in Albania and Central and Eastern Europe over the most recent decade because of innovation progressions.

Hypothesis 2: Digitalisation has transformed the standard employment relationship by introducing new forms of work and altering job structures

It is assumed that digitisation has influenced internal changes in the traditional employment relationship and that workers on digital labour platforms frequently lack legal protection in Albania and Central and Eastern Europe. This hypothesis will be examined by contrasting traditional worker's legitimate status with workers on digital platforms (de Bustillo Llorente, 2021).

Hypothesis 3: Digitalisation has created new employment conditions that necessitate the development of updated international labour standards.

It is assumed that to guarantee that digital platform workers in Albania have the lowest pay permitted by law and adequate government-managed retirement, new global standards are required.

Hypothesis 4: Digitalisation influences new organisational techniques for digital platform workers.

The hypothesis outlines that workers in Albania develop or adapt new approaches to address their local and global inclinations to work online. This concept will be examined through current campaigns and efforts by online employees to unite and fight for their rights (Piroșcă et al., 2021).

Hypothesis 5: Digitalisation influences existing strategies for public employment services and public skills programs in improving access and participation in the online labour market.

As job structures develop, goverments must adopt public initiatives that provide relevant training, career support, and legal protections for remote workers. This is because these employees struggle to transition into this growing economy as they lack the skills and knowledge needed in these fields. The study will examine this by analysing Albania's existing employment-based programs and how effective they are in supporting the integration of a digital-based workforce.

These hypotheses provide an in-depth framework for analysing the effects of digitalisation on employment relationships in Albania and Central and Eastern Europe. Since these hypotheses capture how this factor influences job structures, worker protections, and organizational responses, the research will thus be in a position to highlight the challenges and opportunities labour platforms present.

1.7. Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation begins with Chapter 1, which introduces the purpose of the study and explains the concept of digitalisation and its impact on employment relationships in Albania and the Western Balkans. It also outlines the research questions, objectives, and hypotheses. This chapter provides a foundation that helps to understand how working online is changing work structures in these regions. Transitioning to Chapter 2, the author provides a literature review on the impact of adopting online work (digitalization) on employment associations. It also compares the challenges Albania faces with those in more digitally advanced regions, such as Poland and the Czech Republic, in adapting their laws to protect remote workers. Further into Chapter 3, the dissertation discusses the research methodology employed in the study. It outlines adopting a mixed-method approach that integrates quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques, including surveys and semi-structured interviews with

online workers in Albania. The chapter also introduces the "Research Onion" model to guide the selection of research philosophies, approaches, and methods, where it gives more focus on interpretivism and a deductive approach. Chapter 4 evaluates the legal protection for platform workers and the implications for employment law. It examines the legal status of these workers by providing related cases in Albania, Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), and other parts of the world worldwide. It also evaluates national systems of labour law, international and national initiatives on regulating digital platforms, conflicts of law, and the need for international minimum conditions of employment.

Further into Chapter 5, the author discusses the representation of the interests of digital workers and how they can advocate for their rights within these platforms. It also examines the conflicts of law in digital-based labour and highlights innovative solutions to address uncertainties within the law and improve worker protections. Chapter 6 talks about the techniques that can be used to represent these employees, including collaboration between traditional labour unions and platform-based worker groups. It will also discuss the use of digital tools for communication, policy advocacy, and legislative reforms to strengthen how workers can be represented in the gig economy. The dissertation then proceeds to Chapter 7, which explores the challenges and opportunities in harmonizing legal frameworks for remote workers by focusing on issues such as diverse national legislation, rapid technological advancements, and differing cultural norms. It will also highlight potential solutions, including collaboration, social dialogue, and policy reforms that create a more cohesive and inclusive regulatory environment.

Chapter 8 will examine the effectiveness of public employment services and skills programs in the digital-based market. Here, the author will keenly assess how well they support workers in online job opportunities. It will also evaluate key factors that influence these programs' success, such as literacy levels, training accessibility, and government initiatives to help these employees. Chapter 9 will present the results and analysis of the study on worker demographics, job categories, and platforms that remote workers mostly use. It will also examine key findings related to online job regulations and working conditions. From here, the dissertation will enter its final chapter, 10, which will provide a conclusion with a summary of the key insights from the research and outline recommendations for future studies and policy developments.

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CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

Table 1

Indexes Over the Years

Index	Year	Region	Description	Link
Digital Adoption Index (DAI)	2022	Eastern Europe	Measures digital adoption across governments, businesses, and individuals. Leading countries include Estonia, Poland, and the Czech Republic.	World Bank
Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI)	2022	European Union (EU)	Assesses the digital economy and society's progress in the EU, with highlights from Poland and Estonia.	European Commission
BBVA Research Digitalization Index (DiGiX)	2021	Western Balkans	Evaluates the level of digitalization across various countries, including Serbia and Bosnia & Herzegovina.	BBVA Research
Enabling Digitalization Index (EDI)	2022	Eastern Europe	Measures a country's ability to support digital enterprises and close digital gaps. Notable countries: Poland and the Czech Republic.	Euler Hermes
World Digital Competitiveness Ranking (WDC)	2022	Eastern Europe	Assesses the capacity of economies to leverage digital technologies. Poland and Estonia are high performers.	IMD
Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI)	2021	Western Balkans	Provides a framework for assessing digitalization across the EU, with specific insights into Bosnia and Serbia.	European Commission

Indexes over the years track the evolution of digitalisation across different regions in Eastern Europe and the Western Balkans. They measure digital adoption, competitiveness, and policy impact on employment, highlighting trends and gaps in digital transformation, as will discussed in the literature review.

2.1. Introduction

The first chapter has shed light on the fact that digital labour platforms have witnessed a significant rise in the potential to provide work opportunities to many people. Opportunities provided by these platforms or this economic type are also accompanied by challenges that address certain regulatory responses for improved working conditions. This chapter discusses accessing existing academic sources to get more details. The digitisation of

employment and the economy is changing the workplace, which in turn affects workplace relationships because companies and employees gain from new opportunities and also face challenges through new business models, working practices and technological developments (Ghazy et al., 2022). Alongside the industry reports and legal appraisals, important patterns, problems, and possible solutions are identified in this chapter. It also analyses how work is progressing in the digital era, which consists of the gig economy, platform work, and remote work. In addition, the impact of digitisation on labour law, such as social protection, job security and work status (Gherghina et al., 2021), is also considered. In addition, it determines the public and international administrative responses to digitisation and evaluates the effectiveness of existing employment regulations and administrative systems in protecting workers in the digital economy. It also considers possible changes such as changing business contracts, managing digital platform work, and creating new social welfare systems. The last section of the chapter notes inconsistencies in the existing literature and possible avenues for future research. One point is the need for an interdisciplinary approach combining sociology, economics, and other social scientific perspectives with legal research. This section intends to provide the basis for the rest of the study and determine how the survey would be designed to investigate the impact of digitalisation on employment relationships more closely.

2.2 Conceptual framework

Figure 1.1 shows this study's conceptual framework, which illustrates the impact of digitalization on employment relationships, focusing on digital labor platforms and the gig economy. The study will examine how motivators, such as flexibility, autonomy, career growth, and complementary pay, influence workers' engagement in platform-based employment while also addressing demotivators, including earnings instability, working hours, security concerns, and workplace safety issues. Furthermore, the study will analyze the role of algorithmic workplace management practices in shaping job conditions and employment structures, assessing their implications for labor policies and regulations in Albania within the broader EU and Central and Eastern European context.

Digitalisation

Digitalisation is an important part of the modern business era since it allows firms to grow and remain economically significant in any market(Kraus and Kraus, 2021). This study is built on digitalisation and its impact on the employment relationship. This development is also connected with the rise of Industry 4.0. This 4th industrial revolution (Industry 4.0)

involves integrating new high-tech digital technologies, like automation, artificial intelligence(AI), big data and the Internet of Things (IoT), into manufacturing processes to build extremely intelligent and interconnected processes. Real-time communication and coordination between machines, systems, and humans can be enabled to achieve smarter manufacturing with higher efficiency. It helps in continuous data flow, which helps optimise operations, decision making and productivity. Businesses adopt these technologies as they can automate tasks, reduce downtime, and improve the business's overall performance. Similarly, AI enables companies to forecast trends, manage inventory, and control quality without much human involvement to enhance their performance and output. The growth in economic activities comes from Industry 4.0, which promotes innovative practices and the development of new business models, along with redefining some traditional jobs into more flexible and technology-enabled jobs that conform to what this digital age demands. This also describes the current interest in this subject. It further shows the current trend of digitalisation in the competitive business market. Critical factors such as risk management, quality control, and other aspects are related to digitalisation. It also supports the rising interest in automation among modern business owners. Employee experience is another vital factor linked to current progress. It is common for firms to make data-driven decisions since it can influence the employees' experience. Hence, it is evident that factors related to digitalisation and employee experiences are interconnected.

Further, the labour market and digitalization are closely linked, as digital technologies play a crucial role in production. Calderón-Gómez et al. (2020) highlight that these technologies enhance connectivity between employees and production systems, reinforcing the interdependence of both factors.

Figure 1

Conceptual Layout (Source: Developed by Author)
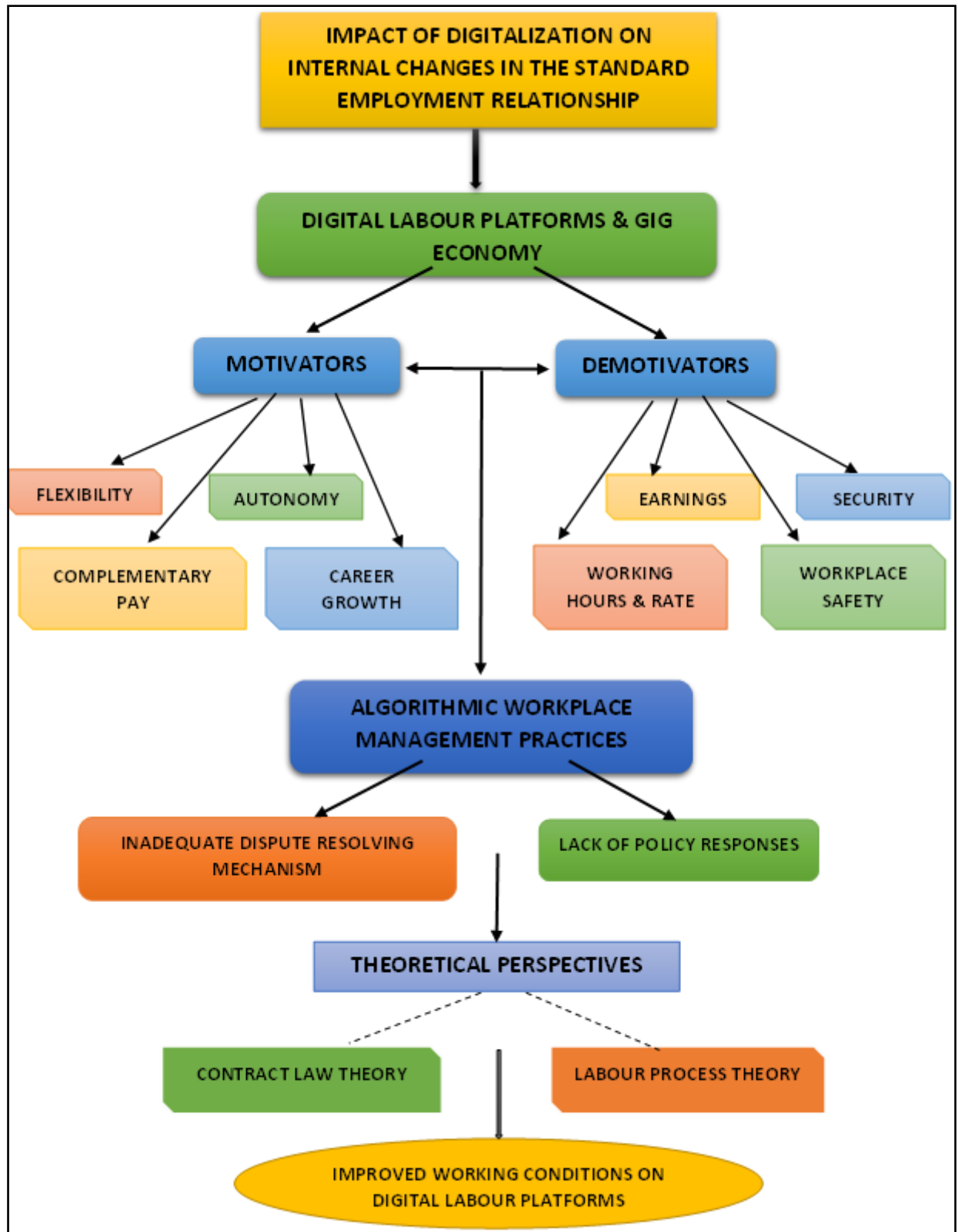
Since the study highlights the connection between digitisation and the labour market in the global market and the European Union, as well as the type of employment and their

connection with the employee relationship factors, it will be helpful to understand the core factors that are part of standard employment status. Workers in digital spaces often face regulatory challenges, and this study aims to analyze these issues while providing relevant insights. Additionally, it will examine international labor law standards and their role in shaping fair employment practices.

The rise of digitalisation is an important factor, and it requires attention from modern business owners. A lack of attention on this subject can cause firms to face failure in the modern competitive market. Digitalisation is a common factor for modern business owners. According to Lumi (2020), digitalisation has penetrated most of the business sector in the current era. In other words, it has become part of the growing business market. Hence, it is necessary to focus on this subject. It is important to understand the crucial factors related to the digitisation process. It can help firms and employees to understand their job roles significantly. Digitalisation is also known as a beneficial factor for business firms. It can allow firms to use their resources properly. Hence, it is necessary to understand the modern business era and digitalisation concept.

A rise in spending is also observed in the global context since businesses of the modern era are investing adequately in information technology. According to Sherif (2024), the spending capacity in 2023 on this aspect is around 4.7 trillion U.S. dollars. This amount is estimated to reach around 5 trillion U.S. dollars by the end of 2024. Hence, it is evident that global business owners are also focusing on the digitisation process. Further, it is observed in the rising spending amount in this context. The increment in spending is a part of digitalisation. It is meant to allow modern business owners to become part of the digitalised world. The spending on the communication process is also increasing as per the current information. It has allowed employees to indulge in several work opportunities where they are now able to work through both offline and online modes.

Digitalisation has enhanced the scope for modern employees to work at their own will. According to Fischer *et al*. (2023), digitalisation is concerned with organisational resilience. It has enabled workers to work from home, allowing them to participate in organisational tasks regardless of their location. As such, digitalisation is connected to the concept of employee behaviour as it influences the employee's relationship with the workplace. It is, therefore, crucial to identify the impact of digitalisation. It can allow companies to highlight important strategies. These strategies are also meant to help them in the competitive business market.

Standard employment is a vital component of this study. It shows the positive aspects of the employment standard and its impact on the employment relationship. According to Mattijssen et al. (2020), permanent employment contracts are superior as they include vital factors such as employment security, fringe benefits, promotion, scope for training, earnings, and others. Hence, it is a positive aspect in terms of employment standards. In other words, it is common for standard employees to avail of beneficial features. These factors can also influence the perception of an employee towards the workplace. A lack of these factors can demotivate employees to show high performance. It can also create issues for employees on digital platforms. This study focuses on highlighting digitalisation's impacts on standard employment factors. It can allow firms to focus on necessary factors linked to employee relationships and motivation levels.

It is common for digital platform workers to face issues during their working hours. In other words, digital platform workers get fewer benefits than the standard or permanent workers. In other words, digitalisation is both beneficial and harmful for the workers. It can enhance the scope for workers to perform certain duties without leaving their residential area. On the other hand, the facilities for the digital platform workers are less than those of the regular standard workers. Reasons such as these have also gathered attention in the EU directives. A recent EU directive highlighted the need for a fairer chance for digital platform workers (Mattijssen et al. 2020). It is important to identify the legal status of the digital platform. These workers belong to the Eastern and Central Europe region. It will be useful to evaluate future strategies for further improvement. It can further increase the motivation level among digital platform workers.

It is necessary to identify the standard employment factors. These factors can influence the perception of digital platform workers. According to Bulińska-Stangrecka and Bagieńska (2021), employee relationships are an important factor. It can show the relationship between employers and employees. The purpose of this study is to highlight the key factors of employee relationships. It will help employers of the modern era to adopt the necessary strategies. These strategies are meant to generate a positive perception of the workplace. Modern firms need to locate crucial factors regarding employee motivation. It can allow firms to create a high value workforce. This type of workforce is beneficial in the conception market. Communication is another vital part of employee relationships. According to Terkamo-Moisio et al. (2022), business owners need to focus on communication tools to build trust with their employees. It will create a positive impact on the employee relationship level.

The impact of digitalisation is also visible in the job profile. In other words, digitalisation is a method to transform job requirements and organisational tasks. According to Akyazi*et al*. (2020), digitalisation is the foremost reason for job transformation. It means employees need also to adopt new skills that are useful in this type of situation. A lack of opportunity to train or learn can reduce the chance for adaptation. A lack of attention on this subject is also harmful for workers to show adequate performance. Hence, it is necessary to assess these factors and find solutions for digital transformation. Digital platforms are also an essential part of the modern business era. It allows employees with different skills to connect with the employers. Williams *et al*. (2021) define this opportunity as gig work, where it is common for a self-employed worker to connect with employers using digital platforms.

Next, it is also essential to identify the positive and negative aspects of this type of work since it can help in evaluating the employee relationship with the workplace. Williams et al. (2021) view digitisation as a positive move to connect employers and workers, with greater flexibility and opportunity for both parties. However, this type of work is not supported by any comprehensive legal framework, rendering the workers vulnerable to exploitation. Van Doorn et al. (2023) argue that digital platform workers require legal protections and rights to ensure they are not disadvantaged regarding job security, wages, and working conditions.

The number of digital platform workers is increasing. As per the findings, the number of digital platform employees has increased significantly. The number of digital platform workers in 2022 was around 28.3 million (Europa.eu, 2024). This number is estimated to reach 43 million in 2025. In other terms, digital platform workers are considered an important part of the EU's workforce. Hence, it is necessary to identify their issues. The findings have also suggested the drawbacks of being a digital platform employee. According to statistical data, 55 percent of digital platform employees get paid less than the average minimum wage. Apart from this, 41 percent of their working hours are unpaid. These times are used to identify works, research processes, go through advertisements, and other tasks.

Self-employed individuals are not entitled to similar facilities as regular employees. According to findings, around 93 percent of people are self-employed, and the remaining 7 percent are employed (Europa.eu, 2024). Hence, it is necessary to identify the beneficial aspects of the major working group. This study is focused on highlighting vital factors regarding employee relationships and digitalisation. Apart from this, the need for legal support is also a core aim of this study. Reasons such as these make this study useful in the current era.

The employment relationship is defined as the link that generally binds employees and an employer. It is a well-defined condition in which a person works or performs a service to receive a certain amount in return, which is perceived as remuneration (Cirillo *et al.,* 2021). A good employment relationship is generally considered productive for any workplace as it fosters productivity, employee engagement, turnover reduction, enhancement of job satisfaction, and equality.

The survey has shown that around 79 percent of the employees agree that it is very important to have good relationships with the employees in an organisation (Statista Research Department, 2022). Around 18 percent of the respondents said they somewhat think that good employee engagement is important, while only 1 percent said that a good employee relationship has no significance (Statista Research Department, 2022). It has been seen that around the world, an increase in job opportunities has been witnessed, and this is due to digitalisation. The fields of data analytics, cyber security profession, digital marketing, and software development have been flourishing around the world. The field of data analytics is new, and it needs several more years to become a full-fledged employment option as there is a minimal number of data analytics or data scientist professionals in the world who are fully functional (Sarker *et al.,* 2020). A survey was carried out to gather statistics regarding several data scientists who are involved in companies worldwide in the year 2020 and the year 2021 (Taylor, 2022). The survey's final results have revealed that, on average, 28 to 50 data scientists were employed in different organisations worldwide (Taylor, 2022).

The cybersecurity profession is highly sought after, as the rapid expansion of digitalisation has significantly increased associated risks. Due to excessive digitalisation, the digital infrastructure has been facing threats of cyber attacks from ransomware, IoT attacks, Cloud attacks, Blockchain revolution, Data breaches, and AI gaps. Each of these has the potential to damage the digital system to a large extent within seconds; hence, cyber security as a profession started flourishing (Alharbi *et al.,* 2022). Employee engagement can be strengthened in a company if cyber-security specialists are hired, as they will ensure that none of the employees in the organisation become victims of malicious software. The threat of cyber security could be minimised to a very large extent if cyber security professionals are employed.

As per the ETU, the COVID-19 crisis has increased job security risk in the market, and this has led most of the EU's digital sector to face layoffs. ETUC has reiterated that all organisations adopting digitalisation must act responsibly when it comes to understanding the rights

of labour and ensuring their fairness in wages and work (ETUC, 2023). Apart from this, job security and social protection of all employees are also the pillars of trade unions; thus, they must be ensured by all organisations worldwide. It is not against the digitalisation process or any companies associated with digitalisation programs in Europe, but workers' rights must not be affected. It was said that digitalisation should be brought into an organisation to improve living conditions and cooperation between workers and trade unions.

Women's participation has increased over the period, and ETUC has said that digitalisation should bring more women participants into the digital workforce and should bring more participation in the STEM sectors without any involvement of those algorithms that are gender biased. On 25th November 2020, the European Commission tabled the data governance regulations to provide a European way of processing data and making data intermediaries (ETUC, 2023). This was proposed just to build strong trust among the data-sharing parties and the users and avoid monopolies in the digital market. ETUC has reacted to these developments and has proposed its views on some points.

- The governance should bring better-protected data sharing, especially the remuneration data and reusing of personal data of individuals (ETUC, 2020).

- Participation in the trade union is required to be increased so that worker's data can be protected at the company level (ETUC, 2020).

- The involvement of trade unions in AI and data governance is also required to be increased so that all workers have access to their data whenever required (ETUC, 2020).

- Data Altruism is the concept that was proposed by the trade union to the new European data governance framework.

As per the ILO report, the diffusion of digital technology in businesses and workplaces is reshaping the world, creating challenges and opportunities. It was said that by the end of 2030, a net increase in employment will be 24 million, of which 6.4 million will be occupied by the world's youth population (ILO, 2024). This will be achieved due to the worldwide broadband connection, and thus, policymakers need to seek the update of the policies to address the gaps that have emerged in the protection of workers' rights. ILO has defined some important points for inclusion in the employment policy during digitisation (ILO, 2024).

Digital Inclusion

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The first point that has been suggested by the ILO is digital inclusion, and here, the differences in digitalisation in urban areas and rural areas have been covered (ILO, 2024). Globally, digitalisation has spread rapidly in urban areas compared to rural areas. Due to this, a gap has been created, and a huge rural population is marginalised from this opportunity to work from remote locations. Hence, keeping the rights of their digitisation policies around the world should bring this inclusiveness.

Infrastructure

The next proposal's key policy area includes infrastructure development, which is a key roadblock to the future, where more affordable digital technology and internet services must be provided for the common population. Mobile internet broadband has become a common phenomenon worldwide in almost all nations, but its access is specific to highly developed countries (ILO, 2024). Its extension must be spread across the borders in all types of economies, such as developing and emerging economies.

Internal Labour Standards

When it comes to digital economics, budgets and regulations are made by companies around the world. ILO has reiterated that the global budget should include issues related to jobs and skills in the market, which digitalisation will bring up (ILO, 2024). The digital economy around the world has shown exponential growth; hence, it is important to include a dedicated employment policy and regulations that will help keep up with all the challenges regarding labour norms.

Digital Skills

Digitalisation has brought up various working opportunities in almost every sector as professions like data analytics, AI, and machine learning specialists are sought after, and it is expected to boost the global economy (ILO, 2024). Companies around the world are required to promote the digital literary skills developed by their employees as well so that their existing workers will become more competitive regarding digital working conditions and digitisation.

Digital SMEs

In most of the country's economies, the MSMEs and SMEs are the backbone of the economy, and they provide the highest number of jobs. Digitalisation around the world possesses the potential to make the business more productive, and as of now, it has provided to

do so (ILO, 2024). Things like digital payment tools, e-commerce websites, and others are a few digitisation tools that play an important role in digitalisation.

Digital Economy and Digital Work

The digitalisation of the economy is affecting many global aspects, including the labour market. Today, digital technologies are integrated into people's everyday lives, bringing new opportunities and challenges for businesses, employees, and policymakers; although advantageous, this phenomenon is associated with several problems, including the influence of automation on jobs, the change in the concept of work, and the growing demand for skills in the digital sphere (Potocka-Sionek & Aloisi, 2021). Automating business processes has been one of the most debated topics regarding the impact on employment. Some researchers claim that digitalisation could result in many job displacements, especially for those with low skill levels. For example, Frey and Osborne (2013) predicted that 47 percent of US jobs could be automated in the near future. Likewise, Acemoglu and Restrepo (2018) argue that adopting digital technologies could increase income inequality by causing employment to be redirected from routine, non-cognitive tasks. However, other research finds the impact of digitalisation on employment to be an exaggeration since, according to Autor (2015), automation can displace some jobs in the short run, but automation will create new opportunities for employment in the long run.

The literature also explores how this factor is reshaping the nature of work. The rise of gig economy platforms such as TaskRabbit, Uber, and Deliveroo has transformed how independent contractors work, as they provide employees with flexibility and some sense of autonomy. However, these platforms raise concerns about worker rights, benefits, and job security. Some authors suggest that gig economy workers may face unfair compensation and precarious working conditions (Huws et al., 2018), while others argue that the platforms could serve as a stepping stone to long-term employment (Katz and Krueger, 2019). Another key issue is the growing need for digital skills in the labour market. As technology adoption progresses, possessing digital skills is increasingly vital for competitiveness. Studies by Kee et al. (2023) highlight that these skills are important for career advancement and employability. However, addressing the gap remains challenging, particularly for socioeconomically disadvantaged groups who may lack access to digital-based technology and education.

Several assessment tools have been developed to measure the impact of digitalisation at the country level. The World Bank's Digital Adoption Index (DAI) measures digital adoption across governments, businesses, and individuals. The DiGiX (BBVA Research

Digitalization Index) assesses the digital level of countries and tracks challenges in countries' digital strategies. The Enabling Digitalisation Index (EDI) of Euler Hermes assesses a country's ability to promote the establishment of digital enterprises and to close the digital divide (Economic Research 2018). The World Digital Competitiveness Ranking (WDC) of the IMD World Competitiveness Center (IMD, 2023) evaluates how digital technologies are used for transforming economies (their readiness to utilise digital technologies for economic transformation). Lastly, the European Commission uses the Digital Economy and Social Index (DESI) as a comprehensive framework for assessing the digitalisation of the EU (2022a, 2022b).

Digitalisation is fundamentally reshaping labour markets, as detailed in reports by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the European Union (EU). The ILO's 2022 report, "Digitalization and Employment: A Review," highlights the dual nature of digital transformation, presenting opportunities and challenges for the labour market while stressing the need for workers to develop digital skills to stay competitive. The OECD's 2019 report, "Going Digital: The Future of Work," provides an in-depth analysis of how digitalisation, particularly automation and AI, is affecting employment across OECD countries, emphasising the need for policies that facilitate worker adaptation through education and training. The European Economic and Social Committee's (EESC) 2020 report, "Impact of Digitalization and the On-Demand Economy on Labour Markets," focuses on the gig economy's rise and its implications for job quality and worker rights within the EU. Further, the ongoing digital transformation has profound implications for Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), influencing government operations, business practices, and labour markets in distinct ways. According to the World Bank's Digital Adoption Index, countries like Estonia and Poland showcase advanced digital government services and high population digital literacy, positioning them as leaders in digital integration within CEE. Conversely, nations such as Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Albania reveal disparities, highlighting areas needing strategic digital enhancements (World Bank, 2022).

The BBVA Research Digitalization Index further analyses the area's digital landscape to understand the overall digitalization level and define strategic challenges. For example, the digital infrastructures of the Czech Republic and Hungary are sufficient to allow them to carry on business and digital services. In contrast, Romania and Bulgaria, as well as these countries, experience high skill deficits and digital distances between urban and rural areas,

limiting fair digital growth (BBVA Research 2022). Furthermore, the insights from the Euler Hermes' Enabling Digitalization Index reveal that although countries like Slovenia and Slovakia have established a suitable environment for digital enterprises, some countries, like Moldova and Ukraine, on the other hand, are lagging because of poor digital infrastructure or outdated regulatory frameworks hindered the adoption of digital business (Euler Hermes, 2018).

According to IMD World Competitiveness Center's World Digital Competitiveness Ranking (WDC), Latvia and Lithuania are some of the emerging competitive digital economies due to their well-developed educational systems and strong technological infrastructures. Yet, as Estonia and Slovenia are doing, others in the region need to support the digitization of their ecosystems to catch up with rapid technological developments (IMD, 2023). Yet, to fully exploit digital opportunities, there is still a crucial need to develop advanced digital skills and adopt general services (European Commission, 2022). According to the International Labour Organization's 2022 report, "Digitalization and Employment," Croatia and Serbia need to catch up with the development of digital skills and face rapidly changing digital demands of the times if they want to remain competitive in the labour market (ILO, 2022).).

Echoing this need, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in its 2019 report, "Going Digital: The Future of Work," calls on policymakers to facilitate worker adaptation through enhanced education and skills training. This is particularly relevant for CEE countries as they revamp their educational systems to prepare for a digital economy, with a focus on integrating digital skills into curricula from early education through to adult learning programs (OECD, 2019). Lastly, the European Economic and Social Committee's (EESC) 2020 report highlights the imperative for CEE nations to develop regulations that protect gig economy workers, promoting a flexible, innovative employment landscape. This is especially crucial in emerging digital markets like Hungary and the Czech Republic, where the gig economy is rapidly expanding without sufficient regulatory oversight (EESC, 2020).

Overall, various international organisations are actively measuring digital transformation and its social impact, including the need for digital skills and the effects of automation on job replacement. Although opinions differ on the extent to which digitalisation may lead to job losses, there is a consensus that possessing digital skills is crucial for maintaining competitiveness in the job market. Despite the availability of numerous assessment methods, evaluating digitalisation's effects on the labour market remains a complex challenge. Among

these, the DESI index stands out as the most comprehensive tool for assessing digitalisation within the framework of the European Union.

The digital economy and digital work have become increasingly significant in the technologically advanced and interconnected world. The "digital economy" encompasses the production and distribution of digital goods and services, integrating digital technologies into traditional industries, and creating new revenue streams and business models enabled by these technologies (Başol & Yalçın, 2021). The expansion of the digital economy has given rise to new types of employment, such as freelance work, digital labour platforms, and remote work. "Digital labour" refers to work facilitated or mediated by digital technology, including jobs completed entirely online or those supported by digital platforms and tools.

Digital platforms, which enable the exchange of goods, services, or information among various users, have fostered new forms of business organisations. These platforms often rely on digital labour to deliver their services, creating new job opportunities while raising concerns about regulatory issues, workers' rights, and job security (Grigorescu et al., 2021). Moreover, the digital economy has transformed how we engage with and consume goods and services. Social networking platforms, e-commerce, and online streaming services have permeated every aspect of our lives, altering consumer behaviour and opening new business markets. However, the digital economy also presents significant challenges, including cybersecurity concerns, the digital divide, and the need for new regulatory frameworks to ensure accountability and equity. Policymakers, businesses, and civil society must collaborate to address these challenges to create a sustainable and inclusive digital economy.

The digital revolution in the labour market affects not only the number of jobs created or lost but also the conception and execution of work. According to projections from the World Economic Forum, the shift in the workforce composition between humans and machines could lead to the displacement of 85 million jobs by 2025 while also creating 97 million new positions better aligned with the new division of labour (Lastauskaite & Krusinskas, 2021). Digitalisation facilitates the rise of gig economy jobs, freelancing, and remote work, offering increased flexibility and improved work-life balance for many workers. However, this shift also concerns worker benefits, job security, and protections.

The skills required for many jobs are also changing due to digitalisation. Workers must acquire digital literacy, data analysis, and problem-solving skills to thrive in the digital economy. This has led to an increasing demand for individuals with STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) skills, putting pressure on employees to keep pace with these

developments. The impact of digitisation on the nature of jobs is multifaceted. While digital technologies can enhance job quality by automating tedious and hazardous tasks, they can also lead to labour market polarisation, increasing the demand for high- and low-skilled positions while reducing middle-skilled employment (Zeshan et al., 2023).

Digitalisation has the potential to exacerbate gender inequality in the workplace. Women are disproportionately employed in low-skilled, low-paying professions that are particularly vulnerable to automation. Additionally, barriers that prevent women from pursuing STEM degrees and careers further limit their opportunities in the digital economy. On the other hand, digitisation may offer new opportunities for refugees and individuals in precarious situations. Online platforms can help vulnerable populations access employment opportunities and develop skills, aiding their integration into the labour market. However, digitisation may also lead to new forms of inequality and exploitation, particularly for vulnerable workers in the gig economy.

Digitisation has a complex impact on employment and labour, presenting both benefits and drawbacks. It is essential to develop strategies that leverage the advantages of digitalisation while mitigating its risks, ensuring a comprehensive, inclusive, and sustainable digital economy.

2.2. Digitalisation's impact on work and employment

The employment relationship is affected in a variety of ways by digitalisation. The characteristics of labour markers, the idea of business, and hierarchical organisations have all gone through significant changes.

Types of Digitalisation And Their Disruption on Work And Employment

Digitisation and its implications for business and work are crucial. The term "digitalisation of production and work" refers to the increasing use of digital technologies to transform not only how work is performed and managed but also how goods and services are produced and distributed (Pärli, 2022). Digitalisation of production involves leveraging technologies such as automation and artificial intelligence (AI) to streamline operations and enhance productivity. This can include engaging robots for hazardous or complex tasks, automating routine jobs, and using data analytics to optimise supply chains and production schedules.

The "digitalisation of work" implies ways in which digital technology reshapes the execution, management, and compensation of work. This transformation may involve adopting

new work arrangements, such as gig work and platform-based employment, as well as implementing remote work and virtual collaboration technologies.

Digitalising work and production offers several potential benefits, including increased productivity, reduced costs, and enhanced flexibility. However, it also introduces challenges, such as job displacement, the skills gap, and the need for new regulations and protective measures for workers (Keller, 2020).

Organisations must fully understand the impacts of digitisation on work and production and develop strategies to capitalise on its benefits while addressing any potential challenges or disruptions. This may involve investing in advanced technologies, retraining or upskilling employees, and implementing innovative work schedules and organisational methods.

The Digitalization of Production

The global production of goods and services is undergoing a significant transformation due to the digitisation of production, facilitated by technologies like artificial intelligence, robotics, the Internet of Things, and complex manufacturing processes. Digitalisation enables the integration of digital and physical systems and the comprehensive digitisation of the manufacturing process both within and across company boundaries. This phenomenon is collectively referred to as Industry 4.0, also known as the fourth industrial revolution (Petkovski et al., 2022).

Digitalised manufacturing, which originated in Germany with initiatives like Industrie 4.0, simultaneously enhances speed, flexibility, adaptability, quality, and efficiency. Integrated sensors and equipment facilitate real-time monitoring of physical processes while modelling, virtual design, simulation, and extensive data collection optimise design and efficiency.

On production lines, automated robots replace human labour for repetitive tasks. Intelligent factories use digital communication to coordinate complex operations across structured assembly stations, exemplified by companies like Bosch Rexroth. Real-time digital quality assessments are conducted, and instructions are delivered to workers through augmented reality technologies (Suknarowska-Drzewiecka, 2020).

Digitalisation also transforms services while enhancing manufacturing. Financial institutions and healthcare providers have significantly expedited processes through digitalised booking, record-keeping, invoicing, and remote monitoring systems, as demonstrated by research initiatives like QuInnE. In one bank study, a virtual assistant that automatically

searched archived documents to respond to customer inquiries saved time and resolved issues at a rate comparable to human employees, with fewer errors and faster responses.

However, digital production also significantly impacts the workforce. Proponents argue that technology augments rather than replaces labour by automating repetitive physical tasks and freeing up time for more cognitive activities. Opponents contend that artificial intelligence and robots, with their superior capabilities across a broader range of activities than humans, could potentially replace a large number of jobs. The estimated percentage of jobs that could be affected by automation ranges from 35 to 90 percent, with manufacturing, transportation, retail, and clerical work sectors that employ large numbers of men being most at risk (Aloisi & De Stefano, 2020).

Although threats vary at the national level, they are greater in regions reliant on automatable sectors. Additionally, jobs in higher-risk industries are typically held by younger, less educated, and ethnic minority groups. Few professions will remain untouched, even as roles involving creativity, problem-solving, and interpersonal interactions exhibit less vulnerability. As digitalisation gathers data from human work performance, the distinction between humans and machines becomes increasingly blurred.

Data shows that complete job replacement has not yet occurred, contrary to apocalyptic predictions. Only 9–14 percent of jobs in the OECD are currently highly likely to be automated, and 32-47 percent require significant modifications. Historically, each wave of technological advancement ultimately creates more jobs than it displaces, despite predictions of widespread unemployment. Hindsight reveals unexpected careers like social media managers and drone operators (Gasparri & Tassinari, 2020).

The digitisation of manufacturing offers several advantages, including shorter turnaround times, increased output, and customer involvement in product design and customisation. Consequently, companies may face heightened competition, and customer satisfaction and loyalty could increase. However, these technologies also present challenges, such as the need for people to acquire new skills and potential job losses. As the production process becomes more automated, some workers, especially those performing routine or repetitive tasks, risk falling behind (Georgescu, 2020).

Organisations and policymakers must consider the potential implications of the digitisation of production on workers and society at large and take action to mitigate any disruptive effects. Furthermore, the digitisation of production influences the future of work and the

place of humans in a highly digitalised production system. The "lights-out factory" concept suggests that some jobs can be fully automated, increasing productivity and reducing costs. However, in the digitalised industrial environment, it is essential to ensure that robotics and automation complement human labour rather than replace it and that employees are empowered to advance in their careers and take on new responsibilities.

The digitalisation of manufacturing is a significant shift in the manufacturing landscape that offers many benefits as well as considerable challenges. As organisations and policymakers navigate this transformation, it is crucial to consider the impact on workers and society and to ensure that all share the benefits of digitalisation. By embracing digitalisation, manufacturers can improve competitiveness and drive innovation in the 21st century.

The Digitalization of Work

Digitalisation has a massive influence on the standard concept of work. It has increased productivity and differentiated traditional working with advanced technologies. As per the views of Malik (2018), the "human resource department" has established an advanced way of working that influences employee relationships. Sharing important information has become easier due to digitalisation, which has enhanced the culture of collaboration to a greater extent. Employees feel motivated and a part of the organisation through collaboration. In the context of "human resource management (HRM)," digitalisation helps to make informed decisions as well as strategies that are driven by valuable data. As opined by Nedyalkovaet al. (2021), the HRM department plays a vital role in establishing positive employee relationships and providing a positive working environment. In this regard, digitalisation helps organisations collaborate and share information to achieve "shared goals."

Digitalisation provides agility as well as supports employees in accelerating career growth. The main reason behind career growth through digitisation is its capability to provide free online lessons. Moreover, employee training became easier due to massive digitalisation and innovation in advanced technology. Innovation is an integral part of digitalisation and stimulates the standard of employee relationships. Morgan (2019) mentioned that "investment and leadership support, training, skill development as well as policies" are influenced by innovative technologies that help employees develop standard employee relationships. Digitisation leads to more "empowered company values". The traditional leadership hierarchy has been eliminated due to digitalisation and internal communication, which enhance employee engagement and empowerment.

"Cloud-based systems" increase efficiency by allowing businesses to choose services according to their requirements. Moreover, it helps to establish a huge business network that allows everyone to monitor the business process. It improves employee performance, and chances of error are reduced due to frequent monitoring (Iskamto, 2020). In context to standard employment relationships, all the impact of digitisation increases chances to develop a "legal link" between employees as well as employers. Innovation or installation of advanced technologies enables the HRM department to keep track of all employees, which was difficult in traditional management. Besides, traditional management leads to several "loopholes" that increase the chances of corruption to a greater extent. However, all the negative impacts have been eliminated, security has become strict, and monitoring employee performance as well as keeping track of their working becomes easier. Standard employee relationships can also be considered relationships between employers and employees. Coordination became evitable after massive digitalisation, which helped to connect each employee with higher authorities and enhance communication. In this way, digitalisation helps to develop a standard employment relationship.

Platform companies have emerged as a significant result of the digitisation of work, transitioning traditional work to digital networks. This shift has been facilitated by the ease with which various business activities can now be conducted online, profoundly impacting the digital workforce. Major companies such as Uber, DoorDash, TaskRabbit, and Upwork have become multibillion-dollar enterprises by leveraging algorithms and technology platforms that connect job seekers with employers (Boikova *et al*., 2021).

These platforms have digitised and transformed numerous jobs previously carried out through conventional employment arrangements or freelance projects, such as transporting passengers, delivering food, assembling furniture, and providing freelance design or coding services. They have reduced transaction costs and enhanced accessibility for service providers and clients. However, this platform model has also challenged established labour and employment norms.

Platforms often categorise users as independent contractors rather than employees, positioning themselves as facilitators within the marketplace, not direct employers. Many platforms implement price controls, rating systems, and performance monitoring that collect productivity data, significantly influencing their workforce. This level of oversight raises questions about the true independent status of many platform-based workers (Alfatta, 2019).

The flexibility offered by platforms presents both a risk and an opportunity for platform workers. While choosing one's hours is appealing, platforms have managed to circumvent traditional employee protections such as unemployment insurance, overtime pay, benefits, and minimum wage for the growing gig workforce. Research indicates that many individuals reliant on platforms earn significantly less than the minimum wage when accounting for additional expenses like vehicle payments, leaving them vulnerable in negotiations (Horváth et al., 2021).

Platforms have also significantly altered the nature of remote, digital work. By employing a global workforce and using algorithmic productivity tracking, websites that advertise freelance labour, microtasks, and other miscellaneous online jobs have become multi-billion-dollar enterprises. Although they provide some digital workers with autonomy and flexibility, these platforms also create unstable income scenarios and intense competition for many workers (Horváth et al., 2021).

The future of work and employment is significantly shaped by the rise of platform companies and the shift of labor to digital networks. Understanding the different platform service delivery models and their impacts on workers and businesses is crucial. Policymakers and other stakeholders must collaborate to ensure that the digitisation of work benefits both individuals and businesses, in addition to safeguarding employee rights and promoting fair competition in the labour market.

Changes in the Nature of Work

Work has greatly been changed by digital innovations, which are creating new types of employment, automating traditional work, and recasting the nature of old work. Therefore, the skill sets needed have changed, work arrangements have evolved, and the posture between workers and managers has been reconfigured. For instance, roles characterised by physical labour have been replaced with machines, while new occupations in the emerging field of artificial intelligence data analytics, among others, have been created (Zeshan et al., 2023). Digital technology has completely transformed work landscapes and has sprung up new job categories, automated routine tasks, and redesigned jobs. This shift has introduced new skills expectations, work arrangements, and employer-employee relations. For example, meal assembly jobs that used to be very labour intensive are now automated, and there are all new jobs in data analysis and artificial intelligence.

Digitalisation has changed the labour markets with the emergence of gig work, platform-based employment, and the need for digital skills. This has changed job relationships, shifted the bargaining power of the workers, and altered the distribution of labour. For example, new intermediary businesses now connect employees to customers due to the expansion of platform jobs, expanding the markets for which new credentials for workers are needed (Ká-dárová et al., 2023). This phenomenon has introduced some challenges, particularly in the rise of gig work, where workers face job insecurity, unpredictable income, and a lack of benefits like health insurance or retirement plans. Additionally, the role of intermediary companies has sparked debates over their responsibility to ensure fair treatment and protection for workers, as they often avoid providing employee rights by classifying workers as independent contractors.

2.3. Digital Platform Work

Definition of Digital Labour Platform

A digital labour platform is an online system that connects workers with clients for short-term or task-based employment. Platforms are intermediaries that facilitate access to work, typically using automated processes such as algorithms to match workers with tasks. Digitalisation is not just about altering the nature of workplaces, skills development, and jobs but also about subjecting how to allocate work. Digital labour platforms (DLPs) serve as driving innovation concerning the aspect of allocating different work forms (de Groen et al. 2021). This is significantly correlated with the aspect of the digital economy or the gig economy playing a crucial role in transforming the world of work. The context of digital labour platforms is pivotal, owing to their assistance in redefining the means of economic exchange by executing a rapid exchange of labour, practices, and business landscape.

The aspect of DLPs can leverage distinct features concerning the digital economy. It also caters to the organisation and nature of the digital economy in terms of the availability of cloud infrastructure services at significantly reduced costs. Vallas and Schor (2020) asserted that platforms tend to be seen as entrepreneur incubators, accelerants of precarity, digital cages, and chameleons that are constantly adapting to the concerning environment. However, it is argued by the same source that each of the devices has its own limitations that yield the introduction of alternative platform images. As a consequence, the context of platforms represents diverse forms of governance mechanisms that tend to differ from hierarchies, networks, or markets.

The expression "digital platform work" alludes to a business plan in which people, known as " platform workers," volunteer to finish brief tasks on request and separately through a digital platform work that joins them with clients needing their abilities (Kuznetsova et al., 2021).

The main qualities of digital labour platform work include the following:

1. **Online selection of workers:** Platform workers are picked on the Internet based on the matching calculation on the platform or by the inclinations of clients from a pool of accessible specialists.

2. **Intermediation by a platform:** Digital platforms are fundamental for resolving questions and ensuring the nature of administrations between platform workers and clients.

3. **Personal performance of tasks:** Platform workers don't deal with a group or reevaluate the work; instead, they carry out the tasks independently.

4. **On-demand nature:** Employees on the platform work as needed, providing services only when customers request.

5. **Short-term tasks:** Rather than continuous or endless, platform workers' exercises are typical of a characterized span.

6. **Diverse clients:** Platform workers do not have to work for just one company; all things considered, they might work for a few clients.

7. **Income exchange:** Platform workers are paid as a trade-off for their administrations, typically through the platform's instalment framework.

This means that digital platform work offers a structure for understanding the unmistakable characteristics of this recently well-known business and its impacts on society and the work market.

The digital labour platform or gig economy accounts for income passing a range of contingent worker arrangements like consultants, freelancers, moonlighters, temporary contract workers, and independent professionals. This also entails contractors in addition to outsourced networks and teams. Graham and Anwar (2019) contended that digital technologies accounting for underpinning online labour markets foster scope for clients to operate transspacially and unboundedly. This allows them to reconfigure the geography of their networks at a considerably lower cost. A 2021 study forecasted that the global gig economy tends to

generate a gross volume of $204 billion, expected to grow by 17 percent by 2023 (Illuzzi and Tang, 2021). It is accompanied by the fact that about 58 percent of the global gig economy is relevant to the transportation area, with the remaining section being subject to legal, IT, accounting and finance, among others. Although these figures highlight a positive note, workers involved with the gig economy are subject to challenges like a lack of benefits and security.

Companies are accounting for increased creativeness in hiring digital labour workers as part of their gig economy. This has involved hiring freelance or temporary staff where decreased budgets cannot accumulate full-time staff salaries. On the contrary, the impact on the labour market is found to have certain downsides, like limited knowledge transfer and internal capacity development, along with barriers to quality and training management. Some potential advantages of digitalization and the on-demand economy in labour markets are work-life balance, flexibility, autonomy, career advancements, and job exposures with alternative income streams (Illuzzi and Tang, 2021). It is also followed by workers belonging to the generations that prefer living big work as part of being increasingly responsive to their changing appetites and needs. However, the article by Mohanty (2021) argued that the gig economy tends to be a good prospect for companies but challenging for workers as it worsens their financial and social health. It is also found to damage the growth prospects of this economy, with worker loyalty and availability posing an issue.

2.4.1. The Rise of Digital Platform Work

The so-called gig economy emerged at the beginning of the 21st century with the development of the Internet and, parallelly, the need for human input to ensure the smooth functioning of web-based industries (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2019). When digital platforms entered the public debate, concepts like 'sharing economy' or 'platform economy' or the 'on-demand economy,' inter-alia, were synonyms. However, this approach overlooks some essential differences between online platforms and obfuscation in the theoretical debate. At first, conceptualizations of the platform economy did not focus on the labour aspect. For example, the authors of one of the earliest definitions of the platform economy used the term 'sharing economy' to prescribe a phenomenon in which consumers grant other consumers temporary access to underutilized assets, possibly in exchange for money (Görög, Georgina, 2018).

Digital labour platforms derive from technological advances and represent a return to casual labour (International Labour Organization (ILO), 1993). Casual workers have an explicit or

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implicit contract of employment that is not expected to continue for more than a short period and whose duration is to be determined by national circumstances. These workers may be classified as employees or own-account workers according to the specific circumstances of the employment contract of the past in advanced economies. In contrast, it adds to the casual labour force in developing economies. Workers can work from anywhere worldwide as long as they have a reliable Internet connection. This opportunity is associated with significant growth in flexible and irregular working hours, partly driven by individual choice but also imposed by the growing demand to serve in the economy flourishing due to the digital revolution. Most digital labour platforms are not subject to employment regulations, so workers have little control over their work or working conditions.

As the impact of digitalization on the employment relationship is the object of the research, this chapter focuses on analyzing the theoretical background of two research fields: Information and Communications Technology (ICTs) and employment. The author's opinions on the development of ICTs, particularly digital platforms, and their influence on the labour market are crucial to the analyses. Meanwhile, the legal opinions on the recent developments in employment law will guide us in identifying the gaps and designing potential recommendations.

Data and measurement on the gig economy, variously referred to as the sharing economy, platform economy, or the on-demand economy, are inconsistent. However, most estimates predict that these forms of work are on the rise and could account for 40 percent or more of the workforce in the future (Cooper, Cary, Bajorek, Zofia, Brinkley, Ian, & Bevan, Stephan., 2019). These digital labour platforms provide companies access to a large, flexible workforce.

The concept of "crowd outsourcing" is not a recent term. The first edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, published in 1884, was the product of solicitations in newspapers for any reader to send in examples of ordinary and rare words. (International Labour Office – Geneva, ILO, 2018). Jeff Howe was the first to redefine "crowdsourcing" with labour connotation in 2006. The author mentions the competition that professional photographers faced when sites such as iStock (an international micro-stock Photography provider) started offering licenses to many amateur photographers. If crowdsourcing is outsourcing work to "the crowd," platforms are the digital services (websites or apps) that facilitate crowdsourcing.

Between 2004 and 2005, Amazon initiated its first crowd-working platform to improve its online catalogues. The company realized that its computer programs could not distinguish

between similar products, leading to mistakes and multiple entries on the Amazon site; therefore, human intelligence was needed to classify its catalogue entries precisely. Initially, the tasks on the platform were designed for Amazon employees to do in their 'free time.' However, the company soon noted that it could externalize the tasks to a crowd of workers worldwide and provide a platform for other companies to post tasks. Paradoxically, artificial intelligence's failure brought the need for human input, leading to the creation of the Amazon Mechanical Turk (AMT) platform (Berg, Janine, Cherry, Miriam A., & Rani, Uma, 2019).

The digital platforms merely leveraged the connectivity afforded by the Internet to gain access to a distributed workforce instead of setting up centralized work buildings.

By the early 2010s, further technological advances, especially in GPS and the development and diffusion of smartphones, led to the proliferation of location-based, digital labour platforms whereby an application is used to match labour demand and supply within a particular geographic space. The digital labour platforms provide the technical infrastructure for requesters to advertise tasks to large potential workers spanning geographic and economic circumstances. Meanwhile, these labour platforms offer a centralized location for workers to identify functions from many different requesters, a method for submitting work products, and the technical and financial infrastructure to receive payment for work completed. The setup raises many legal issues that the labour law practitioners diagnose (International Labour Office – Geneva, ILO, 2018). The expansion of the digital platform has opened up new position possibilities by permitting individuals to associate with clients internationally and use their abilities from a distance. Platforms like Upwork, Uber, and Airbnb have allowed people to start small businesses and become entrepreneurs while upending established sectors and industries.

Working on digital platforms offers independence, adaptability, and the opportunity to diversify one's income streams, among other advantages. More youths, who are searching for substitute work decisions that fit with their standards and ways of life, have been particularly intrigued by it. Additionally, employment on online platforms has served as a lifeline for many individuals affected by the COVID-19 epidemic's job loss or income instability.

2.4.2. Classification of Digital Labour Platforms

Different authors have classified digital labour platforms in various ways. For this research, a mapping of all the existing classifications is conducted to develop a comprehensive classification.

Broadly, digital labour platforms are classified into two categories:

1. Web-based: work is outsourced through an open call to a geographically dispersed crowd (pool of potential workers);

2. Location-based: allocates work to individuals in a specific geographical area, usually utilising workers' assets.

Based on the classification of Debra Howcroft; University of Manchester, UK, Birgitta Bergvall-Kåreborn Luleå; University of Technology, Sweden and Janine Berg, Miriam A. Cherry and Uma Rani, International Labour Office, Switzerland, Saint Louis University Law School, St. Louis, Missouri, USA we have prepared the classification presented in figure number 1.2

Figure 2

Classification of Digital Labour Platforms (Source: Developed by Author)
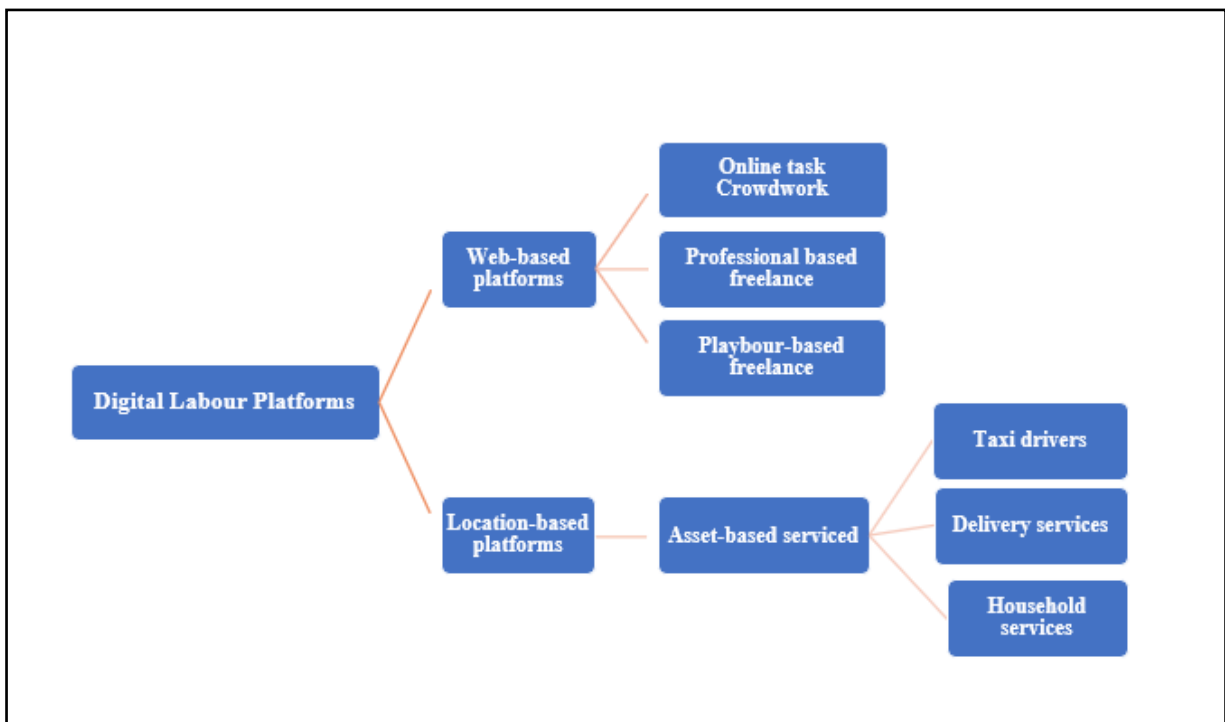
Web-based digital labour platforms categorize tasks offered to a broad audience (micro-tasking or contest-based creative tasks) or directly to individuals through a freelance marketplace. Below is a detailed overview of these platforms:

Online Task Crowd-Work Platforms: These platforms provide paid work for specific tasks where the "employer" initiates the interaction. They cater to a range of activities, from simple micro-tasks like data entry, classification, transcribing, and content moderation to more complex and large-scale projects that require the skills of multiple individuals, such as content classification, AI data annotation, and media annotation. Notable platforms include

Amazon Mechanical Turk, Clickworker, and the rebranded CrowdFlower (now Appen). Workers choose projects based on their skills and are paid based on their output and employer satisfaction. These platforms offer a flexible source of additional income and access to a broad worker pool for tasks impractical for traditional outsourcing (Andreeva & Yolova, 2022; Reljic et al., 2021).

Playbour-Based Freelance Platforms: Originating from Kucklich's 2015 definition, 'Playbour' combines labour with the pleasure and creativity associated with games, blurring the lines between work and leisure (Florida, 2002). These platforms often involve non-paid creative contributions, such as designing T-shirts on Threadless.com or solving scientific challenges on InnoCentive.com for cash prizes. They also cater to those who wish to monetize their hobbies through services like graphic design, music production, and video editing on platforms like Envato Studio, Fiverr, AudioJungle, and 99designs (Burinskienė & Seržantė, 2022).

Profession-Based Freelance Platforms: These platforms connect businesses with professionals like developers, graphic designers, writers, and programmers who do not receive upfront payment. The worker initiates the services, offering their specialized skills to clients who can review and compare options on platforms such as Upwork, Fiverr, Freelancer, Guru, and PeoplePerHour. Platforms like LegalZoom, Toptal, Catalant, and LawTrades specifically cater to highly skilled professionals like lawyers and accountants (Bergvall Kɛreborn & Howcroft, 2013; Brodny & Tutak, 2021).

Location-Based Platforms: Tied to geographical locations, these platforms facilitate connections between local service providers and clients. They encompass a range of services requiring a physical presence, such as taxi (Uber), delivery (Deliveroo), and household services managed through platforms like TaskRabbit and Handy. This category is pivotal in the sharing economy, emphasizing crowd work that leverages real-world exchanges and assets like cars, bikes, and spare rooms (Slee, 2015). Asset-Based Service Platforms allow individuals to monetize their assets by offering services related to vehicle rentals (Turo), lodging (Airbnb), or tool rentals (KitSplit), providing an income stream through resource sharing.

This classification provides a comprehensive understanding of various digital labour platforms and their services. Workers can select the platform that best suits their skills and preferences, while customers have more options for selecting a service provider (Marcolin & Gasparri, 2023).

2.4.3. Factors that Motivate Employees to Work on Digital Labour Platforms

Relevant to the perspective of workers, a gig economy has a potential role in improving work-life balance compared to many traditional jobs. Independent workers can select free-lance jobs that they tend to be interested in, in addition to those that provide new opportunities for them. Prassl (2018) pointed out that the gig economy possesses great potential to improve matching efficiency along with associated algorithms for adding economic value. It is also subject to creating job opportunities and allowing scope for enjoying access to better services and products. The extent of satisfaction gained by employees in transitioning to a gig economy or digital labour platform is highlighted through workplace autonomy.

The concept of digital labour platforms and the gig economy holds the disadvantage of low job security and substantially fewer benefits than structured and traditional employment. Conversely, increased flexibility, along with a scope of avoiding toxic workplaces, burnout, and pay grades of traditional workplaces, pushes 30 percent of employees towards the gig economy (Sean, 2022). This source of motivation is found to exist among those aged 45-54 years old and those aged 35-44. Meijerink and Keegan (2019) posited that HRM operations concerning the gig economy tend to be designed for governing platform ecosystems through aligning the multilateral exchanges of key actors. These are subject to gig workers, intermediary platform firms, and requesters as a way of ensuring value co-creation. Despite these, the ILO highlights workers facing challenges in earnings, working hours, social protection, and working regulations.

The labour market is undergoing significant changes in both fields of adaptation and changes in requests regarding job searches for potential staff. Vasilyeva et al. (2020) propounded that behavioural characteristics and unique structure concerning social ideas play a significant role in Generation Z's shift towards digital labour platforms. The comparative analysis further negates this aspect with evaluations that the level of motivation among workers varies based on the platform type. This is supported by the findings of ILO that are relevant to freelance platforms: 59 percent of leading motivation is rendered by flexibility. It is accompanied by 43 percent being subject to complementary pay and 85 percent accounting for improved skills and career opportunities (International Labour Organisation, 2021). The motivational factors were also found to differ with age basis in terms of 50 percent of youths aged 18-24 years preferring complimentary pay. It was contradictory to 37 percent for those aged 25-34 years and 36 percent for older workers aged 35 years and above.

Job flexibility or working from home is found to be particularly different based on gender in G20 nations. For example, 32 percent of women prefer job flexibility in the gig economy compared to 25 percent of men in the same field. Likewise, a major motivating factor for many employees engaged in the taxi and driving sector was inadequate employment opportunities in certain nations, like 44 percent in India and 31 percent in Mexico, among others (International Labour Organisation, 2021). However, for the delivery platforms, the reasons were found to vary substantially depending on the nation in terms of complimenting pay being the main motivating factor, with 32 percent in China, while India accounted for better pay in terms of 64 percent. The costs and benefits of gig platform work among employers, society, and workers tend to be highly contested. Johnston and Land-Kazlauskas (2018) supported this with the advocacy that digital labour platforms have the scope of economically benefiting marginalised social groups, including the geographically isolated, refugees, and unemployed. Contrary to this, the same article has identified that jobs in digital labour platforms tend to be structured in ways that negatively impact employees through unpredictable scheduling, unreliable long-term employment prospects, and inconsistent earnings.

High-quality employee motivation is identified as a contribution towards an organisation's long-term success by supporting employees' performance and well-being. A combination of empirical evidence and theory fosters the scope for research in demonstrating the way organisations support self-motivation among gig workers (Jabagiet *et al*., 2019). This is carried out through the thoughtful design of digital labour platforms and the integration of pivotal social media tools in social badging and social networking. The ensuing perspective is again refuted by the findings of ILO that a large proportion of the workers engaged in the gig economy do not have access to basic social protection, which serves as a demotivating factor.

Behrendt et al. (2019) put forward that calling coverage on grounds of social protection for employees engaged with digital crowd work platforms highlights significant gaps. This is based on the fact that the existence of such coverage is often provided through additional or previous jobs of the workers or indirectly through their spouses or other family members. It caters to raising questions about the free-riding approach of digital platforms on the traditional economy in financing social security.

2.5. Digitalisation in Eastern Europe

Digitalisation has reshaped employment models worldwide, shifting from traditional full-time, fixed-location jobs to more flexible, remote, and gig-based work arrangements. In Eastern Europe, countries like Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic have embraced

digital technologies, an aspect that has helped to accelerate the growth of digital platforms that enable freelance and gig economy jobs (Aleksynska, 2020). As online work continues to grow, the benefits of remote work, entrepreneurial opportunities, and access to global markets have become significant in these countries as citizens can secure employment with international companies, which has helped them to increase their income potential (Aleksynska, 2020). However, despite these advantages, including flexibility in terms of working hours and job selection and allowing workers to manage their work-life balance more effectively, the rise of digital labour also presents regulatory challenges resulting from the misalignment between traditional-oriented labour laws and emerging digital employment structures. Therefore, labour laws must be adapted to protect platform workers.

Hungary

Hungary's Labor Code (Act I of 2012) establishes the standard working duration as 40 hours, distributed over five days from Monday to Friday, where employees are also entitled to a minimum daily rest period of 11 hours between shifts and a weekly rest period of at least 48 hours. The flexibility and independent nature of working on digital platforms make it difficult to amend this act to include the interests of online employees, especially in the case of emerging virtual workspaces such as the Metaverse, where workers work in a non-physical environment without clear boundaries between work and personal time. Therefore, as Péter (2023) points out, the concepts of working hours and leisure time become blurred in these virtual spaces, and current labour laws cannot regulate work in the Metaverse. Additionally, this categorisation denies employees benefits like paid sick leave, unemployment insurance, and retirement pensions (Kiss, 2020). Online employees in Hungary are not provided with these support systems (available to traditional workers) and are not held accountable for fair labour practices (Kiss, 2019). Also, there are no frameworks to legally protect these workers from issues such as job stability and compensation in case they are dismissed unfairly, which makes Hungarian employees working on online platforms vulnerable to unfair working conditions (Mélypataki & Solymosi-Szekeres, 2024).

In addition, platform work in Hungary has significant economic and social implications, especially when it comes to income instability and career progression. Kapisyzi et al. (2024) note that these employees' earnings are highly unpredictable, making long-term financial planning difficult, especially considering no standard employment. Without access to these protections, these employees struggle to attain stable jobs due to the lack of mentorship or well-designed career paths within the gig economy (Kiss, 2019).

Poland

Poland has established itself as a leader in the digital economy within Eastern Europe, especially in sectors such as IT outsourcing, software development, and e-commerce. The country has the infrastructure, skilled workforce, and government support for digital-based innovations, which has led to a surge in remote work and global market opportunities (International Trade Administration, 2024a). As a result, international employees are increasingly seeking Polish IT professionals for their high-level technical expertise in fields like software development, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence. This market is valued at $44 billion and is projected to grow to $123 billion by 2030, accounting for 9% of Poland's GDP. The ICT sector alone was worth $26 billion in 2023, with software services increasing by 13.6% and public cloud services growing by 24.5% compared to the previous year (International Trade Administration, 2024).

Gig-based jobs have also grown along with the growth of the IT sector, more so in ride-sharing and food delivery services. Companies like Uber and Glovo employ thousands of Poles to provide flexible income opportunities (Beręsewicz et al., 2021). Remote work opportunities in Poland's IT sector benefit freelancers. However, they compete with lower-cost markets worldwide, making it difficult to maintain competitive wages. In the face of the rise of digital work, Poland is gradually adapting its labour laws. It discusses classifying gig workers as employees to guarantee they are given the necessary social protections. Amended in April 2023, the Polish Labour Code now provides for remote work, reflecting the new trend of digital employment. According to these regulations, employers are obliged to provide the necessary equipment for work at home, reimburse employees for using their tools, and cover the telecommunication, electricity, and installation (Kobroń-Gąsiorowska, 2023). These amendments are to ensure that remote workers are not left behind. Yet, gig workers who work as independent contractors under civil law contracts are not entitled to the same protections as regular employees.

Czech Republic

The Czech Republic has also been a huge player in the digital economy within Central and Eastern Europe, with a growth of 10% annually from 2019 to 2021, reaching a value of €18 billion in 2021 (Kmen et al., 2022). The country also ranked 19th among EU member states in the Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) 2022 (Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, 2023). The country has greatly improved its public services and connectivity, with 69.1% of the population possessing at least basic digital-based skills, surpassing the

EU average of 55.6% (Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, 2023). The remote work sector and ICT, telecommunications, and IT companies employ nearly 175,000 people, contributing significantly to the country's GDP (ABSL, 2024).

Like other online workers, remotely working employees in the Czech Republic also face challenges related to job security and access to social benefits. However, the government is gradually addressing these issues through legislative measures. The primary legal framework governing remote work is the Labour Code (Act No. 262/2006 Coll.), which underwent some amendments effective from October 1, 2023 (Ježek, 2024). The change introduced key provisions designed to address the rise of remote and online work, ensuring that workers' rights are protected in the evolving digital landscape.

One of the main provisions of the 2023 amendment is the written agreement requirement, which mandates that employers establish a written agreement with employees performing remote work. This agreement must detail aspects such as the place of work, working hours, and the reimbursement of expenses incurred during remote work (Ježek, 2024). In addition, the amendment includes a reimbursement of costs provision, where employers must reimburse employees for costs incurred while working remotely, either through actual cost reimbursement or a lump-sum allowance, as determined by a decree from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (Ježek, 2024). Also, the law requires employers to guide employees in setting up ergonomic workstations and offer the necessary training to ensure a safe working environment.

2.6. The Western Balkans

The Western Balkans region in Southeastern Europe comprises Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. De Munter (2022) points out that the term 'Western Balkans' came to light in the 1990s by the European Union to distinguish these non-EU countries from other Balkan states that had already joined or were in the EU integration process. Digitalization in the Western Balkans has significantly grown in the 21st century due to the initiatives by the EU, growing foreign investments in ICT sectors, and national strategies to modernize infrastructure, public services, and labour markets to align with European standards.

Serbia

Like other countries, Serbia is continuously digitally transforming its various sectors to enhance its economic growth and maintain global competitiveness. The Information and

Communications Technology (ICT) sector now contributes approximately 10% to the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In 2023, ICT exports reached $3.9 billion, which reflects an impressive annual growth rate of over 26% during the past decade (International Trade Administration, 2024b). The country also progressively embraces online and remote work, with over 100,000 individuals engaged as freelancers on platforms like Upwork, Toptal, and PeoplePerHour (Anomadic, 2021).

Like many other nations, Serbia faces challenges regulating digital work since the Serbian Labor Law primarily covers traditional employment relationships, leaving many platform workers without comprehensive legal safeguards. In addition, independent contractors, who are usually classified as freelancers, are subject to specific regulations concerning taxation and business registration, are generally considered self-employed, and are not covered by the standard Labour Law provisions applicable to employees (Robert, 2021). However, as Barjaktarević (2024) explains, the government is gradually enacting legislative changes to improve protections for these employees and freelancers. For instance, the Law on Safety and Health at Work, adopted in July 2023, introduced specific provisions for remote work, where employers must also provide necessary equipment and cover expenses related to remote work setups. Full compliance with these provisions is required by May 7, 2025 (Barjaktarević, 2024).

Bosnia and Herzegovina

In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the ICT services industry has seen a significant increase in employment. As of the third quarter of 2024, the number of employees in this sector was 21,587, an increase of approximately 2,066, marking a 10.58% increase compared to previous periods (Statista, 2024). In terms of basic digital skills that are key in remote work, BiH is within the Western Balkans average at 35%. However, it trails behind Montenegro (47%) and Serbia (41%) and remains well below the EU average of 54% (Intor et al., 2022). A similar trend is observed in digital content creation skills, where BiH (63%) lags slightly behind Serbia (64%) and remains below Montenegro's impressive 81%, though it is close to the EU benchmark of 66% (Intor et al., 2022).

While there is no specific act or law to specifically protect digitally employed workers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the labour laws of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), Republika Srpska (RS), and the Brčko District do include provisions for work performed outside the employer's premises (Hainz and Dulewicz, 2023). Though not designed precisely for online workers, these legal provisions establish important guidelines that

regulate remote work as they require that contracts define key aspects such as work organization, equipment use, and expense reimbursement. Therefore, these regulations provide a level of protection that extends to digital employment (Hainz and Dulewicz, 2023). However, the absence of a specific law for this kind of work means that platform-based workers, freelancers, and gig economy participants may not fully benefit from the rights and protections afforded to normal or 9 to 5 employees.

Albania

Albania has also made great strides in providing remote workers with the necessary infrastructure and skills needed for this type of job. For instance, the country has 98.4% of households having internet access, which surpasses the EU average of 93.1% (Eurostat, 2024). However, the digital-based skills gap remains a major challenge, as only 24% of Albanians aged 16 to 74 possess at least basic skills, the lowest in the Western Balkans and way below the EU average of 54% (Zito, 2024). Nonetheless, the country has a growing ICT workforce, with 3.6% of its workforce employed in digital-related jobs, slightly ahead of Serbia's 3.3% (Zito, 2024).

To elaborate further on what was discussed in the introduction part of this thesis regarding remote employee protection, the Albanian Labor Code, in Article 15, addresses telework and work-from-home arrangements (Tiri, 2023). The code mandates that telework-based agreements be formalized in writing to ensure remote workers receive conditions less favourable than on-site employees, especially regarding working hours, remuneration, and occupational health and safety. Employers must also provide, install, and maintain necessary equipment for teleworking unless employees use their own devices (Tiri, 2023). However, as mentioned earlier in the introduction, no specific acts or laws are directly formulated to safeguard digital workers, similar to what is observed with traditional employees. Nonetheless, the existing legal framework provides certain provisions for these working arrangements.

2.7. Challenges of Digital Platform Work

The key challenges workers face on digital labour platforms stem from their varying working conditions, including irregular working hours, unstable earnings, inconsistent job availability, limited social protection, lack of labour rights, and occupational health and safety concerns. This is based on the fact that although 28 percent of online web-based platforms and 90 percent of those in taxi and delivery platforms take this as their main source of earning, it tends to vary significantly based on the country of origin. For instance, workers associated

with the gig economy in developed nations earn more in terms of $4.5 compared to those in developing countries earning $2.7 (International Labour Organisation, 2021). This disparity is considerably high in developing nations, with the workers earning about 66 percent less than their counterparts in developed nations. Berg et al. (2019) opined that irrespective of the significance of crowd work as a significant source of income, earnings tend to be relatively low, particularly given the high educational level of the global workforce. The challenges involved also hold the fact that although digital labour platforms garner the scope of connecting workers with diverse work opportunities, they have the downside of difficulty in finding regular work.

Findings from studies highlight that low earnings among workers associated with the gig economy are attributed to their inability to obtain tasks regularly. This is accompanied by challenges related to digital platform workers regarding potential occupational safety and health risks. It is addressed that most of the risks tend to be specific to the form of platform work and range from uncomfortable working positions, verbal abuse, and lifting substantially heavy subjects (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2022). Among others, challenges also involve harassment and bullying in addition to job insecurity and long working hours. Findings through ILO have shown that the need to work long hours on online web-based platforms has a negative impact on work-life balance and increases social isolation and exhaustion. An illustration concerning the taxi or delivery platform includes the long working hours in the UK being subject to the highest death rate due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Another challenge highlighted by Wentrup, Nakamura, and Ström (2018) is the increased mistrust and decreased commitment among digital workers and platforms. This is found to be a substantial issue for Uber and is mitigated through scarce and control mechanisms.

Working on a digital platform enjoys many benefits; however, there are downsides, too. Since platform workers are viewed as self-employed entities instead of representatives, they often need social insurance, work steadiness, and arranging influence. This has led to stresses over imbalance, abuse, and unreliable business (Marti & Puertas, 2023). Besides, issues concerning the fate of work, including the chance of occupation removal and the crumbling of customary work markets, have been featured in the ascent of digital platform work. The regulatory vacuum created by the legal and regulatory frameworks' inability to keep up with the rapid changes brought about by digitalization exposes platform workers to various risks and uncertainties.

Working on a digital platform means a sensational change in the idea of work, with both new open doors and impressive hindrances. Approaches and regulations that safeguard the privileges of platform workers empower fair contest and assure that the upsides of digitalization are dispersed genuinely and should be created as this industry develops and changes. By utilizing the open doors introduced by digital platform work and handling its related obstructions, we can make a future work market that is both more vigorous and comprehensive.

Implications of Algorithmic Workplace Management Practices on Employees

Digital platforms use algorithmic management practices concerning the evaluation allocation, reward, and monitoring of employees. This includes matching the workers with consumers and clients depending on various indicators and ratings that tend to be critical and decisive for excessing diverse work types. The following approach is opposed to being unhealthy for the employees as any negative feedback or rating by a client gets factored into the algorithms with a significant impact on the workers (International Labour Organisation, 2021). This is supported by the findings that rejection is quite common on online web-based platforms, with 71 percent reporting the same, among which 36 percent belong to freelance tasks, with 85 percent on the microtask platforms. These findings are criticised based on algorithmic practices because most workers with rejection or negative feedback have complained of difficulty accessing future work.

The ratings or rejections often tend to be influenced by components like delays, traffic congestion, or any form of difficulty in completing freelance tasks. Although higher rates or acceptance are significant in facilitating work access, lower ratings are subject to deactivating workers' accounts or reducing their access to work on future grounds. Rani and Furrer (2021) contradicted this with the belief that algorithmic hiring and management approaches are effective as they enable workers to be more productive, earn higher performance ratings, and increase retention rates. This is also effective in faster hiring, matching quality, and potentially avoiding discrimination. Outcomes from Hyers and Kovacova (2018) are instead found to be conflicting based on the aspect that distinctive features of digital platforms tend to have a considerable negative impact on the working conditions of employees. Besides these, another important challenge garnered by algorithm management is preventing workers from completely benefiting from flexibility and freedom.

2.8.   Gaps in the Literature

The employment relationship is the basic association between workers and employers, which binds them to work for each other. A good employment relationship has many advantages, including reducing turnover in the organization, promoting open communication, helping to boost innovation, developing a healthy workplace culture, analysing the workers' performance, and strengthening employee engagement. Employees working in a workplace cannot make every decision independently; for that purpose, they need guidance within an organization. A good employment relationship will help companies make decisions collectively on several issues. The other advantage of an employment association is sharing problems and issues with others. While working in an organization, an employee will stick to a problem that a single employee might not handle. Hence, if that employee has a good employment relationship, the employee will get the assistance of their seniors and colleagues. Apart from these, healthy relations ease the workload and distribute it to others, which helps to enhance the organization's productivity. It is seen that an employee loses control over and focus on the work if the person is stressed and working under enormous tension. In most workplaces, individuals spend around 8 to 9 hours a day. Throughout the day, it almost becomes impossible for them to work continuously without any lunch break or other type of break. In such cases, if an employee is left alone and no one is talking to them, then it is sure to happen that the employee will lose his interest in working. This is why studying the employees' relationship with the context of global and EU is important, and for that purpose, this research study is being carried out.

The next focus area of this research study is digitalisation, which is the phenomenon that will become the reality of the future. Digitalization has changed the way we work, the way we think, and the way we imagine the world. Globally, digital spending was around 0.96 trillion USD, which had jumped up to the mark of 2.51 trillion USD, and estimations of Statista have revealed that by the end of the year 2026, it can reach as high as 3.4 trillion USD (Sherif, 2023). These developments and progress in Albania and Western Balkans countries such as Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Eastern Europe countries like Poland and the Czech Republic, have shown that digitalization is going to be the reality of the future, and without the digital infrastructure, the future cannot be perceived.

Industries like education, retail, labour, service, and entertainment have been digitised worldwide. This digital progress in almost every sector worldwide has shown that employment and employment relationship development will also be changed by digitalisation.

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Sectors like hospitality, construction, agriculture, and health are working eagerly toward adopting digitalization. The biggest change brought about by digitalisation is the creation of new jobs in the market and making popular professions like data analysts, cyber security as a profession, and software development. Digitalisation has brought connectivity and integration worldwide, where people work from different locations without any difficulty for organisations located in different locations, even in different countries. These collective explanations of digitalisation and employment relationships have shown the significance of both for an organisation and its progress in this digitised world.

Understanding the changing elements of business connections in the EU and overall climate relies upon distinguishing gaps in the literature and potential regions for extra concentration on digitalisation in work and business. The impact of digitalisation on workplace relationships is a complex and multifaceted issue that necessitates in-depth research to fill in knowledge gaps and identify potential research avenues(Tomashevski, 2020). The existing body of research on the need for additional empirical studies investigating how digitalisation impacts many aspects of work relationships is severely lacking. Despite an expanding body of research on the general effects of digitalisation on labour and employment, there are few comprehensive analyses of how digital technologies affect certain aspects of the employment relationship, such as job design, work organization, and employee well-being in Albania and Western Balkans countries such as Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Eastern Europe countries like Poland and Czech Republic. Future research investigating these dynamics in various organizational contexts and industries may focus on in-depth case studies or extensive surveys.

The impacts of digitalisation on the elements of the work market and the appropriation of business possibilities address one more area of uniqueness in these countries. While previous research has shed light on how digital technologies are altering the nature of jobs and the skills employers require, additional research is needed to determine how digitalization affects distinct aspects of the labour market. This could involve taking a gander at how expertise-one-sided innovation headway, business polarization, and the ascent of new work plans like gig economy platforms are impacted by digitalization (Gasparri & Tassinari, 2020).

Research on the administrative deterrents and strategy arrangements related to digitisation and its consequences for work connections is additionally inadequate. It is basic to appreciate how administrative systems can effectively deal with worries like information security, algorithmic administration, and labourer insurance about digitalized working environments,

as computerised advancements keep reforming work rehearses and hierarchical cycles in Albania and Western Balkans countries such as Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Eastern Europe countries like Poland and Czech Republic. Future research may include comparative studies of regulatory systems in other nations and regions to identify best practices and policy recommendations.

Moreover, research can explore how go-betweens and digital platforms impact work associations. Research is needed to determine how online labour platforms and digital markets affect workers' access to social protections, bargaining power, and relationships between employers and employees. The ramifications for aggregate portrayal, work norms, and the changing person of work connections interceded by advanced delegates could be explained in every way by more exploration in this field. (Georgescu, 2020). Likewise, there is an absence of information on the drawn-out friendly impacts of digitalization on positions and work. Longitudinal examinations assessing what digitalization means for bigger cultural patterns like pay imbalance, social portability, and the idea of work in the future are vital, as the material now accessible affects work relocation and expertise needs. Multidisciplinary approaches may be utilized to examine how financial frameworks, social outcomes, and innovation change cooperate over extensive periods.

While existing literature acknowledges the challenges of digital platform work in the Western Balkans, there is a notable gap in comparative legal research concerning how these countries regulate online workers, especially when compared to Eastern European nations such as Poland and the Czech Republic. The current academic discourse focuses more on economic and technological aspects but gives insufficient attention to employee protections, employment classification, and algorithmic management in non-EU Western Balkan countries. Unlike EU states that are gradually integrating digital-based worker laws, Albania and its neighbours, such as Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, have limited frameworks to address the precarious working conditions of gig workers. Additionally, there is little empirical research on the lived experiences of these workers in Albania and its neighbouring countries, making it difficult to assess the effectiveness of existing labour laws or propose evidence-based regulatory reforms. Addressing these gaps in the literature will help in understanding the f how digitisation influences work relationships in Albania, Europe, and in the world.

CHAPTER 3: Research methodology

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter thoroughly reviewed key concepts within the digital economy and their implications for the labour market. This research adopts a specific philosophical framework and implements a mixed-research methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques. This approach enables comprehensive research of the subject matter. Data collection was conducted using both primary and secondary sources, enriching the development of the research with a comprehensive evidence base. Primary data sources include findings from semi-structured interviews and surveys conducted with digital labour platform employees in Albania. This blend of sources and methods facilitates detailed research into the evolving dynamics within digital labour markets due to digitalization.

3.2. Research Onion
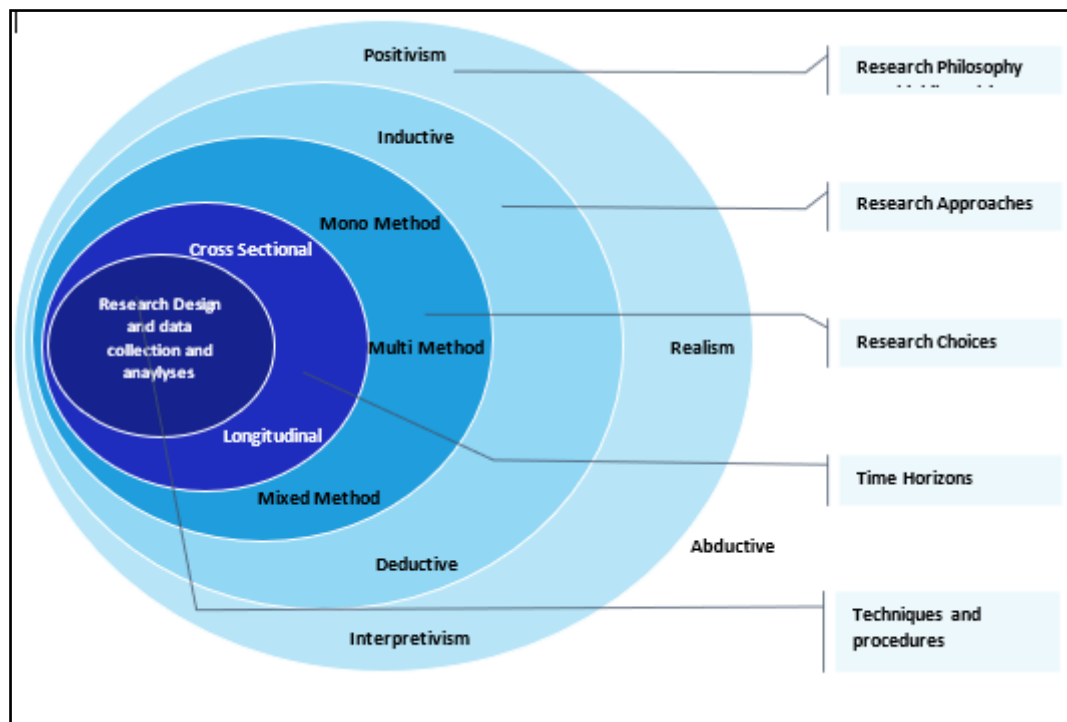
Figure 1.3: Research Onion (Source: As Inspired by Saunders *et al.* 2019)

The Research Onion, developed by Saunders et al. (2007), is a structured model used in research methodology to guide researchers in designing and executing studies systematically. It consists of multiple layers, each representing a critical decision point in the research

process. The outermost layer covers research philosophy, including positivism, interpretivism, and realism, influencing the overall approach to generating knowledge (refer to Figure 1.3). On the inward, the research approach, including inductive, deductive, or abductive, helps to determine how theories are developed or tested. The research choice layer differentiates between mono-method (single technique) and multi-method (combined approaches) strategies, while the time horizon layer (longitudinal or cross-sectional) defines whether data is collected over time or at a single point (Saunders et al., 2007). Additionally, the core layer addresses research design, data collection, and analysis techniques, shaping how the study gathers and interprets data. The Research Onion helps justify each methodological decision in this study and ensures alignment with the research objectives and hypotheses. Below is a breakdown of how each layer will be applied in this research.

Research Philosophies

According to Snyder (2019), research philosophy is a prominent system of presenting data based on the researchers' understanding and beliefs. This is categorised into "positivism, realism, and interpretivism," which are considered the primary research philosophy types. The study has incorporated "interpretivism research philosophy" to achieve its goals. This philosophy claims to capture certain social observations, particularly focusing on digital labour platforms and the gig economy. The choice of research philosophy has significantly impacted the practical implications of the research, enabling researchers to interpret various study elements and integrate key insights. This philosophy, influenced by the type of information gathered and the author's beliefs, has been crucial in developing the survey and the interview questionnaire.

Research Approaches

The research approach is considered both a plan and a procedure responsible for developing broad assumptions based on comprehensive data collection methods. The approach necessitates several crucial decisions to make sense of the research and present it attractively (Basias and Pollalis, 2018). The research approach is classified into "deductive, inductive, and abductive approaches." The deductive approach has been implemented to demonstrate causal relationships within the context of digital labour platforms and the gig economy. In this study, the deductive approach has facilitated the measurement of existing concepts qualitatively, thereby generalizing the research findings to produce efficient results. It also aims to explore key insights and validate knowledge about existing phenomena.

Research Choice: Mixed-Method Approach

The choice of research method is crucial for collecting and utilising key data types throughout the research journey. According to Chang et al. (2020), the research choice is determined by gathering relevant information to achieve research results. The research has adopted a mixed-method approach. Desktop research, also known as literature reviews or secondary research, involves collecting and analysing existing data from various sources to gain a deep understanding of the subject. Many materials, including academic journals, books, government documents, trade publications, and online resources, are utilized for desktop research. For example, the literature review on the impacts of digitalization on employment relationships assessed how digitalization influences labour market polarization, job creation, loss, and the future of work. This framing has helped contextualize how digitalization affects employment patterns and labour dynamics. It is important to note that desktop research was not limited to the initial stages of the research process but was used throughout the study.

The research process is carried out on two levels that run simultaneously and reinforce each other: desk research, systematic comparison, and theoretical modelling. The work started with the doctrinal research method, focusing on desk research of articles, reports, studies, strategies, and projects related to employment law and digitalization, concentrating on the latest legal initiatives or developments made in this area by the International Labour Organisation and European Union. The research included a thorough analysis of the national employment legal frameworks and descriptive and evaluative reports on digital labour platforms, non-standard forms of work, and private international law to draw conclusions and make recommendations. Qualitative and quantitative data and collection methodologies on digital labour platforms at the national, regional, or global level that already exist in the public domain will be subject to secondary analysis to build a structural model for the empirical research to be conducted in Central and Eastern Europe during 2022. The results will be compared with the findings of existing or updated reports in other parts of the world, obtaining more detailed information and identifying similarities and differences with regard to trajectories of online workers, such as their previous work experience, working conditions, and the ways they are building careers through platforms. One of the main advantages of the comparative method is that it focuses on the intensive comparative analysis of a few variables/cases, which makes it time and cost-effective and provides the opportunity to prove the hypothesis.

The author used different beneficial search strategies. Firstly, "Google Scholar" and the "Database of Employee Relations and Crisis Management" have been involved in this study to obtain suitable journal articles. Additionally, searching through keywords has been developed within this context in the following way.

Justification for Mixed-Methods Approach

a) Quantitative Method (Questionnaires)

This research will use questionnaires to collect data from a sample of digital platform workers in Albania. This method will allow the study to assess the prevalence of specific working conditions, such as income instability, working hours, job satisfaction, and whether there is access to social protection (Humble, 2020). Since the research will use a relatively large sample size provided by the surveys, it will enable the identification of generalizable trends across the remote worker population in Albania to understand their working conditions properly. This approach helps answer key research questions regarding the impact of digitalization on employment patterns within Albania, with a particular focus on workers using international platforms such as Upwork, Fiverr, and Freelancer.com. Through this method, the research can statistically measure the association between variables like working conditions and socio-economic factors. The gathered data will serve as a foundation for understanding how working online affects the local employment landscape.

b) Qualitative Method (Case Studies)

In addition to questionnaires, this research incorporates case studies as a qualitative method to enrich the understanding of digital platform work in Albania. Bunkar et al. (2024) elaborate that using case studies helps to provide more context-specific information, such as complex phenomena within their real-life contexts like the classification of online workers, the challenges of employment misclassification, the enforcement of labour protections, the impact of algorithmic management on worker autonomy, and the legal responses to disputes involving gig economy workers that quantitative data alone may not capture (Bunkar *et al.*, 2024). Also, case studies highlight variations and exceptions to the general patterns identified by the questionnaires when exploring how workers interpret their employment status, how platform policies directly impact their everyday work experiences, and what legal or policy shortcomings they perceive as most problematic. The studies also support the development of practical recommendations by grounding the findings in real-world scenarios and lived experiences. Thus, in this case, the research will produce evidence-based information insights into specific institutional practices and worker responses through direct engagement

with selected cases. This, in turn, can guide policymakers and labour organizations when designing interventions and regulatory frameworks.

Studies that Have Used a Mixed-Method Approach

A vast number of studies have used a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods to provide in-depth analyses. For instance, the study by Jones et al. (2022) used online surveys and semi-structured interviews to explore the challenges and benefits of remote working in patient public involvement and engagement (PPIE) within health and social care research during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through this study technique, Wakelin, McAra-Couper, and Fleming (2024) were able to conclude that online face-to-face interviews are effective in capturing the essence of the participant through visual and auditory cues, even though some difficulties, like connectivity issues and limited non-verbal communication, were noted. Also, the research by St-Amant et al. (2025) used a similar study method to evaluate patient experiences with a Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (VTAC) in Renfrew County, Ontario. This approach (mixed method) enabled the authors to conclude that VTAC helped to address healthcare access challenges in Renfrew County, with high patient satisfaction across virtual, hybrid, and in-person modalities, and that issue resolution was the strongest predictor of patient satisfaction, regardless of demographic factors.

Further, Racine et al. (2020) used the same approach to assess the experiences of people with diabetes and healthcare professionals in different consensus meetings. This method allowed the researchers to gather measurable data on how well participants were satisfied and more insights into their feelings of empowerment, safety, and group dynamics to reveal how different meeting formats influenced their experiences. In addition, using this method (mixed method), Nixon et al. (2022) concluded that students were motivated to participate in the survey due to the importance of contributing to COVID-19 research, feeling useful, and having their voices heard. Vergara et al. (2023) explored the expectations of people with Type 1 Diabetes regarding voice-based digital health solutions also using this approach. The authors were able to obtain a view of participants' needs and preferences, allowing them to design more user-friendly and effective digital health interventions.

Wasti et al. (2022) also used a mixed-methods approach to investigate healthcare workers' attitudes toward mental health interventions and gather information about the workers' personal experiences. The authors were able to explore healthcare workers' perspectives on stress management, mental health support, access barriers, and psychological issues and

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assessed intervention effectiveness. Using this method, McKinley (2019) assessed the use of mixed-methods research within European student mobility studies, which involved analyzing 24 studies using content analysis, allowing the researcher to evaluate the prevalence, characteristics, and alignment of the technique with study designs across multiple articles. McKinley (2019) was able to identify gaps in applying this research method, including limited methodological integration, inconsistencies in data collection, an underrepresentation of qualitative insights, and difficulties in cross-country comparison. Also, Teame, Debie, and Tullu (2022) used a similar approach to analyse the effectiveness of healthcare leadership among managers at public health institutions in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The study found that education, experience, and EQ enhance leadership effectiveness in healthcare, with higher education improving decision-making, EQ fostering communication and team management, and experience strengthening vision implementation and problem-solving.

Further, Crawford and Tan's (2019) study used a mixed-method approach to examine how mixed methods were applied in teacher education research. They quantitatively analysed 1055 empirical research articles, which allowed them to determine the prevalence of mixed-methods studies. The qualitative-based content analysis helped them categorise these studies according to their research design and the balance of qualitative and quantitative components. The method allowed Crawford and Tan (2019) to identify key trends in the field of teacher education, such as the growing frequency of balanced mixed-methods studies and how these methods were applied, including concurrent parallel and explanatory sequential designs.

Table 2

Inclusion Exclusion Areas: Enabled and Disabled Area (Source: Created by Author)

Enabled Area	Disabled Area
● Journal articles released after or in 2018 have been involved in this context.	● Secondary sources released before 2018 have been excluded in this study.
Secondary sources, which had relevant following aspects, have been enabled. ● Influence of digitalisation on the internal changes in aspects of employee relationship standard ● Demands for new legal policies and frameworks to ensure minimum employment conditions, minimum wage and sufficient social protection ● Engagement of line workers working in "***Digital Labour Platform***" ● Challenges that companies face	Secondary sources, which did not have any relevant following aspects, have been disabled. ● Impact of digitalisation on the internal modifications with reference to employee relationship terms ● The latest legal frameworks and policies are needed to confirm minimum conditions of employment, minimum wage, and sufficient social protection. ● Motivation of line workers while working within a digital labour platform. ● Issues that are suffered by companies in case of digitalisation due to internal modification within standard employment relationships.
● This study has involved ethical access and free exploration of journal articles.	● This study excluded secondary sources, which did not have any ethical access and free exploration.

3.3. Research Design

Research design is accounted as a prominent "master plan" for conducting the research, thereby enhancing proper validity and authenticity (Mohajan, 2018). It also aids in displaying a prominent outline for addressing the research questions and achieving the research objectives. Theoretical modelling and systematic comparison are two essential components of the research strategy. They supported the creation of theoretical frameworks to explain the findings and provide a deeper understanding of the study topic. One methodical

comparison is examining the effects of digitalization on employment relationships across various regions or countries. This could help recognise the factors, such as organizational structures, labour market conditions, or industry-specific factors, that influence what digitalization means for business associations (Ruiner & Klumpp, 2020).

3.4. Data Collection

Data collection is categorised into prominent categories such as "secondary data collection method and primary data collection method" (Rashid et al., 2019). The secondary data collection technique is accounted as a prominent type of data collection technique in which the data is gathered from secondary sources such as published journals, books, magazines, and newspapers. The secondary data collection technique is a prominent criterion that needs to be selected to improve the validity and authenticity of the research (Beugelsdijk et al., 2020). The researcher has incorporated "secondary data collection" to acquire details in terms of existing research papers and studies focusing on the research study. The secondary data collection method will help the researcher collect data and information from online sources on the impacts of digitalisation on business.

The author utilizes the accompanying information sources: Academic research on how digitization affects employment relationships, reports from global institutions, including the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and the International Labour Organization, Statistical databases, such as the World Bank's World Development Indicators and Eurostat, Labour market statistics from member states of the European Union and national statistical agencies. The author conducted a survey with 135 Albanian digital platform workers between May and June 2022. The survey was designed to be nationally representative and targeted digital platform workers from five well-known platforms in the European Union: Upwork, Fiverr, Freelancer.com, People Per Hour, and Guru.com. The survey was conducted independently from the platforms to ensure the answers were not influenced. The questionnaire includes variables such as age, sex, region, educational attainment, average monthly income, average working hours per week, and employment status, as well as open questions on the motivation to work through digital labour platforms, main challenges and disadvantages, and the effect that Covid-19 had on this type of work.

Table 3

Questionnaire: The Impact of Digitalization on Employment Relationship

QUESTION	ANSWER

Location	
In what country do you reside?	
What's the area type?	An urban area
	A suburban area (i.e. the outskirts of a city)
	A rural area
Age	
How old are you?	
Language	
What languages do you speak?	
Gender	
What is your gender?	Female
	Male
	Other
	Prefer not to say
Marital status	
What is your marital status?	Single
	Married/Have a partner
	Prefer not to say
Identity	
Do you identify as any of the following?	Ethnic, religious or other minority
	Migrant, refugee, asylum seeker or displaced person
	Person with a disability/disabilities
	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex
	None of the above
	Prefer not to say
Children	
How many children do you have?	
Education	
What level of education have you completed?	
Income	

What is your monthly income, before tax, in your country's currency?	
Employment	
For how long have you been using online /platforms for the provision of some type of labour services	Less than a year One to three years More than three years
Do you have a contract with the work platform?	Yes No
How is the employment relationship categorised?	Full time employed Self-employed Independent Contractor
Which of the following answers best describes your current occupation situation?	<u>Major groups</u> 1 Managers 2 Professionals 3 Technicians and Associate Professionals 4 Clerical Support Workers 5 Services and Sales Workers 6 Skilled Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Workers 7 Craft and Related Trades Workers 8 Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers 9 Elementary Occupations
What are the motivations and conditions of platform work?	Flexibility Autonomy Other
How many hours per week do you work through the platform?	Less than 10 per week 40 hours per week More than 60 per week
Would you prefer to work more or less hours per week than you usually do?	More hours Satisfied with current hours Less hours

If you work overtime, how much is this compensated?	Not compensated as normal hours Paid as time-of
How satisfied are you with your pay?	Satisfied Neutral Dissatisfied
Social contributions	
Do you pay social contributions?	Regularly Often Once in a while No
Associations	
Do you belong to any of the following organizations?	I belong to a workers' organisation. I belong to an employer's organisation. I belong to a non-governmental organisation None of the above
Covid-19 impact	
How would you rate your work-related productivity since the start of the outbreak?	Substantially decreased Somewhat decreased Unchanged Somewhat improved Substantially improved
Since the start of the coronavirus outbreak, how has your income changed?	My income has increased substantially My income has increased slightly My income remains the same My income has decreased slightly My income has decreased substantially
Did you lose your job since the start of the coronavirus outbreak?	Yes No, I lost my job before the outbreak I have always worked through platforms
Public Employment Services	
Are you aware of the support services offered by the government to help you find a job?	Yes No

Did you apply for public Employment Services before finding work through the platform?	Yes
	No

Notes: *The survey combines twenty in-depth interviews with individuals who regularly work through online platforms.*

The author utilised quantitative and qualitative approaches to evaluate the information gathered using desk research and systematic comparison. Quantitative data analysis can examine employee and employer survey responses regarding their experiences with digitalization. The information, like the average age of workers, the percentage of workers in different industries, or the typical number of hours worked each week, is summarized and described using descriptive statistics. Inferential statistics assess hypotheses on what digitalization means for work relationships. For example, regression analysis is used by researchers to examine the relationship between digitalization and work satisfaction or the impact of digitalization on job security in different industries. Qualitative data analysis is used to analyse interview data from industry professionals or policymakers regarding the effects of digitalization on employment relationships. For instance, themes and patterns in the data may be identified using thematic analysis. "Regulatory challenges," "skills development," and "job displacement" are a few possible topics for research. The findings and common trends were cross-checked using the primary data sources: semi-structured interviews and surveys conducted with digital labour platform employees in Albania.

3.5. Study Limitations

Even though the proposed research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics and legal position of digital platform workers, there are several possible restrictions to consider:

- **Generalizability:** The particular platforms, tasks, and worker demographics that were examined are some of the issues that may limit the study's findings' ability to be generalized. Digital platform workers' experiences and perspectives may vary greatly across platforms, jobs, and demographics due to the vast variety of the gig economy. To lessen this constraint, the study implemented a stratified sample strategy to ensure representation from various platforms, tasks, and demographics.
- **Data Quality:** As previously stated, the quality of the collected data may be affected by a variety of constraints and biases. To lessen these constraints, the author will use

various data collection methods to triangulate the data and increase its validity and reliability.

- **Research Design:** The study design may not adequately reflect the complexity and fluidity of the digitalization of the labour market. To lessen this constraint, the study implemented a mixed-methods approach to triangulate the data and broaden and deepen the conclusions.

- **Limited Scope:** The review's application to different areas or settings might be restricted by its accentuation on digital platform workers in Central and Eastern Europe. To address this limitation, the exploration can utilise a near technique to look at equals and divergences among different regions or conditions. Additionally, the study may consider employing a historical perspective to investigate the evolution of the gig economy and the various factors that have influenced its expansion.

By taking into account these additional features and factors, the author aimed at overcoming the potential constraints previously mentioned and presenting a more comprehensive and nuanced picture of the characteristics and legal status of digital platform workers in Central and Eastern Europe.

3.6. Connection Between Methodology, Objectives, and Hypotheses

While designing this research methodology, the author made sure it aligned with the study's objectives and hypotheses to ensure that the chosen data collection and analysis methods provide the necessary insights into the impact of digitalisation on employment relationships in the context of digital platform work in Albania.

Objective Alignment

I. **Objective 1: To identify and analyse the characteristics and legal status of digital platform workers in Albania.**

To ensure this objective is met, the questionnaires will collect data on the socio-economic characteristics of platform workers, such as income, working hours, and job satisfaction, directly addressing these workers and work conditions. Likewise, the case studies will provide information on the specific aspects of platform work, such as legal misclassification or employment disputes.

II. **Objective 2: To assess the regulatory challenges faced by digital platform workers.**

The case studies will allow for an in-depth examination of real-world challenges faced

by workers in the gig economy, including their struggles with legal classification, lack of benefits, and challenges in accessing social protection. Questionnaires will provide the required information on the prevalence of these issues across a larger sample.

III. **Objective 3: To evaluate the effectiveness of national and EU regulatory frameworks**.

Through case studies, the research will examine how current labour laws in Albania and the EU are applied to digital platform workers and identify regulatory gaps. Questionnaires will provide data on workers' awareness of their rights and ability to access protections, helping to measure the effectiveness of the existing legal frameworks.

IV. **To evaluate whether the working conditions of digital platform workers in Albania align with national labour standards compared to CEE and EU labour frameworks.**

The research will assess whether online workers in Albania experience fair working conditions, such as adequate wages, job security, and access to social protections, compared to international labour standards. Questionnaires will collect information on workers' earnings, job stability, social security coverage, and overall job satisfaction. This will prove whether the work aligns with Albania's national labour standards and international benchmarks. Meanwhile, case studies will explore employment disputes, regulatory gaps, and court interpretations regarding the labour rights of gig workers.

V. **Objective 5: To explore organisational strategies for digital platform workers in Albania and their potential for collective representation within national and EU labour frameworks.**

The research will assess whether remote workers in Albania experience fair working conditions, such as adequate wages, job security, and access to social protections, compared to international labour standards. Questionnaires will collect worker earnings, job stability, and social security coverage data. This will determine whether platform work aligns with Albania's national labour standards and international regulations. Meanwhile, case studies will explore employment disputes, regulatory gaps, and court interpretations regarding the labour rights of gig workers.

VI. **Objective 6: To evaluate the effectiveness of Albania's public employment services and skills programs in supporting access to the digital labour market in comparison with EU and CEE initiatives.**

The study will evaluate whether Albania's public employment services and skills programs effectively prepare workers for digital labour markets. Questionnaires will gather data on workers' participation in government-led training initiatives, their perceptions of digital skills programs, and any barriers they face in accessing these opportunities. Case studies will provide analyses of specific government policies and workforce development programs and compare them to similar initiatives in EU and CEE countries. This comparative approach will highlight best practices from other regions and recommend strategies for improving Albania's support systems for digital platform workers.

Hypothesis Alignment

I. **Hypothesis 1: Digitalisation has led to new forms of work in Albania, aligning with broader trends observed in Central and Eastern Europe:**
The research will examine how digitalisation has contributed to emerging new forms of work in Albania, such as gig work, freelancing, and remote platform-based employment. Questionnaires will collect data on the types of jobs workers engage in, their primary sources of income, and the extent to which online platforms provide sustainable work. Case studies will provide real-world examples of Albanian workers transitioning to digital labour, highlighting the impact of digitalisation on job availability, worker autonomy, and employment security.

II. **Hypothesis 2: Digitalization has transformed the standard employment relationship by introducing new forms of work and altering job structures.**

This hypothesis will assess whether digitalisation has disrupted the traditional employer-employee relationship, leading to changes in job security, contractual agreements, and worker rights. Questionnaires will gather data on whether online workers identify as employees, independent contractors, or self-employed individuals and whether they receive any benefits from this type of work. Case studies will examine court rulings, legal disputes, and regulatory challenges that address the classification of digital workers in Albania.

III. **Hypothesis 3: Digitalization has created new employment conditions that necessitate the development of updated international labour standards.**

As digital work expands, existing labour laws in Albania and internationally seem adequate. In response, questionnaires will capture worker perspectives on job conditions, stability, and access to legal protections, assessing whether current regulations sufficiently address digital employment. Case studies will analyse legal precedents where workers have challenged their classification or sought employment rights, identifying areas that still need to be discussed in current labour laws.

IV. **Hypothesis 4: Digitalisation influences new organisational techniques for digital platform workers.**

This hypothesis examines whether remote workers in Albania are developing innovative ways to organise and advocate for labour rights. Questionnaires will collect data on worker participation in online communities, professional associations, or informal labour unions. On the other hand, case studies will analyse real-world examples of worker advocacy efforts, collective bargaining attempts, and legal actions to improve working conditions. The research will provide insights into how digital platform workers in Albania mobilise for better labour protections, comparing these efforts with trends in other CEE and EU countries.

V. **Hypothesis 5: Digitalisation influences existing strategies for public employment services and public skills programs in improving access and participation in the digital labour market.**

Public employment services and workforce training programs must evolve to meet the needs of digital platform workers. Questionnaire results will assess whether workers are participating in government-backed digital skills programs and the effectiveness of these initiatives in preparing workers for the gig economy. Case studies will analyse government efforts to upskill the workforce and compare them with similar CEE and EU initiatives, identifying which policies are most successful in supporting digital labour integration.

3.7. Summary

The methodology of this research, which is grounded in Interpretivism Research Philosophy, supports exploring subjective experiences among digital platform workers in Albania to understand how digitization impacts their work. The Deductive Research Approach

helps test hypotheses about how digitalization reshapes employment relationships and labour laws. To analyse digital labour conditions, the study adopts a mixed method as the research choice, where it combines quantitative surveys with qualitative case studies. The use of thematic data analysis will allow the examination of patterns and challenges, such as legal misclassification and worker protections, thus ensuring that the research effectively addresses the aim and objectives of understanding the evolving digital labour market in Albania and the EU.

CHAPTER 4: Legal protection for digital platform workers and implications for employment law

4.1. Introduction

Innovations in digital technologies are constantly having significant impacts on the mode of working as they are creating new job opportunities but, at the same time, disrupting established labour markets. This chapter will examine the legal protections that digital platform workers are entitled to in Albania while comparing them with those in Central and Eastern Europe and worldwide. Like any other part of the world, Albania and Central and Eastern Europe have seen an expansion in online labour platforms that connect individuals to various vacancies in the digital economy (Bergvall-Kåreborn & Howcroft, 2014). To shed light on the legal challenges of this evolving environment, the research will assess case law, international initiatives, conflicts of law, and the necessity for new standards (Cherry & Aloisi, 2016). The study will also examine the organizing techniques available to digital platform workers for advocating their interests and the support that public employment services and skill development programs can offer to help them access the digital labour market. The main objective is to provide policymakers, regulators, and stakeholders with valuable insights and recommendations for navigating the complex realm of digital labour platforms and safeguarding workers' rights and welfare in the digital era.

Different legal and administrative issues relating to digital platform workers' rights and security show up with this digital change. Alluded to digital labour platform workers, gig workers, and freelancers are engaged in a dynamic and habitually unsteady work environment where traditional business associations are hazy and labour rights probably will not always be granted or enforced (Howcroft & Bergvall-Kåreborn, 2019). The International Labour Organization (ILO) characterizes "Decent Work" as giving fair compensation, secure working conditions, social well-being, and a platform for cooperation among managers and representatives (Duggan et al., 2020). To assess the status of working conditions and the general prosperity of digital platform workers in Central and Eastern Europe, it is important to identify whether online employers comply. Furthermore, the regulatory bases surrounding digital labour platforms are complex, posing challenges due to the multinational nature of gig-based enterprises (Lehdonvirta, 2016).

4.2. Legal Status of Digital Platform Workers

The legal status of digital platform workers' research includes a similar examination in Albnaia and EU member states and a few in the world for comparison. This will offer information on how different countries oversee and defend the rights of digital platform workers, regardless of whether the underlying spotlight is on Central and Eastern Europe(Gawer, 2022a). The literature review outlines the similarities, contrasts, and ideal methodologies used to settle the challenges experienced by platform workers in the digital economy by dissecting a few official structures. The review aims to foster functional strategies and structures that can be utilized internationally to ensure impartial treatment and adequate protection for all employees in the digital economy by analyzing how different countries handle the legal status and rights of digital platform workers. The comparative study will consider various countries inside and outside the EU, like France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the US, and Japan (De Stefano & Aloisi, 2018). The digitalization of work has essentially changed business connections, raising worries about specialist privileges and assurances. Accordingly, state-run administrations have become acquainted with different administrative structures to address the difficulties presented by digital platform work. This section will investigate regulatory methodologies across various nations, emphasizing the EU and the global setting. The French Labour Regulation, known as Loi Travail, is an illustration of an administrative system that responds to the difficulties faced by platform workers. Adapted in 2016, Loi Travail expects to guarantee stage workers' admittance to social advantages and explain their legal status. Article L. 7341-1 of the French Labour Code characterizes platform workers and lays out their rights, including the option for fair compensation and social security commitments.

4.2.1. In Albania

Status of Labour Law

As discussed in Chapter 2, In Albania, the employees are protected by the country's Labour Code, which regulates working conditions, wages, and job security. As per the law, employees should receive fair treatment without discrimination based on based on gender, age, religion, or disability. The law also stipulates that employees have rights to paid leave, including 22 days of annual leave and public holidays (Kalo & Associates, 2023). In addition, to ensure that employers do not exploit their workers, the law limits working hours per week to 40 and requires employers to pay overtime if a worker exceeds their allowable time in their job. Also, employers must provide a safe workplace and follow health and safety

standards set by the government. In regard to this, employers should conduct risk assessments, implement preventive measures, ensure proper workplace hygiene, provide necessary training, and offer occupational health services to protect employees from potential hazards (Kalo & Associates, 2023). The law also gives mandates to workers to join trade unions and negotiate collective agreements to protect their interests. Further, it requires that employers provide written notice before terminating a contract and give notice periods from two weeks to three months based on the tenure of the worker. If a company fails to adhere to these procedures, it can face legal repercussions such as compensation. However, when it comes to independent contractors, they follow the Albanian Civil Code, which does not grant them employee protection. They work under service contracts without benefits that traditional workers enjoy (paid leave, social security, or minimum wage guarantees). The laws clearly highlight that contractors are responsible for insuring and contributing their taxes for these workers. The law allows them to negotiate terms, but they cannot subcontract work without the client's approval. As such, businesses must classify workers correctly to avoid legal issues.

However, the Albanian Labor Code (Law No. 7961/1995) does not fully address all aspects of online work. Employees are generally classified as independent contractors, limiting them from accessing benefits such as paid leave and job security. This lack of clarity leaves these workers in a legal grey area because the Labour Code was designed with traditional forms of employment in mind and fails to accommodate the flexibility aspects of online workers, leading to misclassification issues where workers are denied rights associated with employment-based contracts.

Cases related to Platform Workers

This has been illustrated in several court cases, such as *Mullaraj v. Bank* (2016) of Tirana, where the court ruled that Mullaraj was misclassified as an independent contractor, which resulted in denied compensation for immediate dismissal. In this case, the court referenced the Albanian Labor Code regarding termination procedures, but it failed to address some of the challenges these workers face, such as the inability to access social protection. Similarly, in the case of Jorida Baliko v. Kosmonte Foods Tirana (2016), oral contracts were central to the dispute over whether Baliko was entitled to the same benefits and protections as an employee. The court ruled in favour of Kosmonte Foods, stating that the relationship was more of a contractual arrangement than an employment contract, thus excluding Baliko from employment-related rights. This case highlights the major challenge faced by workers,

especially in the gig economy, where independent contractors may perform tasks similar to those of employees but are not entitled to the same work protections.

4.2.2. In other Western Balkan countries and Eastern Europe

Similar to Albania, the legal status of platform workers in the other Western Balkans is still not clearly defined, as there are no specific labour laws addressing gig work in most countries. Many of these workers, including those in ride-hailing, food delivery, and online freelancing, are generally classified as self-employed or independent contractors rather than employees (Aleksynska, 2021). This categorization excludes them from essential labour protections such as social security contributions, health insurance, and paid leave. Although countries like Montenegro have debated legal reforms, no formal legislative framework has been introduced to regulate the employment status of online employees. For instance, in late 2024, the Montenegrin Parliament made some amendments to the Labour Law to align national legislation with European Union standards, such as redefining the calculation of the minimum wage so that it can generally reflect the cost of living to the citizens. Other updates include recognizing various educational qualifications to help with job placement, enhancing protections against workplace discrimination and harassment, and simplifying collective bargaining to make negotiations between employers and employees more effective (Papac et al., 2024. The purpose of these reforms was to improve working conditions and ensure fair treatment for all workers in line with EU labour requirements. However, they do not specifically address the challenges remote workers face.

Nonetheless, some Eastern European countries have introduced a tax code establishing a classification system to differentiate employees from independent contractors. In Romania, workers must meet at least four out of seven conditions to be classified as self-employed (Aleksynska, 2021). These requirements include whether the work relationship is long-term, restrictions on working for other clients, the degree of control over work performance, the use of employer-provided tools, reimbursement for work-related expenses, receiving a fixed salary, and whether the worker is generally perceived as an employee (Aleksynska, 2021). In 2018, the country also passed a teleworking law, which set clear regulations for remote work, ensuring that employers define work conditions and responsibilities for teleworkers. Additionally, changes to social security laws meant that employees had to cover more of their contributions, which made it cheaper for companies to hire workers as employees rather than labelling them as freelancers.

4.2.3. In other European countries

The EU's proposed Platform Work Directive aims to establish a presumption of employment to protect workers under the platform. It also seeks to regulate management that is done algorithmically to improve the level of transparency in automated decision-making (Hießl, 2021). In connection with this, several European countries have strengthened labour laws for remote workers. In France, the Loi d'Orientation des Mobilités (2019) established regulations for platform-based workers, which mandate companies like Uber and Deliveroo to provide clear information on working conditions and limit unfair sanctions against workers (Hießl, 2021). Additionally, in March 2020, the French Supreme Court ruled that Uber drivers should be categorised as employees because they exhibit characteristics of employment rather than true self-employment, such as economic dependence on the platform, lack of control over pricing, algorithmic supervision, enforced penalties for rejecting rides, and an inability to develop an independent client base. Similarly, Spain recently passed the "Rider Law" (2021), which presumes that food delivery couriers working for companies such as Glovo and Deliveroo are employees unless proven otherwise. As such, these workers should, therefore, receive essential labour rights, such as social security and paid leave, and they should not be dismissed unfairly (Hießl, 2021).

Also, Germany's labour laws define employment status based on personal dependency and economic reliance, with Section 611a of the German Civil Code (Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch) stating that a worker is considered an employee if they are subject to instructions regarding work content, implementation, time, and place and lack autonomy over their work. In case of disputes, as Hießl (2021) elaborates, courts assess actual working conditions rather than contractual designations, allowing online workers to be reclassified as employees if they exhibit characteristics of traditional employees. Additionally, Germany recognises an intermediate category of "employee-like persons" (arbeitnehmerähnliche Personen) under Section 12a(1) of the Act on Collective Agreements (Tarifvertragsgesetz), which applies to workers who depend economically on a single employer and grants them collective bargaining rights, paid leave, and access to labour courts. In December 2020, there was a related ruling known as the Roamler Case, where the Federal Labour Court recategorised a worker on the crowdsourcing platform Roamler as an employee after completing nearly 3,000 microtasks in 11 months. This decision was based on the platform's control over task distribution, structured workflow, and incentive-based system, which created a de facto obligation to work. The Supreme Court overruled lower courts, arguing that platform-based digital work requires constant availability, similar to traditional jobs.

4.2.4. In the Rest of the World

The rest of the world has also taken serious initiatives to protect the rights of their online workers. For instance, in November 2024, Japan introduced the Freelancers Act to ensure non-traditional employees are provided with better working conditions (Nasuda and Carter, 2025). In addition, under this law, businesses that hire freelancers must provide written contracts that clearly outline job expectations and payment terms. The law also mandates that payments be made within 60 days, preventing unfair delays in compensation. To promote stability, companies must also support freelancers' work-life balance after 12 months of consistent service. As Nasuda and Carter (2025) elaborate, they must assist with balancing work responsibilities alongside childcare or nursing care obligations. Additionally, businesses must provide 30 days' notice before terminating a freelancer's contract. If a company fails to comply with these provisions, it can be penalized or fined up to JPY 500,000.

 The United States has also made significant moves toward redefining the rights of gig economy workers. In March 2024, the U.S. Department of Labor implemented a new rule making it more difficult for companies to classify workers as independent contractors (Wiessner, 2025). This rule introduced a comprehensive "economic reality" test to determine a worker's status on factors such as the degree of control a company has over the worker, the worker's opportunity for profit or loss, the permanency of the relationship, and the extent to which the work is integral to the employer's business. The goal is to ensure that workers who are economically dependent on a company are afforded protections like minimum wage and overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act (Wiessner, 2025).

Digital platform representatives in Central Europe depend on various administrative systems that could influence their working conditions (Collier et al., 2017). An exhaustive relative examination of adherence to Decent Work standards can be obtained by differentiating the functioning conditions for digital platform workers in Poland from those in other EU part states, like Sweden and Spain, and outside the EU, similar to the US and Australia. The adequacy of legitimate systems in guaranteeing fair wages and working hours for platform workers all around the world can be acquired by dissecting the impacts of the Fair Labour Standards Act (FLSA) in the US on the functioning states of digital platform workers, as well as the utilisation of comparable regulations in different nations (Bessa et al., 2022).

Besides, an assessment of the word-related well-being regulations in different wards will give an understanding of the level of assurance that digital platform workers get from one side of the country to the other. Through an assessment of the capability of social discourse

components in settling the issues and grievances of digital platform workers, the review will offer a complete perception of how worker representation and contribution in dynamic systems support the upkeep of Decent Work standards. (Wood, 2021)

4.3.   Regulatory challenges and national systems of labour law

Broadly based work and employment law frameworks face significant administrative difficulties from digital labour platforms. The regulatory gaps and disparities that arise because of the global tasks of digital platforms will be analysed in this section. The arrangement of business status is one of the fundamental regulatory issues that cutting-edge platform workers in Central and Eastern Europe worldwide appear (Anwar & Graham, 2021). The indeterminacy with respect to gathering these workers as independently employed substances or delegates a large part of the time prompts special degrees of legal safeguards and advantages. For example, the Uber case in the UK called attention to the difficulty of arranging gig economy workers and lighted discussions about their freedoms to event pay and the most minimal compensation allowed by regulation. Contrasting this with the conditions in countries such as Sweden and France, where courts have chosen to order platform workers as representatives, features the administrative labyrinth that public work regulation frameworks should cross. The capacity of digital platform workers to get government-backed retirement benefits presents another administrative hindrance. The scattered design of government-backed retirement programs all over the country might bring about contrasts in the inclusion of workers associated with platform businesses (Benson et al., 2020).

To top off assurance gaps, for example, discussions on extending government-managed retirement inclusion to gig workers have been happening in Germany. One difference is the approach of countries, such as the Netherlands and Spain, which have executed explicit employee projects for the platform. One can see the range of administrative measures intended to ensure government-managed retirement consideration in the gig economy. Besides, a significant administrative impediment is the execution of work standards for workers on digital platforms (Vandaele, 2021). Digital platforms worldwide often make observing and responsibility frameworks harder to carry out, which could open representatives to manhandling. Creative administrative arrangements are essential, as confirmed by the requirement issues looked at by platform workers in countries like Poland and Hungary, where work reviews might find it challenging to screen and control online work game plans appropriately (Vandaele, 2021).

Looking at the cooperative authorization systems that have been presented by countries like Australia and Canada, which include numerous partners, could give important viewpoints on further developing adherence to work guidelines in the digital platform economy. Through an investigation of these administrative deterrents and the introduction of certified contextual investigations from EU member states and non-EU countries, the review will give modern information on the legitimate subtleties connected with the activity of digital platforms. The review means to add to the improvement of strong regulatory structures that safeguard the rights and prosperity of digital platform workers in a work market scene that is quickly changing by recognizing the gaps and irregularities in public frameworks of work regulation and offering modified arrangements.

4.4. International regulation of Digital Platforms

To comprehend the steadily changing administrative scene, it is important to look at the recent global and public drives points toward directing work by means of digital platforms. This segment will survey the viability of these drives in tending to the administrative difficulties distinguished in the past area and feature best practices and regions for development in controlling digital labour platforms. As to guidelines for digital platforms, a large number of global and public drives have been created to handle the specific difficulties introduced by this sort of work (Koutsimpogiorgos et al., 2020). For example, the Digital Services Act (DSA) of the European Commission looks to make an exhaustive administrative structure that covers digital administrations, including on the web platform, to ensure straightforwardness, responsibility, and client insurance.

An evaluation of the DSA's execution in Germany, France, and Italy will reveal insight into how well guidelines are fit among EU part states to direct exercises connected with digital platforms. Around the world, endeavours like the Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work by the International Labour Organization (ILO) feature the need for evenhanded, comprehensive, and economical work rehearses in digital time (Rani & Furrer, 2021). An assessment of this statement's effect on public guidelines and strategies with respect to digital platform work in non-EU countries like Brazil, South Africa, and India will give a relative perspective on global drives impacting the administrative climate for platform workers. Public endeavours to direct digital platforms have additionally gotten some decent forward movement in countries like Australia, where the Fair Work Ombudsma has examined platform organizations' adherence to business guidelines.

Contrasting these endeavours with those in the US, where states, for example, California, have passed regulations to rename gig workers as representatives, will reveal insight into how well unique administrative techniques safeguard employee freedoms and advance fair work principles. The research will give an intensive outline of the changing administrative scene for digital platform workers by looking at digital platform workers' legal status and freedoms across a few EU part states and internationally and by consolidating best practices and experiences from international initiatives. The review's pertinence and materialness to the bigger issue of the effect of digitalization on business connections will be expanded by recognizing viable administrative techniques, tending to regions for development, and drawing illustrations from different administrative systems(Gawer, 2022b)

4.5. Conflicts of law and proposed solutions

The conflicts of law surrounding digital labour platforms often arise between the employer and employees, issues that sometimes spark debates in Europe and internationally. Since digital platform workers operate in a global digital environment, complex legal questions arise regarding jurisdiction, applicable regulations, and dispute resolution strategies (Englert et al., 2020). Deciding the type of employment contract is one of the main difficulties that digital platform workers face, especially when the employee and the platform are situated in different nations. For instance, an Estonian platform worker can utilise a US-based platform to determine the legal structure of their functioning plan. Contrasting this with conditions in countries like Sweden and Spain, where regulations overseeing cross-line work organizations are all the more obviously characterised, underscores the need to normalise legal systems to determine debates coming about because of these arrangements. Also, mistakenly lawful definitions could make looking for cures and equity more challenging for workers. For example, a platform worker in Hungary sitting tight for instalment from a platform with its central command in the UK would find it hard to comprehend the legitimate repercussions of cross-line question goal methodology (Sun et al., 2023).

When compared to the legal systems of countries like Germany and France, which have established cross-border dispute resolution mechanisms, it becomes evident how crucial it is to simplify legal access for platform workers engaged in global digital trade. Advancing international cooperation and harmonization efforts to create uniform standards and structures for controlling digital work platforms are a few proposed answers to the legitimate questions for digital platform workers. Rules for settling debates starting from work on digital platforms can be found in drives like the Hague Conference on Private International

Law's work on jurisdiction and appropriate regulation in cross-line business arrangements. The objective is to give functional answers for working on lawful conviction, safeguarding worker rights, and progressing fair working conditions in the digital platform economy by fitting legitimate ideas and empowering collaboration across countries inside and beyond the EU (Aguilar et al., 2020).

4.5.1. Conflicts of Law in Albania

In Albania, the conflict of law regarding platform workers mostly arises because these employees often operate across multiple countries, and the laws regulating workers' rights differ from one jurisdiction to another. For example, a worker in Albania may be employed by a company based in another country or may work for clients located in various parts of the world. This creates a situation where different legal systems could potentially apply to the workers' rights, such as labour laws, tax regulations, and social security benefits. As noted earlier, Albania's current Labor Code does not explicitly cover specific aspects of remote work, while other jurisdictions, such as Germany and France (as explained in this chapter), have some laws that protect these online (Kapisyzi *et al.*, 2024). To illustrate, if an Albanian worker on a platform engages with clients in the EU, a question arises as to whether EU labour laws, which may provide protections for such workers, should apply or if Albanian law, which may not fully address their rights, should govern the situation.

4.6. Need for International Minimum Conditions of Employment

A concerted worldwide effort is needed to guarantee minimal employment conditions, such as social protection and minimum pay, for workers on digital platforms. Digital platform workers typically experience difficulty in attaining fundamental labour protections and entitlements owing to the developing nature of work in the digital economy. Addressing these difficulties involves the adoption of international norms that define basic terms of employment to guarantee the well-being and rights of platform workers globally. For instance, the Fundamental Conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) advance fundamental labour norms, such as non-discrimination, freedom of organisation, and prohibiting child and forced labour. Other countries should examine how Greece, Italy, and Latvia deal with labour agreements to better respond to the workers' needs in digital platforms. Some international legislation must be put in place to protect all workers doing online work and have suitable working conditions. Developing social safety nets, guaranteeing minimum wages, and allowing better collective bargaining are some ways to ameliorate job insecurity. Establishing universal global labour standards will allow for more fairness in competition,

job security, and long-term economic development. Albania should, with other countries, formulate coherent and uniform Internet employment regulations. In this study, the impacts of labour standards on the citizens of Germany, Japan, and the USA are studied, and the need for basic job security provisions is discussed. If digital workers are to have a fair future, governments and businesses must accept responsibility for their welfare and that there is proper protection for them worldwide.

To address these challenges, it includes uniform worldwide standards that characterize essential work terms for platform workers' prosperity and privileges worldwide. For example, International Labour Organization (ILO) Fundamental Conventions provide a framework for promoting core labour standards such as non-discrimination, freedom of association, and eliminating child and forced labour. Considering the specifics of digital platform work, new global standards are urgently needed to guarantee fair and reasonable working conditions. The risks of unsafe work can be reduced by laying out friendly security programs, offering the lowest pay permitted by law guidelines, and aggregating haggling freedoms for platform workers.

Contrasting the overall sets of laws of EU member states like Belgium and Austria with those of non-EU countries like Brazil and South Korea will feature the differences in the assurances given to digital platform workers and the impacts this has on their monetary security. The effects on global labour markets should be considered when developing proposed international standards, particularly in promoting social cohesion, fair competition, and sustainable development. To make an all the more fair and straightforward work market, it is feasible to even the odds for the two platforms and workers by orchestrating regulations and laying out uniform models for work on digital platforms(Vyas, 2021). Thus, for workers in the digital economy, a more manageable and fair future will rely upon perceiving the requirement for minimal employment standards and pushing for their universal reception.

The digital work platform's speedy spread has decisively changed how work is done, organized, and compensated. A new frontier of employment that gets through laid-out limits and legitimate structures has been framed by the gig economy's development, epitomized by transient commitment and on-request work. It is becoming increasingly critical that platform work be administered by new global guidelines in this evolving climate (Industrial Relations and Labour Laws, 2024). Ensuring acceptable work conditions for platform workers is a principal reason behind the new worldwide guidelines requirement. Digital platforms open workers to opportunities, including sporadic pay, an absence of social protections, and hazy

work status limits, even while giving unparalleled opportunities and pioneering choices (Industrial Relations and Labour Laws, 2024). Through the foundation of novel global norms, states, and important partners might lay out an overall benchmark for impartial work, ensuring platform workers get central freedoms and protection no matter their area. Least business norms for platform workers are one of the primary regions where new global guidelines are frantically required. These prerequisites must cover fundamental components, including even-handed remuneration, proper working hours, government-backed retirement benefit access, and defences for work environment well-being and security.

Laying out insignificant norms globally might protect against unreasonable work practices, promote good working conditions, and protect the poise of platform workers everywhere. Moreover, under the current global guidelines, it is convoluted trouble to group platform workers' work status, and it requires precise rules. The nature of platform work is such that it is difficult to distinguish between self-employed entities and regular employees, which usually results in indistinct freedoms, benefits, and legal protection. Through new standards, we can help minimise risks of misclassification by creating globally recognised principles of assessing the work status of platform workers. It will also ensure that employees get advantages and insurance and that there are essential business methodologies for determining work status. The advancement of impartial treatment and non-segregation for platform workers should be a new global standard. With platform work being so wide in socioeconomics and worldwide reach, it is essential to avoid biased behaviour based on orientation, variety, nation, or age. Such a comprehensive and non-segregated platform economy that will respect the rights and nobility of workers can be facilitated by integrating fairness and non-discrimination standards into worldwide standards.

Besides, performing near assessments across countries in the EU and the past can give valuable bits of knowledge into the administrative strategies and authoritative systems that direct platform exercises. Scientists can recognize varieties in platform workers' freedoms of security, work status characteristics, and government-managed retirement benefits arrangement by looking at work regulations, acts, and approaches in Countries like Germany, France, the United Kingdom, the US, India, and Brazil. The relative examination gives far-reaching information on how various purviews approach the platform economy's challenges and can rouse the detailing of new global standards given best practices from different legitimate conditions (Shibata, 2020). Hence, the need to meet the digital economy's changing challenges and conceivable outcomes underlines the significance of new global shows in

platform work. New international standards can signal security and strengthening for platform workers all over the planet by focusing on respectable working conditions, laying out best business principles, explaining rules for work status order, advancing correspondence and non-discrimination, and leading cross-jurisdictional investigations. Through facilitated endeavours to create and uphold these norms, partners might clear the way for a more impartial, economic, and comprehensive fate of work in digital time.

Digitisation has changed the work scene, presenting new difficulties to current international labour conventions and regulations that work for ordinary business conditions. The ascent of digital labour platforms has made new kinds of business connections, obscured the lines between free work and conventional business, and crossed national borders, requiring reconsidering how global work standards are applied and implemented in the digital age (Gegenhuber *et al*., 2021) Digitalisation has introduced a few challenges to current worldwide work norms, entirely with regard to platform business. Customary labour standards, which are habitually expected to satisfy the needs of full-time representatives in conventional work environments, may not protect the privileges and interests of platform workers taking part in on-request, project-based employment. The adaptable and worldwide person of platform work difficulties works standard implementation by obscuring jurisdictional boundaries and making conventional thoughts of business representative connections progressively cloudy (Altenried, 2020).

Besides, the fast speed of innovation progress has surpassed the development of work regulation, bringing about the gap in employee security in the digital economy. As calculations and automation become more coordinated into the work portion and work for the board on digital platforms, issues emerge about platform administrators' responsibility for ensuring fair treatment, dispensing with separation, and keeping work guidelines. Using current international labour standards in the digital platform economy requires cautious thought and possible change to resolve the specific issues digitalisation presents (Altenried, 2021).

Similar countries across EU member states and other pertinent countries can offer significant experiences in how different jurisdictions are answering the difficulties presented by advanced digital work and can illuminate endeavours to fit and reinforce international labour norms with regard to computerized work. Given these difficulties, it is basic to assess the effect of digitalization on current global work standards and guidelines to guarantee their pertinence and adequacy in the advanced age (Altenried, 2021). From the analysis of the authoritative systems, regulations, and procedures of platform work in Sweden, Spain, the

Netherlands, the US, China, and Australia, researchers can identify creative ideas, administrative gaps, and best practices that can inform the evolution of global labour standards to the digital platform economy. The same study can also reveal how various countries address some concerns like the legal minimum wage, social security, and the safety of workers' rights in the new age.

It can be useful in addressing the effectiveness of international labour laws in this digital era. Additionally, the advantages and hardships of digitization can be considered when planning new cycles and strategies to meet the changing needs of platform workers, given the current global work guidelines. Despite the innovative interruption, policymakers and different stakeholders can attempt to reinstate the flexibility and capacity of worldwide work norms by grasping the meaning of digitalisation for the implementation of work regulations, guaranteeing the protection of worker's rights, and promoting fair work conditions (Altenried, 2021).

Therefore, digitalisation affects how work guidelines and regulations are implemented and managed in the digital environment. This allows researchers to examine administrative reactions to platform work in similar jurisdictions and find evidence of opportunities for growth and improvement in creating new approaches and structures that support global work standards in digital time. Stakeholders can collaborate to enhance and adapt the working regulations for the platform workers and provide them with fair working conditions (Brancati et al., 2020). International organisations and multilateral arrangements represent work guidelines, privileges, and protections internationally. These arrangements and organisations are fully digitised and platformization, and they are the template for the entire development of the financial economy in the digital economy, the fair treatment of workers, and the progress in decent work conditions. Multilateral agreements are similar to the shows that the International Labour Organization (ILO) has conveyed and are significant apparatuses for laying out global work guidelines and standards that direct the activities of legislatures and other applicable gatherings in the working environment (Aloisi, 2022).

States, employers, and employees are united by the ILO's tripartite structure, which provides a platform for dialogue, negotiation,consensus-building, and agreement expansion on significant work issues, including those relating to the digital platform economy. Countries pledge to protect major work privileges and standards, ensuring employees are safeguarded from segregation, double-dealing, and perilous working conditions by confirming and executing ILO arrangements. International organizations that essentially affect work guidelines

and regulations in the digital age include the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations (UN), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These organizations give part expresses a spot to team up, share mastery, and layout strategies (De Stefano et al., 2021).

Subsequently, best practices, research results, and clever fixes to the issues presented by the work market's digitization might be shared. International organizations participate in campaigning, examination, and limit-building drives to help impartial work rehearses, social talk, and comprehensive development in the digital economy. Past laying out standards and principles, multilateral arrangements, and global associations essentially affect the utilization of work regulations in the digital age by offering specialized help, limit building, and checking techniques initiatives such as the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the ILO's Decent Work Agenda, and the OECD's Employment and Social Affairs Directorate provide frameworks for advancing social justice, promoting decent work, and fostering sustainable development in an increasingly globalized and digitalized world. Using these organizations' information base and resources, countries might work on their capacity to go up against the issues raised by digital work platforms and ensure the protection and authorization of workers' rights (Aloisi, 2022).

International organizations and multilateral agreements foster global cooperation, standardise labour regulations, and address cross-border challenges related to digital platforms. A level battleground for organizations, security of workers' privileges, and counteraction of administrative exchange all rely upon facilitated activity and common acknowledgement of work guidelines in an undeniably interconnected existence where computerized platforms work across numerous jurisdictions. Through such joint endeavours carried out by multilateral and international organisations, countries can collaborate to make a fitting and practical administrative structure to uphold civil rights and work guidelines in the digital economy. International organisations and multilateral agreements influence improving work standards and regulations, which is essential to all in handling potential open doors and issues created by digitisation in the work environment. Countries could use these foundations' regulating power, insight, and assets to sustain their dedication to advancing reasonable working, shielding labourers' privileges, and advancing all-out improvement in digitalisation. Closely involved individuals could prompt a shared plan for a more appealing, more predictable, and more libertarian future of work in the computerised age by assisting with undertakings and key coalitions with multilateral arrangements and worldwide affiliations.

Since most work has now been digitised, which has changed the way people take part in financial action and the entire world work market, bringing another period of possibilities and issues, the gig economy and digital work platform are spreading and need new world-wide principles, legal structures, and helpful drives for government support to secure platform workers' rights. This examination has examined the valuable open doors and intricacies of controlling platform work by means of a careful examination of the need for new global standards, the impact of digitalisation on present work guidelines and the effect of multilateral arrangements and worldwide affiliation (Doherty & Franca, 2020).

Based on interpreting the changing idea of work in the advanced economy, this study addresses the challenges of digitalisation of different EU member states and countries and the impact of international organisations and multilateral settlements on work guidelines. It includes the meaning of bringing in new global rules to guarantee decent working conditions for platform workers, characterising the minimum business necessities, setting rules for organising business status, and pushing for uniformity against separation in the digital platform economy. Evaluations across jurisdictions can identify the best methodologies, regulatory loopholes, and best practices for scientists to track down. These discoveries can then be utilised to direct new strategies and cycles that support the worldwide work guideline in a computerised time.

Additionally, work regulations and guidelines should be affected by international organisations and multilateral arrangements to promote cooperation, orchestrate principles, and deal with cross-broader platform business-related challenges. By utilising these organisations' typical standardising force and resources, nations can look toward their capacity to shield work freedoms, support civil rights and accomplish the whole advancement in the computerised age. In sum, the review considers how digitalisation can have potential outcomes and problems to be dealt with by digitalisation in the working environment, and it requires cooperation, imagination and worldwide coordinated effort to manage the situation. In the computerised age, partners should work together to create a more even-handed, supportable and simple workplace by pooling their strengths to make standards, using common procedures from various lawful settings, and strengthening the force of multilateral arrangements and international organisations.

4.7. Classification of Platform Workers

The assignment of platform workers as either self-employed entities or workers shapes their legitimate status, advantages, and access to social securities in the face of changing ideas of

work in the digital age. This part adopts an exhaustive similar assessment of how different countries within the European Union (EU) and the world at large recognise and manage platform workers to reveal insight into the intricacies of the legitimate structures that control this area of the labour force. France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands and Poland all have different strategies for sorting and controlling platform workers in many EU countries. EU countries, including France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, and Poland, have various strategies for sorting and controlling platform workers. Platform workers are qualified for social advantages and work securities in France under the French Labour Code, which characterizes them as representatives. Paradoxically, platform workers in countries like Poland and Hungary are often denied standard work privileges since they are delegated and independently employed. The EU platform Workers Order lays out a standard structure and allows part states to execute it, fully intent on ensuring fair working conditions for platform workers. Beyond the EU, other international jurisdictions that offer different lawful classifications for platform workers include the US, Canada, Australia, India, Brazil, and Southeast Asian countries (Kinderman, 2020).

The National Labour Relations Act vigorously impacts the meaning of workers' freedoms in the US, and court choices like Dynamex Operations West, Inc. v. Superior Court of Los Angeles affect how platform workers are grouped. The Employment Standards Act of Canada lays out a regulative starting point for work privileges, and the Data Innovation Demonstration of India manages the legitimate components of digital labour platforms. Brazil and Southeast Asian countries habitually battle to change their ongoing work guidelines to mirror the requirements of the gig economy. Court decisions like Uber v. Aslam in the UK and other critical choices worldwide have impacted platform workers' legitimate climate. In the UK case, the courts tested the predominant worldview of free contracting in the gig economy and concluded that Uber drivers should be viewed as workers qualified for the least compensation and paid leave. Like this, the US Dynamex choice laid out the ABC rules for employee classification, which affects the lawful meaning of platform workers in the US. These court decisions cause notice of the continuous conversation about platform workers' privileges and the need to establish clear, lawful rules. International drives give bits of knowledge into best practices for controlling platform work, like the OECD and the International Labour Organization rules.

State-of-the-art administrative techniques to protect the rights of platform workers are found to be arrangements remarkable to a specific industry, social discourse procedures, and

labourer representation models. Blending legitimate structures, consolidating worldwide standards, and utilising case regulation bits of knowledge can make guidelines protecting platform workers' respect and prosperity more reasonable and extensive. A wide relative audit of this legitimate environment finds out about the complex legitimate setting of platform work through a relative overview of the legal elements of EU member states and global general sets of laws, key authoritative demonstrations, cases of case law, and contemplations on methodology. In this segment, the issue of fair and secure treatment of platform workers in a digital and associated work environment is continued by legal status, rights, and administrative matters.

4.8. Regulation of working conditions

Guidelines for the functioning conditions are very dependent on the security, welfare, and evenhanded treatment of platform workers in the digital labour market. The subsequent segment considers the legislative structures that manage platform workers' working conditions in a few EU states and other countries. By looking at authoritative, case, and administrative issues, this project will attempt to evaluate the differences and complexities of how various purviews see the status of platform workers. For example, the working conditions control of platform workers is different in Sweden, Italy, Estonia, Romania, and Ireland. Known for its solid work guidelines, Sweden has established laws safeguarding platform employees from not getting reasonable pay, being dealt with time, and having work well-being protection. On the other hand, countries such as Romania and Estonia are contending with the pains of adapting current work regulations to suit the gig economy, where platform workers can find their workplaces hazardous. The European Mainstay of Social Freedoms shows the standards of fair working conditions, including social talk and sufficient security for all employees, especially the ones in the digital economy. Across the world, the purview to address platform workers' functioning outside of the European Union is established in the US, Australia, India, Brazil, Canada, and Southeast Asian countries. Different guideline techniques are shown in these locales.

With regard to the work environment, the US Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) mandates security prerequisites that dictate how platform firms secure the health and security of their workers. Rules of the least compensation and work hours, which determine the functioning conditions of platform workers, are established in the Fair Work Demonstration of Australia. The Modern Business (Standing Requests) Act, as well as other work guidelines

in India, attempt to regulate working hours, leave approaches, and working conditions for all employees, including gig economy workers (Craig & De Búrca, 2020).

Court decisions, such as R (on the application of the Independent Workers Union of Great Britain) v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in the UK, have influenced discussions on the working conditions of platform workers. In this case, the court emphasised that it is important for employers to recognise platform workers as regular employees and ensure they have fair working conditions. This includes rights such as rest breaks and protection from excessive working hours. (Peers, 2016).

Worldwide efforts to advance nice work conditions for platform workers incorporate the Decent Work Agenda of the ILO and the Fair Work Ombudsman in Australia, which give guidelines and techniques. Collective bargaining arrangements, area-explicit guidelines, and requirement methodology are fundamental to ensuring platform workers have safe working conditions, fair compensation, and adequate rest stretches. Policymakers might encourage a fairer and more feasible digital work climate and increment privileges for platform workers by aligning public regulation with globally prescribed procedures and case regulation bits of knowledge (Barnard, 2012).

Through a broad relative review including both EU part states and international jurisdictions, as well as an assessment of applicable, legitimate demonstrations, case regulation, and strategy suggestions, this exploration aims to improve our understanding of the administrative system that oversees platform workers' functioning conditions. This segment expects to include the ongoing conversation empowering decent work and evenhanded treatment for platform workers in a time of digital change and moving work relations by examining regulative systems, case points of reference, and strategy concerns (Goodman & Flaxman, 2017).

4.9. Social Security Benefits

Admittance to social security benefits is basic to supporting workers' prosperity and monetary soundness, particularly those in platform-based businesses. This part breaks down the differences as a whole in social security coverage for platform workers and how different countries and regions are taking measures. The purpose of this study is to discover an understanding of the issues and the potential for the provision of further social security assistant benefits for social security programmes overall by investigating responsibility models for social security programmes and analysing the exhaustiveness of social security aid structures (Emilsson, 2016). By country and region, social security benefits for platform workers are

available or not available. Norway and the Netherlands have extremely solid social security helper frameworks that combine platform workers into one extensive system of social guarantees, including clinical consideration, retirement, and unemployment benefits. However, countries like Southeast Asia and parts of Africa may need to introduce official structures that allow social security aid benefits to be relaxed for platform workers, making them vulnerable to financial shortfalls and poor support for basic crossing (Camilleri, 2020). The changing thought of work in the high-level period presents new issues for existing social security structures, requiring policymakers' change and advancement to offer far-reaching security for all workers, recalling those for the platform economy. Changing the interest for versatility in work blueprints with the game plan of reasonable government retirement benefits is a problematic procedure challenge that requires a cutting-edge strategy. Using advancement, investigating adaptable benefits models, and enabling accomplice discussion are critical approaches to creating social security considerations for platform workers while supporting monetary security and social thriving (Lethbridge, 2015).

Future Direction

This study hopes to show system conversations overhauling social affirmation structures for the changing workforce by putting light on generally speaking blunders in social security benefits for platform workers and focusing on the responsibility components of social security programs. Ideas for growing inclusivity, broadening consideration, and ensuring long-stretch financing for platform workers' administration-upheld retirement benefits will still be up in the air to make a more impartial and flexible social security structure that resolves the issues of workers in a rapidly changing work scene (Lodigiani & Sarli, 2017).

This portion means adding to the ceaseless discussion about creating social security structures and propelling experts thriving in the modernized period by driving a cautious evaluation of social security systems, responsibility requirements, and inclusive countries for platform workers. This study means to advocate for techniques that pressure platform workers' rights and government help in a speedy changing overall economy by settling the issues of permission to social security benefits and suggesting districts for improvement.

4.10. Enforcement of Labour Laws and Regulations

Enforcing labour laws, regulations, and guidelines in the quickly changing digital platform economy requires new strategies and creative ways to address the specific issues that platform workers go up against. This segment investigates the difficulties of observing

consistency, overseeing cross-line concerns, and engaging workers' representation to guarantee platform workers' rights and securities. This study plans to develop implementation techniques further and support consistency with work regulations in the steadily impacting universe of platform work by researching choices like co-guideline, algorithmic reviewing, and workers-driven observing efforts.

4.10.1. Obstacle in enforcement

Enforcing labour laws, regulations, and guidelines for platform workers includes a few issues that originate from the intricate elements of the digital platforms' economy. The decentralized design of the platform-based business, alongside the overall reach of digital platforms and the vague meaning of gig economy workers, adds to the intricacy of ensuring consistency and safeguarding platform workers' freedoms. Checking adherence to work rules, like the lowest pay permitted by law necessities, working hours, and word-related well-being and security safety measures, is particularly troublesome due to the absence of traditional manager representative collaborations and the reliance on the computerized platform as intermediates. Moreover, cross-line hardships confound requirement endeavours since platform workers now and again work in numerous jurisdictions with fluctuating work regulations and administrative systems, adding intricacy to authorization processes. While exploring the issues of implementing work regulations for platform workers, it is basic to conduct a similar investigation across European Union (EU) countries and then some. Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Sweden, the US, Australia, and India have different administrative conditions for platform businesses, different labour principles, authorization techniques, and employee protection. The comparison of these countries' strategies provides experience into the productivity of varying authorization procedures, the effect of regulatory structures on platform workers' rights, and problems that arise from cross-border activities in the digital platform economy.

4.11. Relevant Laws, Acts, and Case Law

In the EU, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Platform to Business Regulation (P2B) regulate how platforms handle data security and treat businesses using their services fairly. Germany's Arbeitnehmerüberlassungsgesetz (AÜG) and France's Loi Travail are public regulations that concern the firm providing the hiring organisation business and the work relations that influence the administrative setting for platform work in these nations. The case regulation takes the same place as the fundamental decision of the US case Dynamex Operations West, Inc. v. Superior Court of Los Angeles case in the US in

deciding the character and protection of work regulations for platform workers. Additionally, Uber BV and Others v. The Aslam case in the United Kingdom brought employee rights and qualifications into the limelight for the gig economy. They set a reference point for platform organisations' liabilities to their representatives. Material, rules, and case laws governing platform work are broken down into a holistic handle of the platform work and implementation issues in different nations (Hogarth, 2019).

4.11.1. IRAC case analysis of Uber BV and Others v. Aslam case

Issue

The matter in question is about the order of the platform workers and authorization of the work regulations and guidelines in the gig economy with particular emphasis on Uber BV and Others v. Aslam in the UK..

Rule

In the Uber BV and Others v. Aslam case, the UK Supreme Court settled on Uber drivers' business status, proclaiming that they should be considered workers with specific work privileges and advantages. The court utilized the lawful standard known as "employer" status, which considers components, for example, how much control is forced by the organization, the requirement for individual help, and the absence of genuine independent work. Workers in the UK are qualified for base compensation, occasional pay, and rest breaks, among other advantages, underscoring the need for suitable order in safeguarding work freedoms for platform workers.

Application

In Uber BV and Others v. Aslam, the court confirmed that Uber drivers were not self-employed entities but rather representatives because of the organization's huge command over their work, the absence of independence in setting costs or terms of administration, and the basic job drivers played in Uber's plan of action. By applying the legitimate rules for "employee" status and looking at the points of interest of Uber drivers' functioning plans, the court established that they were qualified for similar privileges and advantages as workers under UK regulation. Uber's decision lays out a reference point for platform employee classification and work policing in the gig economy, featuring the need to unequivocally characterise business status to keep up with work privileges and insurance. The case accentuates the need for platforms to evaluate the idea of their associations with workers, giving

straightforwardness in working plans and guaranteeing consistency with authoritative necessities to safeguard the freedoms of platform representatives.

Conclusion

The Uber BV and Others v. Aslam case displays the need to adequately describe and maintain work guidelines for platform workers and certify gig economy workers' rights to fair treatment, base pay, and other business protections. By applying the legitimate standard for worker status and taking a gander at the phenomenal states of Uber drivers' speculation, the UK High Court portrayed platform firms' responsibility to their workforce and spread out a perspective for future discussions with respect to the characterization of platform workers. The case is a crucial blueprint for the convergence of work guidelines, workers' rights, and the changing environment of platform-based business, highlighting the importance of genuine clearness and prerequisite frameworks in protecting workers' opportunities in the computerized economy. This study intends to deal with how we could decipher the intricacies of maintaining resolve guidelines for platform workers by conducting a close assessment across EU countries and overall purviews and surveying important guidelines, acts, and case guidelines. This part highlights the moved prerequisite issues and prospects for additional work opportunities safeguards in the digital platform economy by drawing on contemplations from different regulatory conditions, general regulations arrangements, and precedential cases.

4.11.2. Empowering Worker Representation

To create the necessary framework and make the digital platform economy a liability, platform workers must be empowered to rehearse their rights and fight for fair working conditions. To work positively with employee representation, platform workers can collectively raise their concerns and solve problems through collective bargaining, advanced planning tools, or professional-driven initiatives. In addition, a more equitable and inclusive work environment should be promoted by recognizing these workers' autonomy and capacity to influence their working conditions (Moreno Et Al., 2023).

4.11.3. Innovative Enforcement Strategies

To alleviate implementation problems in the digital platform economy, novel arrangements like Co-guidelines, algorithmic examination, and employee checking are being rolled out as devices for enhancing work regulations and administrative consistency. A co-guideline is an identified exertion of state-controlled associations, platform administrators, and employees' gatherings to build and endorse industry standards, demonstrating a cut in duty for consistency. As an information-driven approach to implementation, algorithmic inspecting uses

innovation to screen out platform tasks to guarantee they adhere to work rules. Worker-driven checking is carried out by the platform representatives who check their functioning conditions, report breaks, and come back to the change per the base-up procedure dependent on worker encounters and perspectives (Wickramasekara, 2013).

4.11.4. Future Directions

This study plans to add to the foundation of successful systems for safeguarding platform workers' privileges by researching the issues of authorizing work regulations and guidelines in the digital platform economy and breaking down original implementation strategies. Proposals for further developing consistency, reinforcing employee representation, and integrating innovation into implementation tasks will be made to lay out a fair, straightforward, and dependable work climate for platform workers. Policymakers, platform administrators, and employee backers might cooperate to beat the particular authorization issues of the digital platform economy while guaranteeing that work norms continue in the digital age (Beniston et al., 2011).

4.12. The Need for Policy Dialogue and Concrete Measures

Given the CEE region's various overall sets of laws and monetary, social, and political settings, a unified legitimate system is not practicable. In any case, making policy discourse and pushing explicit policy activities can help address the issues that stage workers defy while as yet permitting the stage economy to extend (Bódi & Farkas, 2019).

Key Regions for Policy Debate and Tangible Initiatives

Adjusting Adaptability and Work Rights

Numerous specialists like the adaptability of platform work game plans. Policymakers should balance holding adaptability and ensuring fundamental work rights, for example, the lowest pay permitted by law, taking care of time, and admittance to social security benefits. This can be achieved by regulative measures that tailor current work norms to the particular attributes of the platform business, perceiving its unmistakable elements while guaranteeing that platform workers approach basic work shields (Hendrickx & Pecinovsky, 2015).

Partner Commitment

Drawing in with platform workers, platform organizations, work gatherings, and different partners might give policymakers an exhaustive handle on the platform economy's troubles and potential, permitting them to embrace explicit policy arrangements. Partner interest might be supported by establishing scenes like gatherings, working gatherings, or public

conferences. By empowering open correspondence and joint effort among partners, lawmakers might make guidelines that successfully address the issues and worries of stage workers, platform firms, and society in general (Barnard, 2012).

Versatile and Enforceable Administrative Structures

The protection of platform worker freedoms requires adaptable regulatory systems that can be effectively enforced. A standard-based administrative approach should establish specific platform work standards that account for flexibility and technological advancements. State governments must allocate adequate funds for work examinations and continuous observation as well as discussion-based goal techniques to establish powerful requirements (Barnard, 2014).

Designated Strategy Measures

Explicit measures such as growing social security inclusion for platform workers, facilitating collective representation, and resolving stage worker misclassification could be investigated by policymakers. Extending social security inclusion can guarantee platform workers access to fundamental advantages like medical care, unemployment protection, and annuity plans. Collective portrayal can advance in order to help platform workers negotiate better working conditions and participate in conversation arrangements (De Rosnay & Janssen, 2014). In order to correctly classify platform workers as employees, independent contractors, or some other appropriate work arrangement with the accompanying rights and benefits, addressing platform worker misclassification is critical. In addition, addressing the issues that platform workers in the CEE region defy can be solved through expanding strategy talks and upholding explicit approach activities that allow the platform economy to grow. By inviting partners, defining flexible regulatory frameworks, and establishing major measures, policymakers could protect platform workers' privileges and construct a thoughtful platform economy that profits workers, organisations, and society (Hopt & Steffek, 2013).

4.13. International Guidelines and Best Practices

International institutions like the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) furnish policymakers with huge apparatuses and direction for tending to the hardships of platform work. These suggestions establish powerful regulative measures that defend platform workers' rights while advancing the platform economy's extension (Kharchenko et al., 2017).

ILO's "Decent Work in the Platform Economy" Report

The ILO research underscores the meaning of extending labour rights and social security inclusion to platform workers, recognizing their weaknesses and vulnerabilities in the platform economy. The review makes the following suggestions.

Social Exchange

Policymakers should cooperate with platform workers, companies, and work associations to guarantee that platform workers can impact administrative systems. This can help ensure arrangements address platform workers' remarkable requests and concerns, bringing about more compelling and proper approach activities (Pita et al., 2016).

Broadening Social Security Inclusion

Platform workers ought to have the option to get to social security administrations like medical services, unemployment protection, and benefits intended to assist with counterbalancing the dangers associated with their work. This could involve changing existing social security frameworks or growing new techniques to meet the specific qualities of platform work (Calderoni, 2010).

Ensuring That Platform Workers are Properly Classified Under Labour Laws

 Policymakers should address platform worker misclassification to guarantee that workers are accurately sorted as representatives, independently employed, or other appropriate classes with connected freedoms and securities. This might be achieved by laying out legitimate definitions and standards for platform tasks and powerful implementation measures (Tholoniat, 2010).

OECD's "Employment Outlook 2019" Report

The OECD paper underlines the significance of adaptable administrative systems and strategy development in handling the hardships of platform work. The review makes the following suggestions:

Versatile Regulatory Systems

The administrative structures ought to be customised to suit the particular highlights of platform movement in quick change. This could be accomplished through standard-based regulations and adaptable approach techniques that energise advancement and creative improvements (Raposo, 2016).

Designated Measures

Policymakers should aim for policies with clear formulation and balance the platform economy's flexibility with due rights to workers. This might include stretching work privileges to platform workers, facilitating social interaction and settling platform specialist misclassification.

Strategy Trial and Error and Assessment

Policymakers are urged to explore different avenues regarding novel arrangement measures and continually evaluate their adequacy in handling platform-related concerns. This can help ensure that strategies are significant and effective as the platform economy advances (Rani & Furrer, 2021). Lawmakers in Albnaia, Western Balkan, and the CEE region can embrace specific strategy measures to meet the particular issues of platform work by considering the rules and best practices given by international associations like the ILO and OECD. This can help to ensure that the platform economy develops dependably while additionally safeguarding the rights and prosperity of its workers.

4.14. Case Studies from CEE Countries

This segment presents contextual analyses from Central and Eastern European (CEE) nations that have carried out approach exchange and unmistakable measures propelled by the experiences given by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to represent the utilization of global rules and best practices in tending to the difficulties of platform work (Bonertz et al., 2018).

Estonia

Estonia, a country with a nearly evolved platform economy, has taken extraordinary steps in advancing policy discourse and setting up unambiguous regulations to protect the privileges of platform workers. Estonia has extended social security advantages to platform workers per the ILO's rule on social security inclusion, ensuring individuals' admittance to crucial protections, including medical care and annuity plans. The country has likewise focused on establishing a digital climate that works with platform work, understanding the worth of adaptable administrative systems by OECD proposals (Bianco, 2021).

Poland

To make administrative measures that address platform worker misclassification and award platform workers more work privileges, clean policymakers have effectively drawn in partners, including platform workers, platform companies, and work gatherings. This is due to

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the ILO's emphasis on fortifying employees privileges and amending misclassification. Poland has made progress in protecting platform workers' privileges and advancing the platform economy's development by participating in strategy conversations and establishing explicit measures (Handford et al., 2015).

Romania

Romania has recognized the need for policy discourse and fitted moves toward addressing the issues of platform work despite the country's slow speed of administrative upgrades. Because of the ILO's rules, Romania has carried out measures to furnish platform workers with government-managed retirement inclusion, promising them admittance to fundamental advantages. In its extending platform economy, Romania is taking a stab at more grounded shields for platform workers through policy discourse and explicit activity thought (De Madariaga, 2013).

Bulgaria

Bulgaria has perceived the worth of adaptable regulatory frameworks and policy trial and error, as suggested by the OECD, notwithstanding having a less evolved stage economy. The country has researched-centred answers for settling the hardships related to platform work and participated in multi-stakeholder discussions. Bulgaria is setting itself in a situation to shield the privileges of platform workers as its foundation economy creates by advancing policy discourse and going to explicit policy lengths into thought (Gumbrell-McCormick & Hyman, 2013).

These contextual investigations from CEE countries feature the need for strategy conversations and reasonable answers to settling the challenges of platform work. Policymakers in the CEE region might better safeguard platform workers' freedoms while advancing the stage economy's mindful development by associating with partners, considering worldwide standards, and establishing explicit measures. To ensure fair working conditions for platform workers in the modern era, policy discussions and flexible regulatory systems must evolve alongside the growth of the platform economy (Morel & Palier, 2011).

Table 4

Summary of Key Reports on Platform Worker Rights and Legal Frameworks

Report	Main Findings

ILO's "Decent Work in the Platform Economy"	The report details the need to extend social protection to platform workers, including access to healthcare, pensions, and unemployment benefits.
	It also advocates for the proper classification of platform workers to ensure that they are recognised as workers and not as independent contractors.
	Promotes worker empowerment through representation in policy decisions and labour organizations.
OECD's "Employment Outlook 2019"	The report calls for flexible regulatory frameworks to adapt to the changing nature of work to make sure platform workers' rights are protected without stifling innovation.
	It notes that it is important for digital skills and training for workers to participate effectively in the digital economy.
IRAC (Uber BV and Others v. Aslam)	The UK Supreme Court ruled that Uber drivers should be classified as workers, not independent contractors, and entitled to employment rights such as minimum wage.
	It sets a legal precedent for how digital platform workers should be classified in future cases, influencing global regulations.

4.15. Conclusion

The exhaustive evaluation of public employment administrations and abilities programs, related to a similar investigation of the legitimate status and privileges of digital platform workers in different EU part states and other global areas, features the need to examine the mind-boggling parts of digital platform work inside the system of changing work markets and digital upheavals. This exploration has revealed insight into the complexities and nuances engaged with exploring the digital platform economy by looking at the adequacy of current drives pointed toward working on employees' employability and digital abilities as well as the distinctions and likenesses in lawful structures and administrative securities for workers on digital platforms across jurisdictions (Graham et al., 2020).

Including a comparable study encompassing several EU member states and other jurisdictions has enhanced the research by providing more up-to-date insights into the legal framework, regulatory environment, and rights granted to global digital platform workers. This chapter has clarified the distinctions, deterrents, and possibilities innate in digital platform's work overall by differentiating legitimate structures, work regulations, and best practices from different settings. This has taken into consideration the advancement of multifaceted comprehension and empowered information sharing on a worldwide scale. Besides, this exploration has shown the pertinence and appropriateness of its discoveries and established the groundwork for advancing conversation, shaping strategy mediations, and upholding further developed freedoms and securities for digital platforms workers around the world by consolidating experiences from global drives, administrative structures, and best practices in resolving the issues looked by these employees internationally.

A more exhaustive comprehension of the intricacies and impacts of digitalization on business connections and work insurance is made conceivable by the extensive assessment of public work administrations, abilities programs, and lawful systems overseeing work on digital platforms. This assessment is upheld by relative investigation and global bits of knowledge. This examination opens the entryway for informed strategy arrangement, promotion endeavours, and navigation regarding the different methodologies, valuable open doors, and difficulties that accompany dealing with digital platforms worldwide. A definitive objective is cultivating a more impartial, comprehensive, and feasible digital economy that helps all platform workers.

Also, the chapter explores the challenges and progress in protecting remote workers' rights in Albania, the EU, and the CEE region. Albania still struggles to regulate online work, which has left many of these workers without protections, social security, or stable working conditions. In contrast, some CEE countries, such as Estonia, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria, have started adapting their labour laws to include the needs of these workers. However, it is difficult to enforce the regulations across the region since the laws in these countries differ. Besides, this type of work does not clearly fall under traditional work since many workers prefer the freedom that comes with working online, but the lack of laws to safeguard them makes them vulnerable to low wages and job instabilities. This chapter also highlights the role of international policies, such as ILO and OECD guidelines, in shaping fair work practices. Policymakers must find a balanced approach to supporting worker rights and business growth.

CHAPTER 5: Representation of Digital Platform Workers' Interests and Conflicts of Law in Digital Labour Platforms

5.1. Introduction

The development of the platform economy has radically changed the idea of work, creating new forms of occupation associations and raising new legal issues in Albania. Digital labour platforms have led to legitimate difficulties that call for creative solutions since they interface workers and clients across public boundaries. Two fundamental components of this trouble are ensuring that digital platform workers' interests are addressed and managing lawful struggles in the platform economy. This chapter examines strategies for strengthening workers' rights in the digital era and unifying legal frameworks in Albania. It additionally explains the complexities of these subjects. The quick development of digital labour platforms has prompted plenty of legitimate requests, for example, the pertinent work regulations controlling platform business, the appropriate jurisdiction for debates, and the goal of cross-line clashes. Platform workers now and again work in various nations, so it is significant and convoluted to ensure their freedoms are maintained, and their inclinations are addressed (Kuner, 2012).

A multimodal methodology that combines inventive hierarchical strategies for employee representation with the harmonization of regulative systems for platform work is expected to resolve these issues. As well as talking about the meaning of representation for digital platform workers at the public and global levels, this part explores the essential legitimate issues that emerge in digital work platforms and proposition feasible choices for settling them. This part progresses information about the platform economy's lawful implications and the need for serious areas of strength for systems by tending to these significant worries. Eventually, this section's suggestions might ensure that the freedoms of platform workers are maintained and that the platform economy cultivates comprehensive development and civil rights.

5.2. Representation of Digital Platform Workers' Interests

Since digital platform work is dispersed and divided, it presents novel snags for workers to have their inclinations addressed at the public and global levels. Workers, organizations, advocacy groups, and policymakers must explore innovative solutions to address these challenges, to a to esnure that employees receive fair treatment, legal protections, and access to essential labor rights in an evolving digital economy. Among these strategies are:

Digital Organizing

With regard to uniting remote workers across geographic boundaries, digital organising is essential to creating a cohesive and effective collective voice for workers around the world. Workers can proficiently collaborate, convey, and coordinate gathering activities using digital instruments and platforms. Through drives like web-based entertainment gatherings, online gatherings, and virtual get-togethers, platform workers might discuss shared challenges and trade encounters and join for backing exercises. Innovation use reinforces platform workers' security with each other, enhancing their collective voice and making a sensation in local areas inside the digital work climate (Pope & McLeay, 2011).

Collaboration with Platforms

Advancing the representation of platform workers' countries requires dynamic commitment with platform organizations. Workers and their delegates can push for acknowledging employee representation and collective bargaining freedoms by shaping unions or conversing with the platform. Cooperating with the platform can form additional impartial working conditions, open lines of correspondence, and proficient compromise systems. Platform workers might endeavour to acquire office and impact the platform economy by empowering positive correspondence and cooperation (Freedland & Kountouris, 2011).

Coalition Building

Building partnerships with other trade unions, civil society associations, and lawmakers is crucial for raising platform workers' voices and advancing their rights. Platform workers might utilize their joined strength, approach various assets, and send off facilitated missions to impact fundamental change through cooperative campaigning exercises. Platform workers might resolve normal issues, focus on their functioning conditions, and promote regulative changes that shield their privileges and advance moral work rehearses in the digital economy by shaping alliances with similar gatherings.

Legal Support

To effectively explore the confounded universe of work guidelines, authoritative arrangements, and debate goal techniques, platform workers should get legitimate help and insight. Lawful help administrations can help platform workers resolve issues relating to out-of-line treatment or agreement debates, grasp their privileges, and seek legitimate cures. Workers on the platform are more prepared to support their rights, stand up to out-of-line work

practices, and consider the platform answerable for keeping up with work regulations and employee protection when approaching legitimate assets.

Capacity Building

Initiatives pointed toward expanding the limit are urgent in giving platform workers the data, capacities, and apparatuses expected to address their inclinations effectively. Workshops, educational campaigns, and training projects might illuminate platform workers on collective representation benefits, sorting out strategies, and their rights. Initiatives pointed toward fostering workers' ability to advocate, arrange, and make collective action for platform workers, empower them to change their functioning conditions, go to bat for their privileges, and assist with making a more even-handed and comprehensive digital work climate. The reconciliation of these creative strategies into the backing of the interests of digital platform workers can expand employee strengthening, cultivate solidarity, and progress work privileges protection in the digital economy. Through digital sorting out, participation with the platform, alliance arrangement, lawful help, and limited building drives, platform workers can explore the obstructions of representation, amplify their viewpoints, and champion even-handed and decent working conditions in the unique platform work area.

5.3. Conflicts of Law in Digital Labour Platforms

Since workers, clients, and platforms are ordinarily arranged in various nations, the cross-country nature of digital work platforms usually brings about legal issues. These struggles raise significant problems, such as which country's courts have jurisdiction over conflicts, whose work regulations apply to work on platforms, and how best to resolve debates between nations. Various potential ways of settling these legitimate questions may be evaluated.

5.3.1. Harmonization Of Lawful Structures

Empowering a more significant level of provincial or worldwide harmonization between the legitimate systems overseeing platform business can diminish lawful issues and give uniform work freedoms to platform workers. Global agreements, settlements, or shows that give uniform rules and norms to platforms work can achieve this. To ensure that employees in the locale are liable to uniform work regulations, the EU may, for example, bring together a lawful system for platform business. Similarly, overall norms for platform work may be made by global bodies like the International Labour Organization (ILO), thinking about the unique characteristics of this sort of work.

5.3.2. Decision of Regulation Arrangements

Advancing the use of decision-making regarding regulation conditions in platforms' work agreements can give platforms, clients, and representatives more legitimate security. These arrangements allow gatherings to specify which regulations from which locale will be utilized to determine questions. In any case, it is critical to settle on certain that the decision of regulation arrangements does not abuse workers' freedoms or give platforms admittance to get around stricter work regulations in their nations. The maltreatment of decisions of regulation arrangements might require administrative examination and implementation measures.

5.3.3. Global Collaboration

Working on implementing labour law in the platform economy and working with the settlement of cross-country clashes can be accomplished by fortifying worldwide participation between administrative bodies and general sets of laws. This might involve trading subtleties on platforms' work methods, coordinating implementation gauges, and making agreement rules to handle lawful issues. For instance, work inspectorates from a few countries might participate to watch out for platforms' work practices and trade best practices for executing work regulations.

5.3.4. Elective debate goal

Advancing the utilization of ADR processes, such as intervention and intercession, can help platform economy organizations resolve global struggles all the more rapidly and reasonably. ADR can be particularly useful when platform work includes cross-line exchanges, making customary cases unrealistic. Laying out exact approaches and cycles, giving sufficient help and assets, and ensuring the interaction's unbiasedness and receptiveness are important to ensure ADR components are simple and open for platform workers. By executing these possible arrangements, the lawful questions coming about because of the cross-line character of digital work platforms might be tended to, and a more uniform and more secure legitimate climate for platform workers can be laid out. This thus can propel civil rights and fair work in the platform's economy.

5.4. Innovative Solutions for Conflicts of Law and Representation

On request to successfully guard workers' address lawful issues on digital labour platforms, clever fixes that think about the particularities of the platform economy are required. These arrangements, which coordinate hierarchical, lawful, and innovative viewpoints, can add to the improvement of a more defensive and strong structure for platform work:

5.4.1. Transnational collective agreements

Platform enterprises and international or regional worker's guilds can arrange arrangements to assist with making uniform work regulations and methodology for settling questions across borders. These arrangements could include working hours, social assurances, and the lowest compensation rates. They can likewise incorporate systems for settling questions between nations. For example, UNI Worldwide Union and the platform Upwork have inked an overall agreement covering social exchange, workers' privileges, and compromise. (UNI Global Union, 2021)

5.4.2. Platform-based worker representation

By setting up a methodology for labourer representation, platform undertakings might further develop correspondence among representatives and executives and make way for platform-level collective bargaining. The foundation of works committees or board-level representation for platform workers can work with their capacity to communicate their complaints, participate in dynamic techniques, and hope for work on working conditions. Since platform-based representation ensures that employees' advantages are consistently addressed across jurisdictions, it can also assist with conquering lawful issues.

5.4.3. Data-driven advocacy

Utilizing platform examination and information might help distinguish normal issues and worries among workers, give direction to backing strategies, and watch out how arrangements and work principles are being executed. Workers and their promoters might screen changes in working conditions, better comprehend the platform work scene, and make centred missions and mediations to settle these difficulties using information. This information-driven system can assist with conflicts of law by giving global implementation and question settlement a solid evidentiary establishment.

5.4.5. Cooperation in cross-border enforcement

In the platform economy, cultivating more coordinated effort between work inspectorates and other requirement employees can help ensure adherence to work rules and accelerate the settlement of cross-line clashes. This might involve trading information and best works, sorting out requirement drives, and making agreement rules for dealing with legitimate issues. Cross-line implementation participation can succeed when matched with the other platform-of-the-art techniques covered above, such as platform-based employee representation and transnational collective agreements. By laying out a more sensible and uniform institutional

and lawful structure for platform work across public lines, these clever fixes can help with settling legitimate issues and improve the representation of platform workers' inclinations.

5.5. Conclusion

The rapid growth of the platform economy and the major changes resulting from it to the conventional employment structures have become a big problem for platform enterprises, workers, and regulatory organizations in Albania. These challenges must be addressed in order to create fair labour practices, worker protections, and sustainable economic growth in the digital age. With platform action crossing public lines, the issue of conflicts of law in digital labour platforms is becoming increasingly more pertinent. As such, there is a need for effective fixes that will ensure uniform guidelines as well as a proficient representation of platform workers' privileges. In this part, strategies that mix classical and state-of-the-art techniques to address these issues have been inspected. Transnational collective agreements could be entered into by platform companies and overall or territorial worker's guilds to establish uniform work principles and ways of settling debates over several countries. This could lead to a more durable and secure structure for platform tasks. Platform-based systems for employee representation, such as works chambers or board-level representation, can facilitate making sure that the employees' benefits are responsibly dealt with over the jurisdictions, encourage collective bargaining at the platform level, and further develop the connection between employees and managers. In addition, information-driven support could also look through plans and working standards, uncover workers' regular issues and concerns, and improve advancement campaigns.

Platform work information and investigation may permit workers and their agents to screen changes in working conditions, better grasp the scene of platform work, and focal point missions and mediations that are focused around these difficulties. Likewise, in the platform economy, cross-border authorisation collaboration between work inspectorates and other implementation organizations might also be essential in order to ensure compliance with work rules and solve cross-line problems. This cooperation could be achieved through the organisation of authorisation activities, the exchange of best practices and data, and agreement rules on resolving legal disputes. Workers, platform firms, worker's guilds, administrative bodies, and different partners should cooperate to set these imaginative thoughts in motion.

Together, these partners can address the difficulties introduced by the platform economy and assist with building a more comprehensive and durable platform workplace that maintains workers' privileges, supports respectable work, and advances civil rights in the digital age.

In rundown, to effectively deal with lawful issues and upgrade the representation of platform workers' inclinations, it is basic that legitimate, hierarchical, and specialized strategies be consistently investigated and changed because of the complex and rapidly changing nature of the platform economy. Partners might assist with planning a fate of work that adjusts the risks and conceivable outcomes given by digital labour platforms by embracing these clever fixes. This will ensure that the platform economy's benefits are disseminated more reasonably among everyone contributing to Albania's development and achievement.

CHAPTER 6: Organizational Techniques for Representation in the Digital Platform Economy

6.1. Introduction

While Albanian economics is subject to global trends in digital work, the rise of the platform economy has given birth to a labour market that is significantly different from the traditional one. The absence of legal protection and formal recognition for workers, as Albanians join more into remote work opportunities advertised on online platforms such as Upwork, Fiverr, and Freelancer, leaves them widely job insecure, excluded from social security benefits, and deprived of collective bargaining rights (Çela, 2024). In contrast to many EU countries where attempts are made to regulate platform work, Albania's labour laws are outdated and do not meet the needs of the challenges that most workers in this field face (Lodovici et al., 2021). Therefore, Albanian remote workers are in legal limbo under algorithmic control by international platforms with no formal dispute resolution mechanisms or representation. This section discusses how these workers in Albania can adopt some of these organisational techniques, including online worker collectives, advocacy through digital-based unions, and lessons from CEE countries that are now starting to address some of these regulatory gaps in similar ways. This examination is intended to broaden the investigation's scale by including remote employees' legitimate status and freedoms (Hauben et al., 2020).

Conventional work associations, similar to worker's organizations, face difficulties with regard to sorting out and upholding these employees in view of the one-of-a-kind highlights of platform work, which incorporate geological scattering, impermanent and adaptable work arrangements, and the vulnerability encompassing business grouping. Different systems are being explored to address these difficulties (Frenken & Fuenfschilling, 2020). These incorporate pushing for administrative changes, coordinating public mindfulness crusades, using digital advances for further developed correspondence and association, and creating relationships between laid-out work associations and recently shaped platform employee gatherings. The primary objective of these methodologies is to address the one-of-a-kind troubles that digital platform workers have and to improve a more different and comprehensive work development that can safeguard and advance their freedoms and interests.

6.2. Collaboration between Traditional Labour Organizations and Emerging Platform Worker Groups

Cooperation between established labour organizations and new platform labourer groups is an essential technique to develop representation further and back endeavours for digital platform workers by saddling the particular resources and abilities of the two kinds of associations. Conventional work gatherings, like worker's organizations, have a long history of supporting workers' privileges and contain fundamental information in hierarchical engineering, bartering procedures, and work regulation (Mandl, 2021). Developing platform employee organizations, which are now and again shaped by the actual employees, gives a private familiarity with the various issues and nuanced needs novel to platform work. By shaping cooperative connections, these different gatherings might consolidate their assets to foster a more far-reaching and viable methodology for addressing platform workers (Edward, 2021).

Customary work associations can give platform labourers basic assets, institutional support, and an abundance of involvement to assist them with organizing successful missions, laying out believability, and exploring convoluted legitimate systems. Simultaneously, platform employee gatherings can give firsthand experiences into the everyday battles and foundational issues that platform workers face, permitting conventional work associations to all the more likely design their backing drives and strategy suggestions to these squeezing concerns. This cooperative worldview empowers the formation of new and specific drives that straightforwardly address the exceptional challenges related to a platform business, like work flimsiness, unfortunate working conditions, and an absence of legitimate social protections (Mandl, 2021). Lastly, the harmonious connection between laid-out work associations and rising platform labourer bunches can fortify platform workers' collective voices while speeding up substantial changes in their general working conditions and prosperity.

In the European Union (EU), the rapid expansion of the platform economy has heightened the need for collaboration between established labour organizations and emerging platform worker groups to strengthen the representation and rights of digital platform workers. This cooperative mindset is basic in settling the different hardships faced by platform workers in the EU, which incorporate worries like shaky business, unfortunate remuneration, and deficient social well-being organizations (United Nations Development Programme, 2024)

.European worker's organizations, especially the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), have effectively worked with platform employee gatherings to acquire information on the extraordinary requests and issues raised by these employees. Coordinated efforts

notably include collaborations with groups such as the Transnational Federation of Couriers (TFC) and the Riders' Rights campaign, which advocate for the rights and improved working conditions of platform workers across the EU (United Nations Development Programme, 2024). These organized endeavours have brought about helpful backing efforts and exercises to advance platform workers' functioning conditions, with an emphasis on lobbying for strategy enhancements at the EU level. For instance, the ETUC and TFC have teamed up to lead requests for a European social discussion focused on platform work, with the principal objective of guaranteeing equivalent work guidelines and expanding platform employee representation. Customary work associations and platform employee bunches in the EU might join their assets, abilities, and encounters to foster more campaign strategies for platform workers by planning their endeavours (United Nations Development Programme, 2024). This cooperative structure encourages a solitary and unequivocal voice for platform workers in the EU, bringing about better working conditions, more grounded defends, and expanded openness for this quickly developing piece of the labour market.

Several established trade unions in Albania could collaborate with emerging platform worker groups to advocate for their rights. They include the Confederation of Trade Unions of Albania (KSSH) and the Union of Independent Trade Unions of Albania (BSPSH), which represent workers across various sectors, including education, healthcare, and industry through collective bargaining and policy advocacy (Doci, 2017; KSSH, 2009; Education International, 2024). By partnering with grassroots online worker organizations or just online employees, these unions could help increase the visibility and credibility of these workers, allowing them to lobby for better working conditions, legal recognition, and social protection. Such collaboration would help the labour unions effectively handle the challenges online workers in Albania face, such as job insecurity and lack of social security and legal protections, thereby advancing labour rights in the gig economy.

6.3. Utilizing digital tools for communication and organizing

As employment statuses change in Albania, similar to other nations worldwide, leveraging digital platforms for communication and organization has become a crucial strategy for platform workers to build connections, share experiences, and unite in pursuing their rights and interests (ILO, 2021). The presentation of digital platforms, virtual entertainment organizations, and portable applications has changed how platform workers associate, crossing geological boundaries and advancing cooperative sorted-out endeavours across shifted public settings. Platform workers have utilised web-based gatherings, online entertainment

channels like Facebook and Twitter, and different advanced platforms to make virtual networks to examine work-related issues and share data about their functioning conditions and direction-bound activities (ILO, 2021). These computerized spaces act as impetuses for expanding mindfulness about the difficulties faced by platform workers while developing areas of strength for kinship and fortitude among them.

Notwithstanding the impact of standard virtual entertainment platforms, explicit internet-based centre points and applications have assisted with smoothing out putting together exercises and fortifying correspondence channels among platform workers. For instance, the Labourer Data Trade is an excellent web-based platform that gives a committed region to platform workers in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands to trade basic data, pool assets, and offer firsthand encounters, reinforcing their aggregate organization and fortitude. In any case, utilizing digital devices to sort out projects isn't without its hindrances (GAO, 2024). Protection concerns, digital incongruities among workers, and weak organization reconnaissance or intruding posture are troublesome difficulties for platform workers. Regardless of these obstructions, the shrewd utilization of digital platforms remains a fundamental component for reinforcing the representation. It joined the voice of platform workers in the EU, pushing them toward a more enabled and lucid stance in lobbying for their rights and prosperity.

6.4. Engaging in policy advocacy

In a purposeful endeavour to advance the rights and prosperity of platform workers, joint activities between platform employee gatherings and conventional work associations have moved to strategy campaigning at the European Union (EU) level. This promotion drives pressure on the significance of administrative changes pointed toward further developing platform workers' functioning conditions, including battling for privileges like aggregate haggling, upgraded social assurances, and fair remuneration. The EU has likewise taken forceful drives to lighten the many issues that platform workers face. Eminently, in 2021, the European Commission presented a Directive targeting working on working conditions in the field of platform work (Maes, 2023). This proposed Order plans to reinforce working conditions and social security for platform workers by including rules for admittance to important data, affirmation of adequate workspaces, and insurance against inconsistent excusal. Platform workers and their partners might influence the administrative climate inside the EU by effectively captivating approach support, pushing acquires in platform employee representation and protections (Maes, 2023). When combined with cooperative endeavours

between customary work associations and platform employee gatherings, this essential mediation is a strong system for tending to platform workers' difficulties while cultivating a more comprehensive and impartial market climate in the EU. The conscious execution of public awareness has arisen as a basic instrument for digital platform workers and their allies in the European Union (EU) to reveal insight into the functioning conditions and difficulties experienced in platform work. These efforts help construct mindfulness of platform workers' issues while getting critical public help for their objective. Public awareness in Albania and the EU includes:

6.4.1. Digital Human Rights in Tirana, Albania

In Tirana, the municipality is raising public awareness about digital rights through the Digital Rights Governance Project, which was initiated to address challenges related to the lack of awareness among municipal staff. The project is about training civil servants to understand digital rights and responsibilities, especially concerning youth (Cities for Digital Rights, 2022). To be part of the initiative to have Tirana named the 2022 European Youth Capital, young people should discuss their rights while they work online. The municipality is also developing a Digital Rights Agenda to guarantee consistent governance and awareness.

6.4.2. Digital Literacy and Inclusion through YMCA Albania

This coalition was launched by the European Commission to address the rising digital skills gap in Europe. An inclusive digital economy is brought together with member states, companies, and organisations. Moreover, it also supports training programmes for the unemployed, coding classes for youth, and advanced training for ICT professionals (European Union, 2022). It also ensures that digital-based skills will be available to all, especially those from underserved communities.

6.4.3. The Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition, Europe

This coalition was launched by the European Commission to address the growing digital skills gap in Europe. The inclusive digital economy is brought to life by bringing member states, companies, and organisations together. In addition, it helps other initiatives such as training programmes for the unemployed, coding classes for youth as well as advanced training of ICT professionals (European Union, 2022). It also ensures that these digital-based skills are available to all, especially to underserved communities.

6.4.4. The European Social Partners Framework Agreement on Digitalisation

This agreement aims to raise awareness of what digitalisation means for the workplace and the opportunities and challenges that arise. It has been signed by European social partners such as BusinessEurope and SGI Europe and calls on employers, workers, and their representatives to collaborate in facing the consequences of digital transformation on labour markets (European Trade Union Confederation, 2022). The treaty urges upskilling and reskilling of workers to cope with rapidly changing technology. It ensures the digital inclusion of all workers regardless of their sector and provides them with the necessary tools and training. Progress in the rules is needed to address the new issues caused by the rise of the digital platform economy and protect the rights and interests of workers. This part considers the anticipated hierarchical strategies for computerization stage specialists' empowerment and further development of portrayal, focusing on aggregate taking care of arrangements, online gatherings, and different kinds of collective exercises. The results of these procedures are likewise discussed for work regulation and the changing idea of work in digital time.

6.4.5. *Collective Bargaining Agreements*

Traditional Collective Bargaining

Collective bargaining could be customised to suit the needs of digital platform work, and it is a well-established work relations procedure. Platform workers can form or join trade unions dealing in an aggregated way with platform firms regarding the working conditions, wages, and benefits of workers. However, new methods of dealing with the specific issues platform work presents, like employee misclassification and geographic dispersion, demand new tactics for traditional collective bargaining.

Sector-Wide Bargaining

One expected system is sector-wide bargaining, in which workers' guilds and business bunches haggle for the benefit of a whole industry or area rather than individual undertakings. This could prompt an area-wide setting of principles of pay, working circumstances, and advantages, giving stage employees a gauge of their level of security. The potential of this strategy is to deal with the problems of work fracture and the dispersed idea of platform work.

Algorithmic Haggling

Algorithmic bargaining is another clever method to aggregate dealing in the advanced platform economy. This technique involves improving platform workers' haggling procedures and results utilizing information examination and machine learning algorithms. Platform workers might further develop their arranging influence by tackling information.

6.4.6. Internet Forums and Online Communities

Working With Correspondence and Sorting Out

Internet gatherings, social media groups, and online networks have become basic means for platform workers to connect, trade encounters, and activate together. These digital digitals can help platform workers rise above geological hindrances and lift cross-public getting sorted-out exercises.

Sharing Data and Assets

Online forums and gatherings can be platforms for trading information and assets on employees' privileges, work regulations, and best practices. This information trade might help platform workers comprehend and advocate for their rights, both exclusively and all in all (Chen et al., 2020)

Encouraging Fortitude and Collective Identity

Partaking in web-based gatherings might assist platform workers with laying out a sensation of fortitude and collective identity, which can expand their dealing power and representation in chats with platform organizations. This collective character may likewise act as the establishment for bigger social and political gatherings that back platform workers' privileges.

6.4.7. Other Forms of Collective Action

Grassroots Getting Sorted Out and Campaigning

The platform representatives can use grassroots organisation and campaigning to bring to light issues of their functioning conditions and rally public support for their goal. It might incorporate arranging protests, fights, or exhibitions and the utilisation of internet-based web-based entertainment and different advanced strategies to advance their message.

Strategy Support and Campaigning

They can likewise be associated with approach support and campaigning endeavours to advance administrative changes that safeguard their privileges and interests. Platform workers can help build the legitimate structure that governs platform work by cooperating with administrators, attending meetings, and providing criticism of proposed regulations (Vallas & Schor, 2020).

Buyer Activism

Consumer activism, which involves revitalizing clients to help moral work rehearses, may be a viable collective action. Platform workers can help buyer organizations bring issues to

light about working conditions in the platform economy and encourage shoppers to support platforms that underscore workers' rights and prosperity.

6.4.8. Implications For Employment Law

The organizational strategies examined in this section have significant ramifications for employment law and the guidelines of platform work. As platform workers embrace novel approaches to collective bargaining, for example, area-wide arranging and algorithmic bargaining, legislators and legitimate employees should assess how existing work regulations may be altered or if new guidelines exist to oblige these systems. Besides, the extended use of web gatherings, online networks, and different types of collective action underlines the significance of lawful protection that safeguards platform workers' freedoms to arrange and participate in collective action even in the digital circle (James, 2022).

Just like in Europe and other parts of the world, policymakers in Albania should address the particular troubles of platform business, like employee misclassification, and ensure that work regulations suitably shield platform workers' freedoms and interests. To sum up, the changing idea of platform business requires novel hierarchical strategies that engage digital work platform workers and work on their representation. This part inspects planned methodologies, like collective bargaining agreements, web discussions, and different types of collective action, to feature the expected roads for platform workers to advocate for their rights, as well as the ramifications of these systems for the eventual fate of digital employment law (Jones, 2021).

6.5. The impact of digitisation on employment law and the need for legislative reforms

The digitalization of work has significantly changed business ideas in Albania and other parts of the world, bringing about new types of work and labour relations that challenge existing legitimate business systems. As digital work platforms grow and develop, it is basic to explore how these progressions impact employment law and feature the requirement for administrative changes in accordance with adequately protecting workers in advanced times.

6.5.1. The Changing Nature of Work Employment

Digitisation has powered the development of capricious work courses like gig business, outsourcing, and crowd work. These arrangements habitually darken the qualifications for work and independent work, making it hard to apply commonplace business regulation protections. It has also led to new employment arrangements in which workers are habitually

classed as self-employed entities instead of representatives. This employee misclassification can be a reason for an absence of admittance to basic work securities, for example, the lowest pay permitted by law, overtime instalment, and work environment and security guidelines. Moreover, the development of calculations and information-based administration methods for platform business has raised issues of straightforwardness, responsibility, and freedom for workers. The problem with these innovation progressions is that they raise issues about how work regulation could resolve algorithmic administration and platform control issues.

6.5.2. *Challenges for Existing Work Employment Law Frameworks*

As elaborated in this chapter and Chapter 4, the existing employment guidelines in Albania are primarily intended to protect workers in traditional forms of employment. However, non-standard employees (such as platform workers) are difficult, as they do not have access to labour protections. Hence, they are vulnerable to exploitation, unstable working conditions, and income insecurity (Caena & Redecker, 2019). This non-regulated approach creates risks because platform workers often work without the protections of formal employment, such as minimum wages, social security, pensions, collective bargaining rights, and standard labour dispute resolution mechanisms. The fragmented and temporary nature of the platform work adds to the difficulties of regulating it since enforcement mechanisms are quite ineffective. Therefore, governments need to be able to monitor and hold platform partnerships accountable for labour infractions and enforce fair working conditions, which is a persistent issue given that many digital labour platforms classify their workers as independent contractors rather than employees in order not to be legally responsible (Cath et al., 2017).

Additionally, the fact that online work is global and one need not account for different labour regulations across various countries also makes it more difficult to provide worker protection. Consequently, there is a need for a coordinated international approach to standardise labour standards for platform workers across geographical locations. Yet, setting such cross-border regulations is also a complex process that necessitates collaboration between the governments, policy harmonisation, and effective enforcement. Furthermore, the lack of an overarching framework for the rights of these workers aggravates the levels of inequalities between workers in various regions, leaving some platforms to exploit loopholes in the already existing labour laws (De Stefano et al., 2021). Comparative case studies addressing these challenges will illustrate the various ways that different legal systems are trying to address the issues in the context of platform worker protections and in what ways different approaches, practices, and gaps in policy can be identified. This is why the methodological

framework of the research is based on the analysis of different national regulatory responses and the evaluation of their effectiveness in protecting platform workers' rights within the evolving digital economy.

5.5.3. The Necessity for Legislative Reforms

The challenges of digitisation require a change in the labour laws to include non-traditional workers like remote employees. Also, this should consist of widening the definition of work to include arrangements or creating new legal categories in Albania. Further, these changes should also take into account how algorithms and data-driven management processes are being used. For this, I believe that these companies should be introduced to laws to promote transparency, fairness, and accountability in algorithmic decision-making (Tambe et al., 2019). Policymakers should also look at how different countries have addressed these challenges through legal reforms. This will give a clearer picture of practical strategies as well as gaps in the existing labour regulations. Since the online economy operates on a global scale, international cooperation and harmonisation of labour laws are necessary. Albania's policymakers should work hand in hand with global organisations to set up cross-border regulations protecting platform workers in all countries. Also, business regulations are less effective in a digitalised workplace. With emerging new forms of work, it is important to evaluate their effect and address the challenges that the workers face. Governments can also update employment laws to incorporate new types of work and address the challenges so that these workers have the necessary protections and rights in this quickly changing work environment (McDowall et al., 2017).

6.6. Conclusion

In order to attract and protect platform workers, digitalisation of employment relationships requires cooperative and creative techniques. Stakeholders can explore effective policies and strategies to leverage so that meaningful reforms can create a more inclusive and equitable workplace. To ensure good protections and rights for platform workers in this rapidly changing digital age, changes in legislation that are specific to the Albanian labour market, in line with European and global trends, are needed. Legislative changes that adapt to the changing idea of work in the advanced period are basic to guarantee that platform workers have the proper assurances and privileges in the quickly impacting universe of work in the EU and all around the world.

CHAPTER 7: Challenges and Opportunities in Harmonizing Legal Frameworks for Digital Platform Workers: Representation, Interests, and Conflicts of Law in Region (Albania, Central and Eastern Europe)

7.1. Introduction

The rapid ascent of the digital labour platform economy has changed the possibility of commerce and genuinely emphasised platform workers' legal confirmation. Platform work has spread over some endeavours in Alabania, Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) because it has interacted with affiliations and clients in different nations to create a tremendous pool of on-demand work. Whereas this new sort of work gives more imperative flexibility and occupation prospects, it presents huge issues to the degree that work respects and social protection (Melkumyan & Sahakyan, 2022)

Advanced labour platforms, such as ride-hailing, transport, and free work stages, presently and once more work in a murky regulatory circumstance, with specialists classed as freely utilized components instead of delegates. This grouping might accomplish confined permission-to-work openings like the most negligible remuneration permitted by direction, paid leave, and collective bargaining, as well as government-directed retirement benefits like advantages, restorative care, and joblessness protections. Subsequently, platform workers often involve questionable working conditions and financial vulnerability, provoking solicitations for additional legal shields and administrative observation. This portion analyzes the harmonization of legitimate structures regulating advanced work platforms within the CEE region, focusing on the obstacles and conceivable results displayed by this drive. Harmonization drives an attempt to provide a more standard, legitimate way to bargain with platforms' work over nations, ensuring that platform workers' benefits are satisfactorily ensured while progressing the platform economy's turn of events and advancement (Welter & Smallbone, 2011).

By addressing the different legitimate frameworks set up, the potential benefits of harmonization, and the difficulties that ought to be tended to, this portion includes a clearer comprehension of the mind-boggling exchange between platforms' work and work control within the CEE climate. The appraisal considers the platform economy's unmistakable points, for illustration, the worldwide thought of platforms work, the utilization of calculations and data-driven organization methodologies, and the various plans of activity utilized by

platform firms. It furthermore considers the greater monetary and political conditions in which platforms trade exists, for illustration, work advertise changes, development leap advances, and legislative plans (Arnholtz & Lillie, 2020).

This portion draws on relevant investigations and close examination from both the CEE region and the past to show the cases picked up from diverse regulatory ways to deal with platform work. It underlines the need to find a few kinds of harmony among versatility and labourer opportunities, engage partner commitment, and make flexible and enforceable administrative frameworks. The findings on official harmonization within the CEE region can light up greater endeavours to defeat the issues displayed by the platform's economy and secure decent working conditions for platform workers within the advanced period (Strang & Ager, 2010).

Digital labour platforms have also delivered a muddled trap of legitimate difficulties that call for creative solutions since they interface workers and clients across public boundaries. Two fundamental components of this trouble are ensuring that digital platform workers' interests are addressed and managing lawful struggles in the platform economy. This chapter discusses different ways of working on workers' freedoms in the digital period and binds together lawful systems. It additionally explains the complexities of these subjects. The quick development of digital labour platforms has prompted plenty of legitimate requests, for example, the pertinent work regulations controlling platform business, the appropriate jurisdiction for debates, and the goal of cross-line clashes. Platform workers now and again work in various nations, so it's significant and convoluted to ensure their freedoms are maintained, and their inclinations are addressed (Kuner, 2012). A multimodal methodology that combines inventive hierarchical strategies for specialist portrayal with the harmonisation of regulative systems for platform work is expected to resolve these issues. As well as talking about the meaning of portrayal for digital platform workers at the public and global levels, this part reveals insight into the essential legitimate issues that emerge in digital work platforms and proposition feasible choices for settling them. This chapter progresses information about the platform economy's lawful implications and the need for serious areas of strength for systems by tending to these significant worries.

7.1. Challenges for Harmonisation

Harmonisation of the legal framework is the process of bringing together laws, rules and policies of different jurisdictions in terms of their content and making them uniform. This strategy is crucial to guarantee uniform utilisation and translation of law to make the lawful

outline more steady and predictable. A few problems with the harmonisation activities within the European Union (EU) system and worldwide digitalisation are the abundance of national laws, the speed of the technology creation, the differences in social standards and values, and the security issues related to the information. The main purposes of harmonisation are to level the playing field for all participants, encourage fair competition, and enhance financial integration. A unified legal framework improves the transparency of commercial exchanges, labour versatility, and cross-border commerce. It also promotes efficient cooperation between countries in resolving common challenges and exploiting the opportunities of the older age; however, there are several obstacles to the harmonisation of legal systems, in particular when it comes to business relations and digitalisation.

7.1.1. Diverse National Legislation

Alternatively, the term "diverse national legislation" signifies the differences in other countries' laws, rules and legal systems. These contrasts make noteworthy deterrents to harmonising legitimate frameworks in the European Union (EU) setting and worldwide digitisation, particularly concerning the area of work collaborations. The European Union (EU) comprises 27 states, each with its labour laws, directions, and legal system. The different qualities of national legislation pose troubles when coordinating legitimate systems connected to digitisation and employment relationships in the region. The difference in national laws is due to country-to-country legislative issues, culture, and historical variations. This variety gives rise to different lawful definitions, labour rights and social security frameworks. These refinements include some notable highlights.

Legal Definitions

The lack of consistency in the definitions of imperative terminology between countries could be a major obstacle to harmonising legitimate work systems and digitisation. The differences in legitimate definitions can lead to misunderstandings, different specialists' rights and problems when working across borders. There are many vital spaces in which these varieties appear.

Employee vs. Self-Employed

The issue of whether a person should be considered an employee or self-employed is a fiercely contested issue between the EU member states. Muehlberger (2020) argues that countries such as Germany have strict benchmarks for distinguishing people as employees, which grants them broader labour rights and social shields. On the other hand, many

countries, for example, the United Kingdom (UK), are more flexible in their arrangements, for instance, gig business and zero-hour contracts, which do not consider the workers to be workers and thus limit such access to social protections and labour rights (Muehlberger, 2020). Since the rights and protections that specialists are allowed depend on their employment status, these different classifications would create problems for the harmonisation of legitimate frameworks. To guarantee standard working conditions and avoid social dumping, comparative measures for worker classification should be connected to all EU states, as indicated by a 2016 European Parliament report.

Digital Work

The definitions of digital work differ in many countries since some define it as remote work or telework or by including platform work or other types of digital labour. The research conducted by the European Commission (2017) has shown that there is a need for the EU part states to agree on a unified definition of digital work, which poses a problem in implementing similar enactments and rights for digital workers. In light of the special challenges confronted by workers in this quickly creating segment, the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2021) has realised the requirement for a more particular definition of computerised labour which goes past just 'Independent employment' to incorporate work status, working conditions, and social security.

Other Key Terms

Other key expressions with different definitions in each country are: 'employer', 'contract of employment' and 'place of work'. These contrasts may hamper harmonising the legislative system that oversees digitalisation and employment interactions (European Commission, 2017). Governments, academics, and stakeholders need to collaborate to standardise definitions and classes of terminology related to digital work and business links. In enshrining this legitimate definition of harmonisation, we can create comparative rules and ensure that all workers can work under reasonable conditions, no matter where or what they do.

b. Worker Protections

National labour laws of the European Union (EU) part states offer different degrees of labourer security, outstandingly in terms of working hours, work contracts, and terminating forms. These disparities in worker rights may make it troublesome to harmonize regulatory systems and provide fair working conditions throughout the region.

Working Hours

Working hours and laws run significantly among EU member states. According to an investigation by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC, 2019), specific countries, such as France, have the hardest working hours, with a 35-hour workweek being the standard. Other countries, such as the United Kingdom (UK), permit more adaptable courses of action, counting expanded working hours (ETUC, 2019). These fluctuations might cause inconsistencies in work-life balance and employee well-being. Even though some countries may force stricter rules, the EU's Working Time Directive (2003/88/EC) builds up the least criteria for working hours, rest intervals, and paid leave. According to a Eurofound (2019) investigation, whereas most EU member states follow the Working Time Directive, others have poorer enforcement frameworks, which might result in inadequate specialist security.

Employment Contracts

The prerequisites for formal work contracts, trial periods, and take note periods vary by EU member state. A few countries, such as Germany, require businesses to provide employees with a composed contract indicating essential employment terms and conditions (Eurofound, 2015). Other countries may have less thorough rules, making business ties unstable and undermining labourer safeguards.

Dismissal Procedures

Individual and collective dismissal rules contrast with the EU. Agreeing to a Eurofound (2015) investigation, certain nations, such as Sweden, have harder standards for companies to legitimize dismissals or offer severance recompense, while others have more adaptable methods. These disparities in specialist rights can result in out-of-line treatment of specialists and impede efforts to unify lawful systems administering digitalization and employment interactions. As the nature of work advances within the advanced period, policymakers and partners must address these holes and coordinate to guarantee steady, reasonable labour standards over the EU and globally.

c. Social Security Systems

Social security frameworks over European Union (EU) member states contrast altogether, making it troublesome to harmonize enactment on advanced labour and social protection. These contrasts can result in variances in scope, payments, and benefits for workers within the digital age.

Contributions

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Rates and grounds for social security commitments may vary by nation, with a few putting more obligations on employers, employees, or both. Agreeing to a study by the European Commission in 2021, Belgium has one of the most noteworthy social security instalment rates within the EU, with employers and employees contributing over 25 percent of gross salary. In contrast, a few nations may have lower commitment rates, influencing the degree of social security open to workers.

Coverage

A few social security frameworks, such as those in Denmark and Sweden, give an all-inclusive scope for all inhabitants, including a wide range of workers, including self-employed and gig workers (European Commission, 2021). On the other hand, other EU member states may have less comprehensive scope, excluding certain populaces from social security payments. These disparities in scope might result in unfair treatment of workers and hinder endeavours to construct unified legitimate systems for digitization and employment interactions. The European Commission (2021) stressed the noteworthiness of upgrading social protection frameworks to offer suitable scope for non-standard specialists within the digital age.

Benefits

Eligibility conditions and advantage sums may change between EU member states, eminently in ranges such as unemployment protections, maternity leave, and pensions (European Commission, 2021). For case, Finland has considerable parental leave policies, while others have more restricted benefits (Eurofound, 2019). Advantage contrasts can result in imbalances in workers' access to social protection and monetary stability. To overcome these issues, governments, companies, workers, and other stakeholders must work together to harmonize conflicting rules, characterize standard terms, and advance reliable social security frameworks and worker rights throughout EU member states. By doing so, they may help to make more attractive and more equal working conditions within the digital age.

7.1.2. *Rapid Technological Advancements*

The ever-changing advanced world, driven by quick technical breakthroughs and the presentation of modern work practices, poses significant issues to regulators and policymakers in harmonizing legitimate systems for employment interactions. These issues infer from the trouble of keeping up with rapid technological advances, managing unintended impacts, and finding the proper balance between innovation and direction.

Regulatory Lag

Lawful systems regularly struggle to keep up with the quick speed of technological developments, resulting in obsolete legislation that fails to address the foremost squeezing concerns emerging from digitalization (European Commission, 2020). This might result in gaps in worker protection and ineffective rules that don't coordinate the modern substances of the digital working environment. As an example, the development of platform work and the gig economy has obscured customary refinements between employment and self-employment, making it troublesome for specialists to preserve satisfactory labourer rights and social security scope (ILO, 2021). Conventional labour laws may not suit the specific characteristics of these digital work courses of action, so we request an adjusted enactment to reflect these new sorts of business.

Unanticipated Consequences

New technologies may have unanticipated repercussions for specialists, businesses, and society that are troublesome to estimate and resolve through legitimate systems (ILO, 2021). For illustration, the broad use of artificial intelligence and robotics has raised stress about job displacement and skill deficiencies, and they must be upskilled or reskilled workers (OECD, 2019). These unanticipated impacts require advancing adaptable and lawful systems that anticipate and react to rapid technological advances. Another case is the collecting and processing enormous volumes of employee information, which raises issues regarding data security, security, and potential abuse (ILO, 2021). Tending to these concerns requires the creation of a solid data protection enactment that secures workers' rights while permitting businesses to utilize data for legal purposes.

Balancing Innovation and Regulation

In the rapidly evolving world of the digital economy, a tough balancing act has to be played out by policymakers: to promote advancement on the one hand and at the same time to provide workers and society sufficient protection (ILO, 2021). Finding this balance is essential for building financial development and job openings corresponding to the individual's work privileges and prosperity. For instance, rigid limitations may discourage the development of technology and hinder the adoption of new work practises, such as On the other hand, permissive rules may expose workers to misuse or other negative results of digitalization, such as unsteady working conditions or insufficient social security scope (ILO, 2021).

To summarize, overcoming the challenges of rapid technology breakthroughs requires adaptable and responsive legitimate systems that can anticipate and adjust to the changing advanced reality. Policymakers must participate with companies, specialists, and other partners to harmonize conflicting legislation, create uniform definitions, and advance steady labourer rights inside the EU and globally. Doing so may help form a reasonable and even-handed digital work environment that promotes advancement, financial development, and labourer well-being.

7.1.3. Differing Cultural Norms and Values

Legal frameworks and approaches to employment interactions are moulded by cultural norms and values, particularly within digitalisation. When seeking to align legal frameworks across the European Union (EU) and the global landscape, cultural differences can present significant challenges. The following are key issues arising from these variations.

Varied Work-Life Balance Expectations

The advancement of legislative frameworks tending to issues like remote work and working hours can be affected by social views towards work-life adjustment (Eurofound, 2019). Whereas a few countries put a higher need on laws requiring paid time off or limiting working hours, others seem to put more noteworthy emphasis on company discretion and adaptability.

For occasion, progressive labour laws that confine working hours and encourage adaptable work plans and strong social help frameworks create a high need for significant work-life adjustment in Scandinavian countries like Denmark and Sweden (Eurofound, 2019). As a result of their disparate cultural perspectives on labour and productivity, countries like the US and Japan, on the other hand, would put the next value on longer workdays and less paid time off (OECD, 2020).

Different Perspectives on Privacy

The foundation of uniform guidelines for digital work settings may be complicated by cultural contrasts in attitudes toward information security and observation (European Commission, 2017). Solid privacy laws may put the next need on exacting data protection laws, while less prohibitive laws may give companies more flexibility to accumulate and utilize employee data.

The European Union's (EU) 2018 usage of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) could be a conspicuous illustration since it has set up a worldwide standard for data

protection and security (European Commission, 2021). On the other hand, countries such as the United States direct data security more sectorally, with diverse degrees of security concurring in the industry (Federal Trade Commission, 2020).

Divergent Views on Worker Representation

Cultural norms around specialist representation may affect the creation of labour laws (European Commission, 2017). There are a few ways to harmonize legitimate systems throughout the EU since distinctive cultures put distinctive needs on personal employment contracts and employer discretion vs collective bargaining and labourer representation.

As a case, countries such as Germany and France have a long history of specialist cooperation through exchange unions and works councils, as well as collective bargaining (Eurofound, 2017). Countries like the US and the UK place more weight on at-will work and personal employment contracts, giving employers more scope in handling working relationships (Eurofound, 2015).

In summary, different cultural standards and values might make it troublesome to harmonize the legitimate systems relating to employment relationships and digitization. In order to overcome these obstacles, policymakers must take into consideration the particular social settings of each country. They must also collaborate and communicate continuously with significant parties to resolve irregularities between diverse arrangements, make uniform definitions, and progress uniform labourer protections throughout the European Union and the more extensive world. By doing this, they may support advancing a fair and advanced working environment that maintains various cultural values and cultivates employee prosperity.

7.1.4. *Data Privacy Concerns*

Data security and protection concerns have expanded essentially due to digitalization, particularly regarding job connections. Harmonizing legislative systems to safeguard workers' security rights becomes more troublesome as businesses gather, store, and analyze enormous amounts of employee information. Critical obstacles in this field include:

Balancing Employer Interests and Worker Protections

Regulators must strike a cautious balance between safeguarding employees' right to security and allowing businesses to utilize data for legitimate targets, such as execution observing or expanded working environment productivity (ILO, 2021). Setting exact rules for data collection, capacity, and analysis and enforcing punishments for noncompliance may be essential to realise this. Managers may, for illustration, utilize employee data to boost yield, ensure

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specialist security, or track adherence to corporate rules (ILO, 2021). They must, be that as it may, take safety measures to secure against the abuse of personal data and regard the security rights of their representatives. This is to ensure that firms can maximize the benefits of representative information.

In contrast, to decrease any perils to labourer protection, controllers must allow clear rules on the worthy utilisation of employee data. Frameworks to defend workers' protection rights become more troublesome as businesses accumulate, store, and analyze massive amounts of representative information. Imperative impediments in this field incorporate:

Establishing Data Protection Standards

Since national laws and practices shift, it can be troublesome to create uniform data protection rules for the EU and the rest of the world (European Commission, 2017). Policymakers must participate in making shared definitions, precepts, and regulations for data protection within the advanced workplace. One imperative outline of a careful data protection system put in by the European Union (EU) in 2018 is the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (European Commission, 2021). The GDPR sets up an international standard for data privacy and security that expands over national borders to businesses that handle the individual data of citizens of the European Union. Participation is vital to standardize data protection necessities over jurisdictions as long as disparities in national laws and practices persist.

Addressing Cross-Border Data Transfers

It can be troublesome to harmonize enactment relating to cross-border exchanges of individual data, particularly when managing non-EU countries with laxer data protection guidelines (European Commission, 2017). Solid international collaboration and agreements are required to protect workers' data appropriately in these conditions. The European Union (EU) has executed strategies, including Standard Contractual Clauses (SCCs) and Binding Corporate Rules (BCRs), to empower cross-border data exchanges (European Commission, 2021). By advertising adequate protections for personal data transmitted outside of the EU, these innovations aim to guarantee GDPR compliance. In any case, there are still issues with ensuring uniform security for employee data in different nations with distinctive data privacy regulations.

In conclusion, lawmakers, businesses, employees, and other stakeholders must work together to address data privacy issues in digitalization. Stakeholders may offer assistance to

guarantee that all workers in the advanced age have more pleasant and equal working conditions by settling conflicting rules, making uniform definitions, and supporting reliable labourer rights. To preserve an adjust between advancement and the defence of workers' rights, legitimate systems and laws administering the utilisation of digital technology in employment must also progress with the times.

7.2. Addressing the Skills Gap

Workers are finding it challenging to keep up with the changing requests of the digital work environment due to the fast speed of digitalization (OECD, 2019). This has brought about an extended skills gap. Regulators and lawmakers will discover it troublesome to make legislative systems that empower upskilling and reskilling programs and ensure that employees have the abilities required to flourish in the digital age.

7.2.1. Promoting Inclusive Digital Work Environments

Especially for vulnerable or distraught populations like women, more seasoned specialists, or individuals with disabilities, digitalization has the potential to compound already-existing disparities (ILO, 2021). The special necessities and challenges confronted by these groups must be considered when harmonizing regulatory systems in order to advance comprehensive and available digital work situations that permit all employees to lock in completely within the advanced economy.

7.2.2. Monitoring and Enforcement

It can be troublesome to guarantee legitimate and regulatory compliance within the digital working environment, particularly when it comes to remote or platform work courses of action (ILO, 2021). Collaboration between national specialists, managers, and employees is vital to creating proficient checking and enforcement methods. It is additionally essential to set unambiguous repercussions for disobedience.

7.2.3. Promoting Social Dialogue and Collective Bargaining

Lawful systems ought to be upgraded to ensure that workers' rights are maintained and their conclusions are listened to as a result of the potential for digitalization to change customary shapes of social discourse and collective bargaining (ILO, 2021). This might entail creating modern forms of collective representation that take into consideration the particulars of digital work courses of action or adjusting current specialist representation strategies.

7.2.4. *Adapting Labour Market Policies*

It is essential to adjust labour advertising policies, such as low wage laws, unemployment protections, and dynamic labour advertising activities, to take into account the evolving substances of the digital working environment for labour market laws to help and protect specialists within the advanced age, lawmakers, social accomplices, and other partners must proceed to collaborate (ILO, 2021).

There are many different and complicated issues included in planning lawful systems for proficient partnerships within the advanced age. A comprehensive and facilitated methodology combining participation between national specialists, social accomplices, managers, representatives, and other stakeholders is required to address these issues. Stakeholders may offer assistance to make working conditions more pleasant and rise to standard for all specialists within the digital age by collaborating to resolve conflicting laws, make uniform definitions, and advance consistent labourer rights.

7.2.5. *Adapting Taxation Policies*

Complications in tax collection and compliance have been brought about by digitalization and the rise of new work models, such as remote and platform labour (OECD, 2019). It's conceivable that the extraordinary highlights of these digital labour courses of action are past the capabilities of traditional taxation frameworks. Hence, policy alterations are required to guarantee equitable and viable revenue collection. In arrange to harmonize lawful systems in this field, the following factors are pivotal:

7.3. Clarifying worker classification

The refinement between employment and self-employment has become cloudier due to the increment of platform work and gig labour, making it challenging to find out these workers' appropriate charge duties (OECD, 2019). Harmonizing legitimate systems must give precise rules for specialist categorization in order to solve this issue. These proposals must take into consideration numerous components, including the degree of control worked out by the platform, the worker's degree of opportunity, and the sort of work done (European Commission, 2021). A solution could be the creation of a specific tax category for gig and platform workers, recognising their specific employment status and establishing a transparent taxation regime (European Commission, 2021). This would encourage tax fairness for these workers and diminish financial uncertainty.

7.4. Adapting Tax Administration processes

Digital work courses of action should be altered to accomplish productive and powerful tax collection (OECD, 2019). This might incorporate:

1. Online resources should facilitate the simplification of the registration procedures for workers to register for taxes and ensure that crucial data is collected and approved (OECD, 2019).

2. To fulfil the desires of remote and platform workers, tax specialists should give advanced frameworks that are simple to utilise for recording and instalments (OECD, 2019).

3. Tax specialists must provide clear guidance and assistance to help workers in digital work action lines understand and meet their tax duties (OECD, 2019).).

7.4.1. Addressing Cross-Border Tax Issues

Digital labour has a global scope and creates problems in international tax areas such as double taxation and tax avoidance (OECD, 2019). Harmonising legitimate frameworks ought to take into consideration the taking after cures to handle these issues:

1. **Implementing international tax agreements:** To address the issues of tax residence, permanent establishment and withholding taxes, nations should collaborate to arrange bilateral or multilateral tax agreements (OECD, 2019).

2. **Developing common tax reporting standards:** Fostering common tax reporting standards: Standardised rules for the detailing of tax for digital work courses of action can enhance international tax compliance and lessen the trouble of sharing data between tax specialists (OECD, 2019).

3. **Enhancing international cooperation:** To address tax avoidance, any doubt about whether cross-border digital work courses of action are properly taxed, and to improve global collaboration, tax experts should collaborate more closely (OECD, 2019).

Using recommended arrangements for settling these issues, legislators can create standardised legitimate frameworks that can successfully change taxation policies to the particularities of digital labour courses of action. This way, companies can guarantee impartial and convincing assessment gathering while advancing social equity and across-the-board improvement in the digital era.

7.4.2. *Ensuring Access to Social Protection*

Getting social assurance benefits like health insurance, annuities, and unemployment benefits may cause troubles for specialists who are locked in in digital work courses of action, counting platform work and gig labour (ILO, 2021). In order to advance financial steadiness, reduce disparity, and ensure that workers in these courses of action have access to adequate social security, administrative systems must be harmonized. Imperative variables for fulfilling this objective are as follows:

7.4.3. *Extending Coverage*

Platform workers and gig workers might not be adequately secured by conventional social security frameworks, denying them access to imperative benefits like health protections, benefits commitments, and unemployment protections (ILO, 2021). Harmonizing lawful systems ought to take under consideration the taking after strategies to overcome this issue:

i. Mandating platform commitments: To ensure that these workers get the same benefits as regular employees, governments may order that platforms make commitments to social security frameworks for the sake of their employees (ILO, 2021).

ii. Facilitating voluntary commitments: In arrange to guarantee that they can get benefits indeed within the occasion that their platforms don't make an instalment on their behalf, lawful systems may permit platform workers and gig specialists to intentionally contribute to social security programs (ILO, 2021).

iii. Developing portable benefits plans: Workers can collect and exchange benefits as they travel between different platforms or work courses of action with convenient benefits plans made particularly for digital work arrangements (ILO, 2021).

Simplifying Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility for social security instalments may be complicated by the particulars of digital work courses of action, such as irregular wages or a few sources of income (ILO, 2021). In arrange to address this issue, harmonizing legitimate systems should take into account:

i. Adjusting income edges: It may well be fundamental to adjust qualification necessities based on pay edges to require platform workers' and gig workers' erratic or variable profit into thought (ILO, 2021).

ii. Recognizing alternative work contracts: Alternative business contracts, such as zero-hour contracts or self-employment contracts, may be identified by lawful systems as genuine reasons to get social security benefits (ILO, 2021).

iii.   Promoting widespread social protection: Platform specialists and gig specialists may get the necessary benefits in case there's a move toward widespread social security models, which offer benefits to everybody in any case of work status or pay level (ILO, 2021).

Facilitating Portability

Concerns about the portability of social protection benefits are brought up by the around-the-world scope of digital labour, mainly when employees participate in cross-border work or switch between distinctive employment courses of action (ILO, 2021). Harmonizing legitimate frameworks ought to take into consideration the taking after cures to deal with this issue.

i. Implementing international social security agreements: To empower the versatility of social security benefits and ensure that representatives may proceed to be secured whereas working overseas, countries might make bilateral or multilateral agreements (ILO, 2021).

ii. Developing interoperable social security frameworks: Adaptability and progression of scope can be advanced by the creation of interoperable social protection frameworks, which permit employees to exchange benefits over different platforms or work arrangements (ILO, 2021).

ii. Establishing personal social security accounts: Platform specialists and gig workers might have them possess individual social security accounts, which would empower them to oversee and accrue benefits in a way that's both convenient and customized (ILO, 2021).

Through the execution of proposed solutions and resolving these issues, administrators may make standardized legislative frameworks that give social security to all workers in the digital age. In expansion to expanding financial stability and lowering inequality, this will also move forward labourer strength to continuous technological alter and upgrade worker well-being in common.

7.5.   Opportunities for Harmonizing Legal Frameworks

Harmonizing legitimate systems within the area is becoming increasingly critical as digitization and innovation enhancements proceed to alter the nature of employment intelligence. This project offers countries a number of chances to work together, be imaginative, and advance comprehensive and sustainable development. Within the digital age, workers' rights and social fairness must be maintained by altering the rapidly progressing nature of employment. Regional collaboration encourages the trade of best practices, mutual learning, and

agreeable research by handling the common challenges emerging from these advancements. Harmonizing lawful systems can moreover foster innovation and investment in digital work courses of action by building up a steady and unsurprising corporate environment.

Besides, by giving cross-border enterprises clear standards and guidelines, these openings offer assistance to advance regional competitiveness. Legal harmonization can back more common advancement targets, just like the Sustainable Development Objectives of the United Nations, by empowering advancement, drawing investments, and advancing reasonable working conditions. By taking advantage of the potential displayed by harmonizing lawful systems for business interactions within the advanced age, the area can protect the welfare of its workforce, progress social equity, and boost financial development.

7.5.1. *Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing*

The region's countries must communicate and work together to harmonize their legitimate frameworks, which creates a number of chances for participation and data exchange. Among these openings are:

Regional Forums

The setting up of regional forums or summits can offer assistance to partners, social accomplices, and policymakers within the region to communicate, share thoughts, and trade skills. The Business, Social Policy, Health, and Consumer Affairs Council of the European Union and the ASEAN Labour Ministers' Meeting are two cases of such forums (ASEAN, 2020; European Commission, n.d.). These dialogue sheets can

i. Identify shared troubles and needs for labour law change and digitization of work.

ii. Share best practices, lessons picked up, and viable arrangement arrangements to handle these troubles.

iii. Encourage collaboration and coordination among member nations to embrace harmonized legislative systems.

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

Countries with more built-up legitimate systems and encounter handling the challenges of digital work courses of action can offer specialized help and capacity-building support to others. This will help to improve labour measures and progress compliance all through the area. Particular acts incorporate:

i. Creating training programs and seminars on labour law changes, social security frameworks, and tax collection arrangements for digital specialists.

ii. Offering proficient direction on embracing and implementing digital labour measures.

iii. Developing digital devices and platforms to screen and enforce labour rules and progress gets social security benefits.

Research and Data Sharing

Collaborative research activities and data sharing can move forward our understanding of how digitization influences labour markets and feeds evidence-based control. Nations can:

i. Conduct collaborative investigation on labourer categorization, taxation directions, and social protection frameworks for digital work courses of action.

ii. Create standardized methods and pointers to evaluate and compare the effect of digitalization on employment relationships in different countries.

iii. Create common databases and instruments to analyse information on labour market patterns, digital work courses of action, and approach activities.

Best Practices and Innovative Solutions

Exchanging best practices and imaginative thoughts enables nations to memorize from each other's encounters and execute compelling approaches and programs to solve shared concerns. This may be finished through:

i. Documenting and disseminating effective policies and activities for digital work courses of action.

ii. Organizing study trips and expert trades to promote learning and information transfer between countries.

iii. Establishing regional systems and communities of practice to cultivate collaboration and trade thoughts on labour law changes and social protection systems for digital employment.

Nations may speed up the method of harmonizing legitimate systems for employment interactions within the digital age by taking advantage of these conceivable outcomes for collaboration and data sharing. This will permit them to confront the issues of digitization better, advance social equity, and support inclusive and feasible development throughout the area.

7.5.2. *Promoting Innovation and Competitiveness*

Harmonizing regulatory systems can offer assistance in forming a more unsurprising and steady corporate climate, encouraging advancement and investment within the digital working environment. Key conceivable outcomes in this division incorporate the following:

Legal Certainty

Clear and uniform lawful systems may give firms the certainty they have to contribute to digital work arrangements, empowering advancement and adjusting to technological alter. This may be finished through:

i. Creating clear laws for digital work courses of action, counting specialist categorization, labour security, and tax collection policies.

ii. Ensure uniform application and requirement of legitimate systems over different businesses and jurisdictions within the area.

iii. Regularly looking at and changing labour laws and controls to adjust to innovation advancements and changing work courses of action.

Level Playing Field

Harmonized legitimate systems can help give a level playing field for cross-border firms by eliminating administrative arbitrage and cultivating reasonable competition. Particular acts incorporate:

i. Creating regional rules for labour, taxation, and social assurance for advanced work courses of action.

ii. Promoting cross-border collaboration among national administrative bodies to guarantee uniform authorization of labour rules.

iii. Developing dispute resolution instruments to address non-compliance and unfair competition among endeavours.

Attracting Investment

A well-regulated digital work environment can attract investors and businesses, invigorating financial development and work creation. Nations can capitalize on this opportunity by:

i. Showcasing the benefits of harmonized lawful systems for digital work courses of action, such as expanded lawful certainty, reasonable competition, and getting to a talented workforce.

ii. Developing focused investment advancement procedures to pull in businesses and new companies in segments related to digital work and platform-mediated administrations.

iii. Offering motivations, such as tax breaks or streamlined regulatory methods, for businesses that receive imaginative and comprehensive advanced work courses of action.

Nurturing Innovation

Legal systems may encourage the improvement and selection of new arrangements by undertakings by offering unambiguous standards and measures for digital work courses of action. This may be finished by:

i. Promoting the creation and take-up of innovative work courses of action, such as hybrid models that incorporate aspects of self-employment and conventional business or platform cooperatives.

ii. Encouragement of the creation of digital platforms that offer assistance to individuals to obtain abilities, social security, and conceivable outcomes for great work.

iii. Creating exploratory regions, or regulatory sandboxes, where companies may attempt and improve creative approaches to digital labour courses of action beneath the attentive eye of regulatory bodies.

Nations may create a dynamic and diverse digital work environment by utilizing these chances to advance and develop competitiveness. This will not only draw capital and boost financial extension, but it will also help in the creation of inventive solutions that handle the issues posed by digitization while progressing social equity and workers' rights.

7.5.3. *Fostering Inclusive and Sustainable Growth*

By guaranteeing that the advantages of digitization are broadly dispersed and cultivating fair and equitable working conditions, harmonizing legitimate systems may bolster comprehensive economic development. Conceivable outcomes in this field comprise of:

Reducing Inequalities

Empowering social equity and reducing inequality can be accomplished by giving labour rights and social security benefits to employees locked in in digital work courses of action. Nations can do this by:

i. Modifying current labour laws and arrangements to ensure that specialists in advanced work courses of action have the same labour rights as routine employees, counting least salaries, paid time off, and secure working conditions, and are appropriately categorized (ILO, 2021).

ii. Filling up coverage crevices for health protections, benefits, and unemployment benefits by amplifying social security scope to employees in advanced work courses of action (ILO, 2021).

iii. Creating centred approaches and activities to meet the enjoyable prerequisites and vulnerabilities of women, young people, and casual worker's groups underrepresented in digital work courses of action.

Supporting Decent Work

Harmonized legal frameworks can help realize the goals of decent employment by promoting a labour market that is more inclusive and egalitarian. In this domain, measures consist of:

1. Creating and implementing labour laws and rules to guarantee equitable pay, favourable working conditions, and rights for all workers—including those engaged in digital labour—(ILO, 2021).

2. Increasing the effectiveness of labour inspection and enforcement systems to keep an eye on adherence to labour laws and deal with infractions, especially in industries where digital work arrangements are widely used.

3. In order to make sure that labour laws and regulations take into account the changing demands and realities of workers in the digital age, social dialogue and consultation with workers' groups, employers, and other stakeholders should be strengthened.

Promoting Sustainable Development

Legal frameworks can help accomplish more general sustainable development objectives, such as SDG 8 on decent employment and economic growth, by promoting inclusive and equitable growth. Particular activities consist of:

i. Making sure that national development strategies and plans incorporate goals for social protection and decent employment and that these goals are in line with the larger sustainable development goals (United Nations, 2015).

ii. Investment should be made in programs for lifelong learning and skill development so that employees may take advantage of new job possibilities in the digital age and adjust to technological change (ILO, 2021).

iii. Encouraging the shift to digital work arrangements that are ecologically friendly, including remote work or green platform companies, in order to help meet SDG 13 on climate change (United Nations, 2015).

Enhancing resilience

Digital workplaces can be properly regulated in order to strengthen social safety nets and to increase the resilience of labour markets to economic and technological changes. This can

be done by adopting adaptable labour laws that protect employees' rights and support the flexibility required to respond and adjust to new work arrangements and business models, as commonly recommended by the ILO (2021). Moreover, social protection programmes, which would include the provision of income support and additional benefits to workers affected by technological advances or economic shocks, are crucial to compensate workers that are changing careers or moving. These measures will enable the workers to transition easily to the evolving job market. In addition, it is important to promote socially responsible digital-based work practises and ethical business models, such as platform cooperatives, to secure the long-term labour market and social security systems. Albania and Western Balkan countries will be able to consolidate legal frameworks and seize these opportunities by bringing the labour market closer to more inclusive, and sustainable paths, which prioritise workers' welfare in the pursuit of broader development goals.

Strengthening Social Dialogue

Social partners must maintain equilibrium between legal reforms when participating in policy development or labour law amendments to incorporate diverse social partner perspectives. Capacity building represents one approach to achieving this goal. Employers, organised labour, and governments must support initiatives that teach workers about digital work arrangements and digitalisation's broader effects. The International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2021) recommends using training courses and seminars alongside knowledge sharing to achieve this goal. The initiatives provide workers with essential knowledge to participate in digital work discussions and decision-making processes. The enhanced understanding of workers and stakeholders enables policymakers to develop better policies incorporating inclusive and equitable labour laws for the digital economy.

A second strategy to boost SD involves establishing multi-stakeholder partnerships. The alliances unite employers with employee organisations, government bodies, and additional stakeholders to handle digitalisation effects while creating productive growth strategies. The European Commission (2020) emphasises the need to make these partnerships because they help develop themes including worker classification, tax systems, and labour regulations. Including workers in these partnerships ensures their issues receive attention when developing digital work policies. The protection and promotion of worker bargaining, association, and representation rights need support, while workers should be included in policy formation processes. The development of discussion platforms for stakeholders across regions proves beneficial because it enables the discussion of common issues followed by problem-solving

activities. The assessment of policies enables organisations to monitor their effectiveness because digital work arrangements constantly change (ILO, 2021.

Enhancing Portability of Rights and Benefits

Harmonised legislative frameworks would help workers in digital work arrangements to the extent that they would facilitate the portability of rights and benefits according to essential protections and social security coverage, irrespective of employment status or location. Another important measure is standardising employment classifications across national borders. Lawmakers can also enhance workers' ability to shift between different work arrangements while maintaining access to the same rights and benefits by standardising definitions for groups of workers, such as independent contractors, dependent contractors, employees, etc. This standardisation makes it easier for workers to move from one employment to another without losing benefits, according to the ILO (2021). Furthermore, the establishment of portable benefits schemes is another crucial strategy that guarantees that workers access benefits such as unemployment insurance, pension plans, and health insurance even when they are not employed.

In addition to standardising classifications and offering portable benefits, facilitating data sharing and interoperability between social security systems is essential to enhancing the portability of workers' rights and benefits. As the European Commission (2020) emphasizes, the job history of any worker, as well as their contributions and entitlements, requires proper transfer across borders and different social security systems. This can only be achieved using uniform data standards and interoperable digital systems to protect workers' privacy while allowing for secure and efficient data transmission. Furthermore, strengthening coordination among social security institutions at national and regional levels is crucial for safeguarding workers' rights as they transition between different employment arrangements. Regular information sharing, formal collaboration agreements, and cooperative training programs can ensure that workers' benefits are consistently protected. Regular monitoring the impacts of digital work arrangements on workers' access to benefits, as suggested by the ILO (2021), allows governments to identify gaps and make necessary legislative adjustments to create a more equitable system that adapts to the digital age.

7.6.   Addressing Ethical and Privacy Concerns

Digital work arrangements can be resolved through a cooperative effort among neighbouring Albania countries so that workers' rights are protected and firms act ethically. Key activities

include: Fostering algorithmic transparency and accountability; Promoting responsible data governance; Encouraging the adoption of privacy-enhancing technologies; Developing ethical guidelines and codes of conduct; Strengthening enforcement and dispute resolution mechanisms. The governments should develop legislation and principles to enhance transparency and accountability for algorithms in digital employment agreements. It includes persuasive organisations and platforms that disclose information on recruiting algorithms, work allocation, and performance management. It provides algorithms to assess and correct their biases or discriminatory practises (ILO, 2021).).

Creating rules and procedures that support responsible data governance practices can assist in guaranteeing that employees' personal information is gathered, kept, and utilized appropriately in digital work environments. This involves following data minimization and purpose limitation principles, demanding express consent for data collection and use, and guaranteeing that employees have the right to access, rectify, and erase their data (ILO, 2021).

Governments should encourage enterprises and platforms to use privacy-enhancing technologies that limit the collection and processing of personal data in digital work environments. This may involve applying pseudonymization and anonymization techniques, establishing end-to-end encryption for data transfer, and deploying decentralized data storage systems (European Commission, 2020).

Governments, corporations, and labour groups should work together to create ethical principles and codes of behaviour for digital work arrangements that address privacy and moral concerns. These standards should include concerns like data protection, algorithmic accountability, non-discrimination, and workers' privacy rights, and they should be updated on a regular basis to reflect new difficulties and best practices (ILO, 2021).

Ensuring effective implementation of data protection and privacy legislation is critical for resolving ethical and privacy problems in digital work environments. This might include establishing specialized regulatory organizations, increasing monitoring and enforcement measures, and providing workers with accessible and effective dispute-resolution methods if their privacy rights have been breached (ILO, 2021).

7.7. Facilitating access to justice

Legal frameworks in the harmonized digital work arrangements, meaning the laws are transparent and uniform regarding redress and conflict resolution, bring greater justice to employees. This may be accomplished by: Developing online platforms for dispute resolution;

Providing legal information and education; Strengthening labour inspection and enforcement mechanisms; Promoting alternative dispute resolution methods; Enhancing cross-border cooperation and enforcement.

Creating online forums with the express purpose of handling disagreements resulting from remote work arrangements can enhance accessibility and expedite conflict resolution. These platforms have to be simple to use, multilingual, and include a range of tools like document sharing, encrypted messaging, and video conferencing for submitting evidence and facilitating collaboration (ILO, 2021).

For digital work arrangements, governments and civil society groups should offer readily available and current information on workers' rights, legal remedies, and conflict resolution procedures. Online resources, instructional materials, and awareness campaigns aimed at employees, employers, and other stakeholders can all fall under this category (ILO, 2021).

In order to address worker rights breaches in digital work arrangements, labour inspectors must be better equipped to monitor and enforce labour regulations. This might entail giving labour inspectors additional training, creating customized inspection procedures, and collaborating with other regulatory organizations (ILO, 2021).

Promoting alternative means to resolve employees' conflicts arising from their digital work arrangements, like conciliation or mediation, would help provide employees with quick, cheap, and easily accessible means of resolving their conflicts (ILO, 2021).).

Procedures for cross-border collaboration and enforcement of labour laws are needed in order to address abuses of workers' rights in digital work arrangements that transcend national borders. One potential way of achieving this could include forming regional or global enforcement organisations, standardizing means of resolving labour disputes across borders, and promoting communication between appropriate agencies (ILO, 2021).

Once these strategies are put into practise and other stakeholders work with governments to ensure that digital workers have efficient and user-friendly dispute resolution and redress mechanisms, governments and other stakeholders can strengthen protection for workers' rights and promote social justice in the age of digital work. (Edquist, 2010). One of the advantages of bringing the employment law into conformity with digital standards is the improvement of social discourse, more transferable rights and benefits, the handling of privacy and ethical issues, and easier access to the legal system. Utilising these chances, nations can

build a more equal and lasting labour market that safeguards workers' rights and promotes social justice and ethical corporate conduct in the digital age.

Authentic disputes and case guideline

Conflicting court decisions and legitimate struggles in CEE nations feature issues made in various public settings. In Hungary, the 2018 "Lex glitch" correction to the Work Code is expected to explain stage workers' business status. However, it drove legitimate disarray and continuous struggles because of an absence of exact rules for recognizing representatives and independently employed specialists. In Poland, a 2020 High Court judgment classed stage workers as workers. A 2020 court administering in Bulgaria characterized them as independently employed, reflecting variations in labour market real factors, legislative points, and legitimate understanding (Aloisi, 2022).

Fluctuating degrees of stage economy improvement

Certain CEE countries have a more evolved stage economy than others, which causes contrasts in the prerequisites and needs for guidelines. For example:

Estonia

With an assortment of digital work platforms working in various ventures, including home-grown administrations, outsourcing, and transportation, Estonia has a nearly progressed stage economy. Understanding that gig economies and digital development can spike work creation and financial growth, the Estonian government has adopted a proactive strategy in advancing these areas. As a result of its proactive position, Estonia has passed various regulations that shield workers' privileges while at the same time advancing the stage economy's extension. For example, the public authority of Estonia has established regulations to support e-residency and digital business ventures, which permit outsiders to begin and run undertakings somewhat in Estonia (Mostert et al., 2016). All the while, Estonia has endeavoured to find some harmony between these developments situated approaches and defensive measures for stage workers, such as giving independently employed individuals more work freedoms and social shields. Controllers should fight complex issues relating to work orders, algorithmic administration, and cross-line stage activities despite Estonia's foundation economy's high-level condition. Along these lines, Estonian controllers need to ceaselessly alter their systems to keep awake with the rapidly changing stage of the economy (Kinkorová, 2015).

Bulgaria and Romania

Bulgaria and Romania have a less evolved stage economy than countries like Estonia, with less platform in activity and a more modest portion of the labour force taking part in stage action. This slower development can be credited to various causes, including lower levels of web access and digital education and an absence of a digital foundation. These countries' foundation economies are less developed, affecting administrative methodologies (Bódi & Farkas, 2019). Policymakers in Bulgaria and Romania could have less association with and data on the unprecedented issues introduced by platform work, restricting their capacity to take on broad and firm rules. Also, these state-run organizations could zero in on other course of action issues, such as clearing out relaxed work or making a progressed system, over-coordinating the platform economy. Authentic battles and case guidelines in Bulgaria and Romania reflect the regulatory issues. For example, court choices in these nations have wrestled with the grouping of platform workers, constantly embracing a cautious procedure that troubles versatility and monetary improvement above strong work safeguards. As the platform economy fills Bulgaria and Romania, specialists ought to address these difficulties and ensure that guidelines stay mindful of the changing thought of platform development. Overall, higher levels of advancement of the platform economy in the CEE Countries means that they may develop uneven regulatory requirements, targets, and regulations. More complicated platform economies, such as Estonia, may be able to use regulatory frameworks. Countries, however, having similar platform areas, such as Bulgaria and Romania, may find it inconvenient to enact compelling rules. These separations include the need to develop coherent procedures so that in the CEE region, they can coordinate legitimate designs of platform development.

Genuine issues and case guideline

Court choices in CEE nations show how much platform economy advancement affects managerial approaches. In Latvia, a 2019 court choice concerning a ride-hailing stage ordered drivers to utilise freely, raising stresses over what more grounded work impediments would mean for the platform economy's expansion. In Lithuania, A 2021 court decision arranged stage workers as delegates, highlighting the significance of work honours even in a rising platform economy.

Managerial Challenge

Regulatory disputes among Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) nations could cause inconveniences in organizing official frameworks controlling platform work. As states battle to attract hypotheses and empower the expansion of the modernized economy, they could relax

work restrictions to lay out a more business-obliging environment. This "rush to the base" may bring about fewer work shields for stage workers, sabotaging endeavours to make clear lawful principles all through the area (Klabbers et al., 2011). A few variables add to administrative rivalry in the CEE district. For instance, nations might attempt to draw in unfamiliar direct speculation by providing good administrative conditions, such as decreased work costs and less administrative weight. With regards to the stage economy, this could suggest assigning stage workers as independently employed or self-employed entities, so confining the platform's liability to offer work privileges and advantages. (Bonertz et al., 2018)

Nations might need to become focal points for digital development by authorizing light-contact decisions that advance the extension of the stage economy. This could involve diminishing limitations on algorithmic administration, information gathering, and stage business models. Also, policymakers might focus on the monetary turn of events and occupation creation by advancing the stage economy's extension. This could bring about measures that favour stage firms, for example, lower expenses or exceptions from specific work limitations, in the expectation that these organizations will add to monetary advancement. Administrative rivalry can result in a "rush to the base" with regard to work principles and privileges for stage workers as countries take on continuously lenient guidelines to protect their monetary benefit. This could risk harmonization endeavours since legislatures might be reluctant to carry out tight work guidelines, assuming they dread losing the upper hand or putting speculation down (Hendrickx & Pecinovsky, 2015).

Moreover, administrative competition could bring about conflicting execution of work regulations throughout the CEE region for certain countries that carry out lower prerequisites than others. This can bring about an inconsistent battleground for stage firms and changed shields for stage workers in view of the country in which they work. Tending to administrative contests and progressing legitimate structure harmonization in Focal and Eastern Europe would require global joint effort and coordination. This could incorporate trading best works, fitting administrative methodologies, and teaming up to guarantee a fair battleground for stage firms while giving necessary work shields to stage workers. This permits CEE countries to encourage the extension of the stage economy while safeguarding the privileges and interests of stage workers (Barnard, 2012).

Legitimate struggles and case regulation

Clashing court choices and lawful difficulties in CEE countries exhibit the logical inconsistency between specialist shields and administrative contests. In Latvia, the 2019 court

judgment in regards to a ride-hailing stage, which sorted drivers as independently employed, to a limited extent inferable from stresses over the conceivable effect of more brutal work limitations on the development of the stage economy, exhibits the significance of administrative contest on legal choices. Similarly, in Lithuania, the 2021 court decision, which characterized stage workers as workers and focused on the need for work principles, raises doubt about the suspicion that liberal standards are expected to draw in venture and animate development. The events demonstrate how administrative rivalry challenges law enforcement and state planning purposes in business operations. The CEE region must improve its platform work laws by solving these issues while ensuring economic growth and worker protection (Barnard 2014). Multiple opportunities exist to link platform work regulations in Central and Eastern Europe despite its specific national settings and different platform development levels. By joining these frameworks, the region can develop similar employment rules while helping EU and worldwide experts better see digitalization's effects on worker relationships (De Madariaga, 2013).

Territorial Participation

CEE nations can benefit from better collaboration and exchange of successful work methods between countries. Local events and promotional activities help share knowledge between regions to standardise platform work regulations. For instance, the European Union (EU) Eastern Organization, which contains a few CEE countries, could act as a gathering for tending to stage work guidelines and harmonization. Moreover, CEE countries might connect on agreeable exploration undertakings and studies to all the more likely grasp the impact of digitalization on business connections, working conditions, and work markets nearby. This can help distinguish shared issues and conceivable outcomes and advise the development regarding orchestrated legitimate structures that fit the area's enjoyable necessities and conditions (De Rosnay & Janssen, 2014).

The impact of EU Strategies and Decisions

As current or planned individuals from the EU, CEE countries are administered by EU approaches and guidelines, which might affect their foundation work regulations. The EU has effectively addressed issues connected with stage work through programs like the Digital Administrations Act and the European Mainstay of Social Privileges. The objectives of these ventures are to propel social freedoms, fair work practices, and straightforwardness in the digital economy. These objectives can act as a guide for harmonization endeavours among CEE countries. What's more, fitting authoritative systems is essential to advance fair rivalry

and even-handed treatment of workers across part states as per the EU's obligation to the four principal opportunities—the free development of cash, individuals, items, and administrations. Harmonization and uniform work shields for stage workers across the area can be worked with by EU-level guidelines and orders, given the developing transnational nature of digital work platforms (Hopt & Steffek, 2013).

The job of global work guidelines: Global work guidelines, such as those set out by the International Labour Organization (ILO), can assist CEE countries with making regulative systems that defend the freedoms of stage workers. These rules can empower greater consistency and make provincial harmonization more straightforward. The Opportunity of Affiliation and Right to Organise Convention (C087), the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention (C098), and the Employment Relationship Recommendation (R198) are among the main ILO guidelines for stage work. The actions demonstrate why all workers need protection for their rights to organise and work fairly without considering business classification. When CEE nations follow world work standards, they will protect basic platform worker rights and work opportunities while combining their leadership methods with international business practises. The strategy enables organisations to exchange successful solutions and unite resources better when facing digital business problems (Kharchenko et al., 2017). The CEE nations should collaborate through regional opportunities to establish platform work standards that align with EU rules and create global work rules.

7.8. The Feasibility and Desirability of a Common Legal Framework

Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) harmonisation of lawful systems for platform work has two benefits and weaknesses that should be thoroughly analysed when assessing the feasibility and propriety of a homogeneous lawful structure.

7.8.1. Benefits of harmonization

A legitimate regional system for platform work in the CEE region could give different advantages such as Reliable Labour Protections; Diminished Administrative Vulnerability; Further developed requirement; Sharing Prescribed Procedures.

A regional legislative system provides equal working standards and protections to platform workers across different platforms and locations. This approach would help create better employment standards across different platform worker populations.

Harmonization would limit administrative vulnerability for platform firms working in various CEE countries by guaranteeing uniform official prerequisites and assumptions. This

might rouse platform firms to put more effort into the region and permit cross-line platform joint efforts.

A brought-together regulative system could further develop a cross-line joint effort between work inspectorates and other implementation bodies, simplifying it to screen and uphold work principles in the platform economy (Pita et al., 2016)

Harmonization will empower countries to share best practices and gain from one another's encounters, making a more cooperative way to deal with platform-related challenges.

7.8.2 Challenges and Limitations

In spite of the likely advantages, laying out a solitary lawful structure might be challenging, attributable to a few variables.

Different Public Settings: The CEE countries' different overall sets of laws, work market conditions, and legislative plans could make it hard to settle on a solitary arrangement of legitimate standards for platform business.

Shifting Degrees of Platform Economy Improvement: Nations with further developed platform economies might have different administrative necessities and objectives than those with less settled platform areas. Given these varieties, a one-size-fits-all system might be incapable.

Political Interests: Nations' ability to take part in harmonization endeavours might change depending upon their political advantages and goals. Nations, for instance, might be reluctant to carry out tight work guidelines on the off chance that they are worried about losing the upper hand or putting the venture down. (Calderoni, 2010).

Adaptability Concerns: A typical legitimate structure might restrict countries' ability to fit their general sets of laws to their own conditions or investigations with novel administrative measures.

7.8.3 A balanced approach

Given the likely advantages and issues of harmonization, a more feasible and helpful methodology might be to encourage more prominent consistency in legitimate systems while considering country-explicit changes. This fair methodology could incorporate the reception of all-inclusive principles or norms for platform work guidelines and the opportunity for countries to change their lawful structures to their surroundings and prerequisites (Raposo, 2016). A few vital components of this fair methodology could include:

Common Principles or Guidelines: Nations could agree on a bunch of central ideas or principles for platform work guidelines, such as fundamental labour rights, social

protections, and straightforwardness necessities. These thoughts may be founded on international labour norms and tailored to the novel setting of platform business (Rosati, 2013).

Adaptability in Execution: While sticking to shared standards, countries ought to have the option to alter those standards to their particular work market real factors, legislative plans, and general sets of laws.

Cross-Line Collaboration: Nations ought to cooperate on cross-line requirement exercises, trading data, and best practices to advance observation and consistency in the platform economy.

Progressing Exchange and Survey: ought to partake in persistent discourse and audit their regulative structures frequently to guarantee they stay significant and compelling even with a rapidly growing platform economy (Tholoniat, 2010).

To sum up, while a wholly blended lawful structure for platform work in the CEE region may not be plausible or attractive, a decent methodology that joins usual standards with country-explicit transformations can assist with tending to platform work difficulties while cultivating more prominent consistency and collaboration across the region.

7.9. Representation of Digital Platform Workers' Interests

The idea of representing the interests of workers on digital labour platforms is centred on making sure that the needs, rights, and voices of these workers are adequately recognized, heard, and safeguarded. The advent of digitization has shifted the nature of work, making the old models of worker representation and protection inadequate. As a result, new regulating methods are sought that consider the difficulties and opportunities provided by digital labour platforms (Häusermann, 2010). Representing digital platform workers' interests empowers workers to engage in collective voice, bargain with platform operators, and advocate for better working conditions, labour rights, and social security benefits. For example, this includes promoting social dialogue, guaranteeing workers good procedures for settling disputes and ensuring a sounder balance of power between the platform operator and workers. The following is of paramount importance to the representation of digital platform workers.

7.9.1. Digital Organising

Digital organising is a key tool for platform workers who organise across regional borders via the connexion, communication, and coordination of collective activities. Platforms and technologies in which labour is digitised should enable platform workers to generate a sense of community and shared purpose. Through this action, platform workers can overcome physical distance and different working conditions to form a virtual community that is not a

particular geographic location (Vandaele 2021). This particularly applies to employees who work in solitude and are not employees typically found in their workplace. In addition, the characteristics make it easy for remote workers to share knowledge and engage in peer-to-peer learning. Consequently, it has become easier to advocate and represent on behalf of some workers to discuss and share knowledge tactics and resources (Scholz 2016). The workers learn collectively how to handle everyday difficulties as well as bargain with their firms.

An organisation of this sort gives online employees a voice to speak about their working conditions, community building, and information sharing. According to Woodcock (2020), digital tools such as online petitions and social media platforms allow workers to mobilise public support, share experiences and fight for their rights from businesses and legislators. Greater visibility may help platform firms gain from it by sparking discussion and ultimately leading to the creation of more effective labour laws. These workers can also use it to overcome institutional and legal restrictions that otherwise make it harder for them to organise or join traditional unions. According to Jansen (2021), online businesses enable trying out new organisational and representational structures. The result is that they can adjust to the idiosyncrasies of work and find ingenious ways of advocacy and group action. It helps people to collaborate, interact and plan joint efforts across geographic borders. Thus, the approach allows workers to share knowledge exchange, amplification and investigation of other forms of representation (Pope and McLeay, 2011).

7.9.2. Collaboration with Platforms

These employees must work actively with platform-based corporations to promote cooperation and communication and encourage representing their interests. Workers can form unions, and their representatives or employees can negotiate with them to accept worker structures, allowing them to be represented and have collective bargaining rights. Such a cooperative approach can result in more equitable working conditions, open channels of communication and good conflict-resolution procedures (Freedland & Kountouris, 2011). Online firms and workers must work with their employees to overcome obstacles and balance out (De Stefano and Aloisi, 2019). According to Leung and Hutchings (2021), platform cooperatives where employees own and manage businesses can offer platform workers more control and ensure their interests are better represented in decision-making.

Platform firms and workers can cooperate to develop and use moral algorithmic techniques. According to Pasquale (2015), the only way to guarantee that algorithms and platform rules

are transparent, fair, and worker-controlled may be worker participation in the design and management of platforms. It implies that we, as a community, can decrease the chances of abusive behaviour and enhance the general working conditions of platform workers. Furthermore, research by Schor (2020) suggests that platform businesses can benefit from engaging with platform workers and implementing their suggestions into operations. This would foster a more cooperative relationship with workers, which would enhance the employer's reputation, increase worker satisfaction, and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the platform economy.

Cooperation between platform workers and platform firms is needed to improve the representation of platform workers' interests. For platform workers, the organisational potential lies in improving working conditions and platform workers' agency within the platform economy and defending workers' rights and interests in the context of the platform corporation through union organising, promoting alternative platform models, and talking with platform corporations. As platform work develops and grows, there will be a need to encourage cooperation between platform corporations and workers to ensure that the digital labour market remains inclusive and sustainable.

7.9.3. Coalition Building

In order to speak up and fight for their rights, platform workers have to create coalitions. They must use other tools, organise together to effect systemic change, and join alliances with other trade unions, civil society organisations, and governments to use their force as a collective. These partnerships enable remote workers to address problems, tackle common issues, and campaign for legal amendments to their rights and morally sound work practices in the digital economy (ILO, 2021). Vandaele (2021) emphasizes the need to build coalitions to represent the interests of platform workers. Most platform-based workers could also be helped by collaborating with like-minded groups, sharing expertise and resources, and devising common strategies to address shared issues to tap into a larger network and support network. These employees can be enlisted for collaboration to increase their bargaining power and visibility to identify and deal with their problems. In Scholz (2016), trade unions are examined as they partner with online workers to use their organising, bargaining, and campaigning skills to navigate the complex labour laws and improve working conditions and employee rights in the gig economy.

Additionally, coalitions can help communicate between workers, online business corporations, and policymakers. In the advocacy activities, different stakeholders can provide a

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complete answer to the problems faced by platform workers (De Stefano & Aloisi, 2019). Such a collaboration could then make it possible to have more practical regulatory frameworks, more ethical behaviour on the platform, and the recognition of the rights and interests of platform workers. Working with civil society groups can also help platform workers popularise what they do and, more broadly, make the implications of their work for wider society known to the public. The increased public oversight of platform firms during collaborative efforts compels them to discuss and improve their labour practises, according to Woodcock (2020). Platform workers should build coalitions because this practise enables them to receive attention and defend their rights. Platform worker organisation becomes possible through partnerships between trade unions, civil society, non-profit, and governmental entities. Workers gain combined power through collaboration platforms while accessing each other's resources to execute their campaign operations. The increasing strength of the platform economy requires new methods to connect stakeholders who will work together to protect platform workers' rights and benefits in the current century.

7.9.4. Legal Support

Platform workers need access to legal help and counsel to attempt to negotiate the dangerous terrain of labour rules, contract provisions, and dispute resolution procedures. Sometimes, platform workers may fall between employees and independent contractors, and the rights and duties they are entitled to under the current labour laws may not be easily understood. The services may offer platform workers legal aid services that can be useful in dealing with unfair treatment, contractual disputes, etc., and other employment-related matters (ILO, 2021) so that they know their rights and how to tackle the problem. Jansen (2021) emphasizes that platform employees require legal help to fight unfair work practices and enforcement of corporate responsibility toward worker rights. The expertise provided to platform workers includes information about how different legal views classify their employment status and its effects on their rights and obligations. De Stefano and Aloisi's (2019) assessment indicates that property support regarding legal matters enables online workers to solve any disputes related to their jobs. Schor (2020) states that developing this form of assistance creates essential infrastructure for establishing digital work regulations. An appropriate framework enables workers to do negotiations with online businesses through access to proper tools that provide necessary knowledge regarding collective bargaining and fair dispute resolution adoption. Leung and Hutchings (2021) propose that owning these resources

gives workers greater abilities for legal interpretation, enabling them to address work-related issues effectively and protect their rights.

7.9 5. Capacity Building

Platform workers need to be capable of developing the capacity to avail themselves of resources that will help them advocate for their rights and interests. They gain more power by participating in seminars, campaigns, and training programmes on collective representation and their rights. These enable workers to develop skills to improve work conditions and struggle for their rights, like for fair digital workplaces (ILO, 2021). These are such programmes that allow self-bargaining and self-representation of workers in case of unfair labour practises and protection of their rights in the platform economy (Vandaele, 2021). According to Scholz (2016), online workers should be trained to use the reporting system or complaint resolution mechanism. By improving and establishing the capacity levels of remote workers in Albania, they will be able to bargain with their companies and governmental institutions to improve their workplace and legislative change (Woodcock (2020). Expanding platform worker capacity through specific programs would enhance their leadership abilities while building sustainable modes of collective employee representation. These abilities should enhance platform workers' negotiating power and increase peer connection while developing fair labour practices for platform work (Freedland & Kountouris, 2011).

Developing capability is important to address online workers' interests and promote decent work in the digital economy. Capacity-building initiatives that impart platform workers with the learning, abilities, and instruments expected to advocate for their rights, take part in collective activity, and require some part in policy debates strengthen worker capability (empowerment), advance solidarity, and further develop work rights insurance in the state economy. As platform-based work continues to grow and develop, it will be crucial to set capacity building as a top priority as the possibilities and difficulties of this changing labour market become more prominent, and platform workers must be equipped to deal with them..

7.10. Conflicts of Law in Digital Labour Platforms

The emergence of digital labour platforms has transformed employment relationships within the European Union (EU) and globally due to the ongoing digitization of the labour market. Along with these changes have come several intricate legal issues and disputes that require a thorough analysis of how digitization has impacted the employment relationship. Digital labour platforms have popularised types of employment such as crowd work, remote work,

or gig work. In this way, the conventional line separating the job relationship has become less sharp, resulting in questions about how applicable current labour laws and regulations are to these new forms of work (De Stefano & Aloisi, 2019). For example, classification as independent contractors, employees, or some other new class of worker will determine the rights and protections platform workers have under labour laws.

Moreover, the cross-border nature of digital labour platforms makes the legal landscape all the more complex. Jurisdictional problems arise when determining whether courts within a nation have the power to resolve disputes amongst platform personnel, clients, and platforms in many countries. However, a lack of clarity on whether platform employees fall under the category of employees or independent contractors leads to disputes, and platform employees face difficulties pursuing legal remedies (ILO, 2021). Additionally, as these platforms are global, it may be hard to determine what labour laws apply to platform work. Consequently, platform workers may not be adequately protected under local, national, or international labour laws. Collective bargaining and representation are also affected by the digitisation of labour platforms. Traditional forms of worker representation, such as trade unions, cannot organise and represent platform workers, who are distributed and flexible (Vandaele, 2021).

The digitisation of the labour market has profoundly affected employment relationships in the EU and worldwide and has caused myriad intricate legal issues and conflicts. These concerns must be carefully analysed to understand the changing nature of employment and protect platform workers' rights. Thus, if platform players in the platform economy cooperate to resolve jurisdictional issues, harmonize labour regulations, and provide efficient dispute resolution procedures, digital labour platforms can have a more egalitarian and sustainable future. There are a number of reasons why these are reasonable questions that might be investigated.

7.10.1 Harmonization of Lawful Structures

The solution to legal issues caused by digital labour platforms requires both EU-based and international legal framework harmonisation as a main strategy. Making legal challenges easier enables standardized protection of labour rights for platform workers when nations establish harmonized regulations for platform employment.

International Agreements, Treaties, or Conventions

The unique aspects of platform work need global leadership from the International Labour Organization to set international standards for this employment type. Countries could pass

the same rules for platform workers through international agreements. Fair rules and better protections will become available for platform workers worldwide.

EU-level Legislation

The European Union can develop one platform employment law that protects platform workers across the region. The system can specify basic worker rights while explaining platform employment types and helping parties solve disputes. The joint EU approach to platform employment would stop different national labour laws from creating problems and give workers and companies better protection, according to De Stefano and Aloisi (2019).

Cooperation Between National Governments

National governments can use bilateral and multilateral cooperation to develop common standards for platform work while sharing best practices. Governments can address transnational platform labour problems by helping member states create equal rights for platform workers no matter where they work (ILO, 2021).

Multi-stakeholder dialogue

Different stakeholders, including platform workers, corporations, and trade unions, must participate in designing unified employment laws. Together, all stakeholders learn and share their views to build a better platform for employment labour standards, according to Vandaele (2021). Establishing common legal rules is the main solution to digital labour platform problems. Government leaders should work toward creating an equal platform for worker rights through international agreements and EU-wide laws alongside shared governance discussions. A unified labour framework is needed to protect platform workers and sustain platform work as it evolves (Morel & Palier, 2011).

Decision of Regulation Arrangements

Platform labour contracts have a choice of law clauses that offer some legal certainty to workers, clients and platform enterprises by allowing parties to choose which country's laws will govern the resolution of any conflicts. However, no employee rights infringement or more stringent labour laws at home must exist. The choice of law provisions may be regulated and enforced so they cannot be abused. When deciding which legislation to use for platform employment contracts, there are a few things to be aware of.

Balancing Interests: The choice of law clauses should be designed to balance the interests of the platform firms and the platform workers. However, platforms should not sacrifice

workers' rights to avoid legal risks and standardise enforcing labour rules. Such a balance should be struck such that clauses choosing law do not allow the platform to escape the labour laws that protect the essential rights of platform workers (De Stefano & Aloisi, 2019).

Compliance with Mandatory Labour Laws: Platform firms should not select the law to not pay minimum wages to their employees who live or work in those countries. These laws could be used to protect against discrimination, health and safety or minimum pay standards. As such, regulatory bodies must continue to monitor how platform firms choose law provisions to comply with the relevant labour laws (ILO, 2021).

Transparency and Informed Consent: The contracts that online workers must sign must be well explained, and they must expressly agree to them. Platforms should explicitly and openly describe how the choice of law agreements must be made. It should be clear to employees that if they feel they are being deprived of their rights, they can contest these provisions (Vandaele, 2021).

Regulatory Oversight: Since the choice of law clauses in platform work contracts has been applied, regulatory bodies must ensure that such clauses do not allow for misuse and closely supervise their correct application. This is, for instance, how the choice of law specifications and noncompliance measures may be set up (Jansen, 2021).

Thus, choosing law clauses in platform work contracts can provide legal clarity. However, the implementation must be well controlled to protect the rights of platform workers and from which platforms can escape from the labour laws. They can contribute to developing a just and enduring legal regime for platform work in the digital era to balance the interests of the workers and the platform in compliance with mandatory labour laws, with transparency and informed consent, and with the machinery for supervising by regulatory bodies.

7.10.2 Global Collaboration

Cross-border regulation and collaboration must be enforced to ensure labour laws are in place for the fast-changing platform economy. The exchange of information between countries and related regulatory agencies is an essential part of cooperation on an international level. Authorities can be abreast of what workers experience in the different regions, and some data and insights about the platform workers' practises, work trends and regulatory challenges can be shared regularly with them. Moreover, information sharing helps regulators understand the problems platform workers face and react more proportionately. Besides, the information collected is also used by the regulators to update current data, which enables

their regulation strategy to be tailored as the platform economy changes. If countries keep doing this, they can create more responsive and better-informed labour policies to protect platform workers in multiple countries.

There is also coordination of international cooperation with respect to the setting of enforcement standards. If regulatory procedures, monitoring efforts, and enforcement protocols are aligned, countries can help ensure platform workers' rights are protected equally across various jurisdictions. Harmonising enforcement standards and practises can close legal loopholes and minimise differences in applying labour laws (as stated by the International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2021). For instance, platform companies operating in many countries may try to use the different regulations in their countries to exploit their workers. Standardising inspection protocols and coordination with regulatory bodies can do the job in the long run and level the playing field. Guarantee platforms work reasonably with workers and are protected from exploitation but not based on jurisdiction. If countries cooperate, they can develop a more uniform and effective enforcement system for the platform economy.

7.10.3. Elective Debate Goal

An effective option for resolving conflicts in the platform economy is the promotion of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) processes, namely arbitration and mediation, on a cross-border basis. In these processes, companies, clients and platform workers can solve problems out of court. Clear policies and procedures are required for ADR to work. Platform companies need to lay down how the ADR process should be defined, the parties' responsibilities in dispute, and ensure that workers are aware of their rights and options (De Stefano & Aloisi, 2019). This process framework is easily understood by the workers from the process and its benefits. Platform workers should have access to ADR processes on terms that are accessible, including remotely, with language translation services, financial assistance to pay arbitration fees at a cost, and the use of resources that are proportional to the sums involved. If taken, these steps will ensure that everyone, regardless of where in the world they work, or whether they are rich or poor, will have the opportunity to have an arms-length, fair dispute resolution process and help better inclusivity for resolving their dispute in the platform economy.

In effect, ADR's efficacy lies in its impartiality and enforceableness. This is because mediators and arbitrators are supposed to be independent and unbiased, making the process fair to all parties. Vandaele (2021) suggests this can be done by setting up proper ADR practitioners, strict selection criteria, conflict of interest policies, and ethical standards. In doing this,

the decision-making is neutral and fact-based. Moreover, to have ADR meaningful, the rulings must be enforceable by law. Such agreements or legal frameworks are needed for the recognition and acceptance of the ADR decisions of other countries (Jansen, 2021). This will give platform workers a sense of security and ensure enforceability, as any ADR agreement reached will be observed. Furthermore, the ILO (2021) points out that ADR processes can only serve if monitored and evaluated to ensure that they are sufficient for workers' needs and improve in the future).

7.11. Challenges Faced by Digital Platform Workers

Digital platform workers have specific problems, including their non-traditional employment status and work type. These difficulties are related to several factors, like unsuitable working conditions, lack of benefits and safeguards, and absence of representation. Digital platform labour has created a variety of new issues because of the nature of the work and workers' non-traditional employment status. To understand these problems, practical solutions must be developed that ensure platform workers have fair pay, fair working conditions, and sufficient social safeguards. In the following list, the significant difficulties that digital platform workers face are enumerated and further examined.

7.11.1. Low pay and lack of benefits

The problems faced by digital platform workers are high challenges regarding their low pay and lack of benefits that undermine their financial stability, career prospects and life. As the gig economy booms, many people rely on these platforms for income, which makes these problems all the more significant. ILO research states that many workers are paid below the minimum salary, and hourly earnings are much lower than their peers in similar roles. Tough competition, algorithm-based pricing, and the absence of collective bargaining are all factors that leave little to no bargaining power for workers seeking higher pay (ILO, 2022). Furthermore, digital platform workers spend a lot of time on unpaid work, for example, waiting for work, keeping tools up to date, travelling to work, and reducing the adequate hourly wages they are paid. The Economic Policy Institute states that these unpaid activities take up many workers' time and thus reduce their overall earnings and financial stability (Economic Policy Institute, 2021).

The second primary concern is the absence of benefits. Unlike traditional employees, most workers do not receive health insurance, paid leave, or retirement savings plans, thus exposing them to financial instability and health risks. Without social safeguards, poverty worsens,

social isolation increases, and there is greater marginalization in the labour market. Also, studies have demonstrated that platform workers are paid less and are not given benefits based on their gender, ethnicity, and location. For instance, the research by the Pew Research Center (2020) shows that workers based in low-income countries, females, and ethnic minorities are more likely to earn exponentially lower pay and have less access to benefits. Serious implications for workers' physical, emotional, and financial well-being follow, resulting in higher stress and anxiety, burnout, and subsequently negatively impacting job performance. Furthermore, the platform workers can be classified as independent contractors, thus exempting the companies from paying benefits, necessitating regulatory changes to safeguard the workers and ensure their fair pay (Peers, 2016).

7.11.2. Job insecurity and unpredictable income

Given that the jobs for digital platform workers are contingent and the platform economy is rife with inherent uncertainties, job insecurity, and unpredictable income are major concerns among this sector. Usually, these workers cannot predict their workload or income due to irregular work schedules. This unpredictability, as reported by the International Labour Organization (ILO), makes it hard for many platform workers to plan budgets and attain sustainable livelihoods. Gig earnings can also vary greatly based on the availability of gigs, algorithms, and the client's demand. A JPMorgan Chase Institute research highlights that 30% of platform workers' monthly earnings vary, which further affects their financial stability (Farrell, Greig, and Hamoudi, 2018). Online work provides employees with less job security when compared to traditional employment arrangements. Besides, workers face higher chances of receiving deactivation or suspension through their platform, which leads to sudden income loss and increased vulnerability. The problem is worsened by seasonal demand patterns that create significant busy and less busy periods during the year, making it difficult for workers to obtain steady earnings.

The unpredictability of their finances prevents digital workers from obtaining credit as well as other financial services because lenders view them as high-risk borrowers. Remote workers face difficulties obtaining financial products such as loans and mortgages because of their status, as per the Center for European Reform research findings, which deepens their financial instability. Unpredictable income combined with job instability results in major harm to workers' physical condition, emotional state, and financial security. Research demonstrates how these issues produce elevated stress and anxiety along with burnout symptoms that damage both job outcomes and workers' overall existence (Farrell, Greig, and Hamoudi,

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2018). Stakeholders need to solve these problems, and organized research demonstrates that work schedule stability, financial service accessibility, and income stability measures represent effective solutions. Stakeholders can create a safer and more sustainable environment for online workers through solutions in the evolving gig economy.

7.11.3. Health and Safety risks

There are major health and safety risks for online workers who undertake physically challenging or dangerous tasks. Workers in the delivery services, manual, and transportation work have physical hazards such as slips and falls, overexertion injuries, and traffic accidents. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2024) states that platform workers face these health and safety risks because they often do not get safe working environments or proper protective equipment. Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are common among workers due to the performance of repetitive motions and lifting heavy objects. Gumbrell-McCormick and Hyman (2013) note that platform workers suffer from MSDs more frequently than conventional workers because they suffer from upper limb and back pain and neck pain. Because these health problems have become evident, the platform economy needs to take a higher standard of occupational health and safety.

Due to unstable employment, inconsistent payment systems, and high levels of professional competition, workers on platform jobs are exposed to physical dangers and mental health challenges. Intense stress, burnout, and anxiety afflict these workers (and their wellness), all to the detriment of their job performance. These employees work extended shifts to achieve financial stability, putting them at a higher risk of fatigue-related accidents. Organisation Internationale du Travail (ILO, 2024) details that platform workers regularly work unusually long hours, so extended labor duration is a rising health and safety issue for them. Platform workers encounter various difficulties in their work environment since they do not have access to occupational health services that can assist them in recovering from injuries and managing health issues. Therefore, regulatory changes are needed to compel platform businesses to offer safe working environments where they have a responsibility to ensure the health and safety of their workers (Economic Policy Institute, 2020.

7.11.4 Discrimination and bias

Workers on digital platforms face discrimination and bias in access to job opportunities, clients, and customers when treating workers and the general work environment. Algorithmic bias is one of the most concerning forms of discrimination as platform algorithms are

based on some data and decision-making processes, which can make it reinforce the existing disparities. Algorithms can also produce discriminatory results: lower-paying tasks to some groups and not including workers in job opportunities based on their profiles. Such a bias sustains inequality in the platform economy. It blocks some people from acquiring equal opportunities and favourable pay in the digital work community, resulting in their inability to compete.

In addition to the algorithmic biases, there is a high level of racial and ethnic discrimination that the digital platform workers face. Generally, workers of colour are more likely to experience racial discrimination in the workplace and have lower pay than their white counterparts. This discrimination can be by platform firms, consumers, and clients and severely restricts those workers from minority backgrounds to well-paying tasks. In the same way, gender discrimination in the platform economy was also expressed in unequal payments, sexual harassment, and few job opportunities for female workers. A recent research by the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2024) revealed that female platform workers are more exposed to harassment and violence at work and are often paid less than their male colleagues. Such discrimination in these forms creates a hostile and unequal working environment and adds to the marginalization of already marginalized groups.

Older workers and those with impairments are among those who are also vulnerable to age and disability-based discrimination when working on digital platforms. According to the Urban Institute, because of that, older platform workers often encounter obstacles to employment, such as negative views of their qualifications, issues over job security, and instability about their financial security. Like platform companies and clients who discriminate against workers with disabilities, workers with disabilities also have discrimination from these companies in the form of inaccessible work systems and lack of employment possibilities. To ensure that people with disabilities fully participate in the platform economy, the World Bank encourages the development of inclusive platform work rules and practices. Immigrant workers also experience discrimination based on nationality and immigration status, which comes in the form of lower pay and lack of social protection. To address these problems, it is necessary to enact laws against discrimination, make algorithms transparent, and ensure that all employees (workers) are on equal terms and allowed equal chances to access opportunities in the platform economy, thus making it a fairer and more inclusive system.

7.11.5. Lack of worker representation and voice

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As digital platform workers do not have the collective force to tackle working conditions, pay, and benefits, it is a major challenge to worker representation and voice. This is because platform workers are classified as independent contractors to be independent contractors. They cannot enjoy the same representation by labour unions as employees. The workers can also not engage in collective bargaining or demand a better working environment because the workers are not represented formally. By lacking access to these traditional platforms of support and negotiation, digital platform workers are finding it difficult to ensure that they reap fair treatment on the digital platforms. All these factors also contribute to the lack of voice of platform workers in the platform economy due to their fragmentation and isolation(Handford et al., 2015). These workers do not work in fixed places; they generally work alone and are dispersed among different geographical locations, making them struggle to connect, share experiences, and build groups.

Their isolation also hinders their ability to organise and fight for their rights. Such fragmentation creates an environment where workers cannot get together and apply pressure to improve working conditions since they are fragmented and cannot be joined in strength. Thus, workers do not have a unified platform on which shared concerns can be addressed or bargaining power to ask for improvements in the workplace. Additionally, the power imbalance between the platform company and the workers plays a significant role in the challenges to worker representation. It is standard for platform companies to have excessive influence over workers' pay, the quality of their work, and the conditions surrounding their labour, but with little or no participation on the side of the workers (Handford et al., 2015). The Economic Policy Institute researches that platform companies can make workers do whatever they want and stipulate what employees can and can't do on the platform without providing the correct protections and benefits. As a result, platform workers usually do not have the ability to challenge these unfair labour practices, for example, bad working conditions and low pay, because they are not organised into unions..

7.11.6. Regulatory gaps and legal uncertainty

The biggest barriers digital platform workers face are regulatory gaps and legal uncertainty, which create confusion and make workers vulnerable to exploitation. First, the ambiguous classification of workers into different legal jurisdictions is one of the key issues. Since platform workers may fit into the category of an independent contractor and employee or a third category entirely, the classification of workers and what it means for them and their employers is complicated by region and platform. The International Labour Organization (ILO,

2024) has emphasized the requirement for more distinct classification systems to characterize exactly what platform employment means. The lack of this clarity then has a knock-on effect on platform workers as they will not know their rights and will not know what protections they have. For that reason, workers might be unable to avail of benefits such as healthcare, paid leave, and other crucial worker protections usually reserved for traditional employees.

Apart from uncertainty in the worker's classification, platform workers do not get adequate protection from labour laws. Since many platform workers are considered independent contractors, they are often not entitled to some of the key protections related to employment for full-time employees. Deemed exempt under this law, they are frequently treated unfairly, paid low, and do not receive benefits including minimum wage guarantee, overtime pay, pay for being sick, etc. Platform workers are often denied these basic protections due to the Economic Policy Institute and are left with instability and an insecure job. Without these legal safeguards, companies can exploit platform workers easily, and these workers can be set up to manage under poor working conditions by such employers without these legal safeguards (ILO, 2024). The gap that exists due to the absence of such protections is of concern, and the only way to fill it is to update the laws to deal with the situation of digital platform work. A second major challenge lies in platform enforcement of existing labor laws in the platform economy, meaning it primarily has a global, virtual, and mobile workforce. Enforcement of labor laws becomes complicated because platform workers operate under the coverage of different countries with different regulations and use algorithms and automated systems to handle their work. Moreover, workers have no clear way of lodging complaints or resolving disputes on many platforms, which means they do not have recourse when abused or treated unfairly. Also, these employees have no legal representatives and can not access justice whenever their rights are infringed.

7.11.7 *Limited access to skills development and training*

Digital platform workers suffer from multiple challenges in skill development and competitiveness in a rapid labour market transformation environment. However, with the evolution of technology, workers are also expected to be up to speed with the knowledge and skills compatible with the platform economy. As per the McKinsey Global Institute's research, digital platform workers must adjust quickly to new technologies and working processes. Specialisation takes time as this fast technological change makes it essential for their professional success to invest their time and money in skill development and training. Without

continuous learning, workers can go behind, and it will not be easy to keep up with the industry standards or to get a higher-paying job. As the platform economy continually relies on digital skills, it has become imperative to provide accessible and effective training in workers' skills to prepare them for the demands of the ever-changing labor market.

Nevertheless, many digital platform workers find great challenges when securing training and skill development access. The obstacles here are financial constraints, limited awareness of the available resources, and the fact that they also need to earn a living, so they are time-pressured. These barriers increase barriers to workers closing skill gaps and furthering their education, which could result in income increase and job stability. According to research, this sector, like other precarious worker groups, is often trapped in a spiral of underemployment because they cannot develop competencies that lead to career progression. Hence, they might struggle to move into sturdier or slicker positions in the platform economy. Not only do these issues prevent workers from climbing the career ladder, but they also exacerbate prevailing inequalities in the workforce, where those who don't have access to training fail to acquire skills and earn less potential.

Moreover, the lack of employer investment in training also adds to these challenges, as platform companies mostly do not offer training opportunities for their independent contractor workforce. Platform workers are not employees, so they are not invested in by companies and are expected to fend for themselves when developing new skills. The lack of support in skill development can limit staff's career growth and get them stuck in entry-level, low-paying, and unstable jobs. In this regard, investing in skills development, as per the Aspen Institute, can hugely increase platform workers' long-term job prospects and qualifications for higher quality and more secure jobs. A lack of employer inbound investment in employee training requires finding other solutions, including public-private partnerships or online learning platforms created in a user-specific, focused fashion just for platform workers. When we address these gaps in the platform economy, they help us through a more inclusive and empowered platform economy where the workers also have the chance to succeed in the ever-changing labour market.

7.12. Innovative solutions for conflicts of law and representation

The platform economies explode exponentially fast, complicating the workers' platform and the clients' operations over several legal jurisdictions. To resolve both existing problems, promising solutions must be developed considering the characteristics of the platform economy. Policymakers should develop organisational methods and legal and technical solutions

to create a stronger protective platform working environment. The platform economy could resolve the conflict of law and representation by adopting standard labour standards across legal systems to protect platform workers. Policymakers should set the standard rules on the regional and global levels to remove equal competition between enterprise operating platforms and protect workers' rights. International treaties and conventions and standard legal guidelines such as the European Union (EU) proposals make achieving consistent border regulations possible.

International treaties and conventions create joint agreements between countries on the lowest acceptable standards for platform workers. This is because such international treaties contain requisite provisions that make state members adapt the standardizsd worker safeguards into their domestic legislation to give platform workers equal protection. The International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2021) protected nontraditional employees, including platform labour workers, by introducing the Centenary Declaration for the Future of Labour. These international agreements aim to find solutions to worker classification struggles and develop higher standards for working tasks and social security protocols for platform workers in a fairer world. These global agreements will ensure that platform workers are protected by the necessary protections as countries can protect their rights regardless of regulations in their territories.

The European Union possesses substantial power to develop standardized legal guidelines that govern platform work activities at the regional level. Such an integrated regulatory framework would close any loopholes platform companies could exploit during implementation to provide consistent rights and protections for platform workers across the entire region. An EU-wide standardized framework should establish uniform definitions of platform work, minimum workplace standards, and worker classification procedures (Global Union UNI, 2021). A regulatory structure would protect working conditions like traditional jobs while maintaining the platform work style, which makes this arrangement appealing to employees. Remote workers need access to health insurance, retirement savings, and unemployment benefits that can be provided through established social networks or new organizational structures offering "portable benefits.". The fair operation and long-term sustainability of platform economies would improve through worker representation initiatives that include digital unions and dispute resolution systems, according to Rani & Furrer (2021). Sustained improvement efforts constitute fundamental requirements for building a platform economy that becomes more comprehensive and equal while maintaining sustainability.

7.12.2. Platform-Based worker representation

Representation for platform-based workers is important in creating a well-balanced and fair working environment in digital labour platforms. Platform companies can make the means for worker representation to enhance communication between the workers and management in a potential collective bargaining platform. This approach helps to deal with legal and representational conflicts by guaranteeing that workers' interests are constantly presented and guaranteed as work travels between various jurisdictions. However, permitting workers to make decisions that affect them can improve working conditions on the platform in general and increase the equity and sustainability of the platform economy. When workers are properly represented, platform workers can negotiate for higher wages, benefits, and protections, thus increasing job security and workplace satisfaction.

Works committees or board-level representation can be an effective way of promoting platform-based worker representation. These committees can link workers and management so that the employees can make their grievances heard and contribute to the decision-making process. These committees can ensure that workers' rights are constantly spoken for, even in the context of platform labour on a global scale, by offering workers a formal platform for input. This also helps represent the trust between workers and employers, which may lead to cooperation and nicer working conditions. Additionally, this could be one step forward to tackling the power imbalances within platform work (as companies hold the reigns over what terms and conditions work for their workers).

Another key element of good worker representation in the platform economy is platform-level collective bargaining. Through a systematic framework for collective bargaining, platform workers can negotiate with the management concerning important issues, such as wages, working hours, and benefits. By adopting this approach, power inequalities can be reduced, fairer labour practises and having a voice in shaping the work environment can be ensured. Furthermore, a platform representation of workers can assist in overcoming legal challenges by guaranteeing workers' interests are represented every time, irrespective of the workers' geographic location. In addition, formal worker representation systems make the platform economy more predictable and safer for workers and employers, as it helps comply with several labour laws and regulations. When paired with initiatives such as digital labour unions, capacity building, and legal recognition, online worker representation serves as a tool to counter many of the challenges faced by digital platform workers in an increasingly complex and globalised labour market.

7.12.3 Data-driven Advocacy

The legal and representational challenges in the platform economy are good problems to solve with the help of data-driven advocacy. By analyzing the data of platforms, stakeholders can learn the common issues and concerns that the workers face, such as working under poor conditions, low wages, unstable work, and lack of access to social benefits. By using this platform workers' data-driven strategy, advocates can identify the hardest-hitting problems facing platform workers and begin to design targeted campaigns that directly address those problems. For instance, data may show that a particular industry or platform tends to pay people poorly and is used by stakeholders to create strategies to improve the standards or even to push for a change of the policies. Platform data can give workers and advocates insight into problems in the platform economy that they can address, one at a time, but with a focus on addressing underlying root causes of inequality and exploitation in the platform economy.

Data-driven advocacy offers useful insights into how better-targeted and more practical advocacy strategies can be designed. Advocates can examine platform data to see patterns of exploitation, discrimination or unfair working conditions in individual platforms or industries. For example, it can also pinpoint how pay varies from one group of workers to another or how specific these issues impact sets of workers more than others. By analyzing platform data, activists and policymakers can focus on areas such as advocating for tougher labor laws, encouraging unionization, and pushing for better working conditions. At the same time, workers understand what works and what doesn't, using evidence to drive meaningful changes and address systemic issues in the platform economy. Additionally, data-driven advocacy can profoundly contribute to monitoring the enforcement of labour regulations and ensuring policy enforcement. Through platform data, workers and their advocates can trace whether labour standards and regulations are properly enforced and determine how to fill the enforcement gaps. By keeping a watchful eye on continuously monitoring vulnerabilities or shortcomings, stakeholders can respond promptly against violations. Second, data-driven advocacy can buttress international enforcement and resolve cross-border legal issues with hard evidence of the problem. Data-backed insights that are accurate allow workers to develop stronger cases to handle legal disputes that cross multiple jurisdictions.

7.12.4. Cooperation in Cross-Border enforcement

Since the platform economy presents legal and representational challenges that require cooperation in crossborder enforcement, three forms of enforcement cooperation have been

identified. Having labour inspectorates and enforcement bodies coordinated among stakeholders at the cross country level, ensures that labour standards are met and cross border issues resolved. Strategies to help accomplish this collaborative approach would be information sharing, coordinated enforcement activities, and the development of consensus guidelines for handling legal considerations (European Labour Authority, 2023). The exchange of information between law enforcement agencies brings them to the common challenges, the lessons learned, and the best practices for meeting the disputes with the platform economy. This could be achieved by holding regular meetings, workshops, or joint research projects to better understand the platform economy's impact on workers and develop solutions to ensure workers' fair treatment across borders.

Apart from disseminating information, coordinated enforcement initiatives can dramatically boost the regulation and monitoring of platform work practices across different jurisdictions. Authorities should then be aligned with efforts to enforce these platform companies' compliance with labour laws and regulations to meet requirements and respect workers' rights to the maximum. This means that we can also take action together to investigate, inspect, and enforce actions against the platform companies that take advantage of their workers or are not abiding by labour standards. Moreover, it is possible to work out consensus guidelines to solve the cross-border legal issue regarding this platform and lay a simple yet predictable legal framework for the platform-related dispute (European Labour Authority, 2023). These guidelines can be implemented in various countries and presented as precepts of jurisdiction and conflict resolution to bring consistency and efficiency to Albania, Western Balkan and Europe's legal process.

7.13. Conclusion

For platform endeavours, workers, and administrative organizations alike, the platform economy's perilous expansion and the disruption in the concept of work it has attained raise significant worries. The topic of legal disputes in digital labour platforms is becoming increasingly relevant when platform behaviour transcends public borders. This necessitates efficient solutions to provide universal guidance and accurately depict platform workers' rights. To address these difficulties, this section examined several ways that combined traditional and cutting-edge methodologies. Platform firms and overall or territorial worker's guilds may enter into transnational collective agreements that establish consistent work rules and ways for resolving disputes across several jurisdictions. This can result in a more secure structure for platform tasks. Platform-based labourer portrayal systems, such as work chambers or

board-level portrayals, can help ensure that specialists' benefits are consistently addressed across jurisdictions, empower collective bargaining at the platform level, and improve communication between workers and executives. Furthermore, information-driven assistance may screen the usage of arrangements and work principles, uncover common difficulties and concerns among workers, and help build future promotion campaigns.

Using platform information and examination, workers and their agents may monitor changes in working conditions to understand better that Cross-line authorization coordination between work inspectorates and other implementation organizations may also be critical in the platform economy for verifying compliance with work norms and resolving cross-line difficulties. To achieve this collaboration, groups may arrange authorization activities, share best practices and data, and develop agreement norms for dealing with justifiable disagreements. Workers, platform companies, worker's guilds, administrative entities, and other partners should work together to implement these inventive ideas.

CHAPTER 8: Effectiveness of Public Employment Services and Skills Programs in the Digital Labour Market

8.1. Introduction

The fast growth of digital technology has dramatically transformed the face of the job market in Albania, the European Union (EU), and throughout the world. The digitisation of labour has resulted in new employment models, such as remote work, online talent marketplaces, and the gig economy, that have profoundly altered traditional employment relationships. While these digital developments have created several benefits, they have also produced new concerns, such as employment instability, expanding skill gaps, and uneven access to digital resources. In response to these issues, public employment services (PES) and skills programs have played an essential role in ensuring the adaptation of employment relationships in the digital age. PES aims to link job seekers with acceptable employment prospects and give career development support. In contrast, skills programs aim to provide individuals with the competencies required to thrive in the continuously changing labour market.

The fast growth of digital technology has dramatically transformed the face of the job market in the European Union (EU) and throughout the world. The digitization of labour has resulted in new employment models, such as remote work, online talent marketplaces, and the gig economy, that have profoundly altered traditional employment relationships. While these digital developments have created several benefits, they have also produced new concerns, such as employment instability, expanding skill gaps, and uneven access to digital resources. In response to these issues, public employment services (PES) and skills programs have played an essential role in ensuring the adaptation of employment relationships in the digital age. PES aims to link job seekers with acceptable employment prospects and give career development support, whereas skills programs aim to provide individuals with the competencies required to thrive in the continuously changing labour market. This chapter seeks to evaluate the efficacy of PES and skills programs in the context of digitalization. Investigating the effects of these programs on employment relationships in Albania will help in gaining a better understanding of their role in encouraging adaptation, closing skills gaps, and improving access to work opportunities.

8.2. Public Employment Services in the Digital Age

Public Employment Services (PES) is a dynamic, ever-evolving system that uses digital technology to offer creative, effective, and easily accessible services to companies,

employees, and job seekers. These services are intended to make it easier for people to participate in the labour market, pursue careers, and find jobs in an increasingly digitalized labour market.

At the core of this definition are three key aspects that characterize PES in the digital age:

i. *Digital Infrastructure*

In the digital era, public employment services (PES) rely heavily on digital infrastructure. It includes all of PES's digital tools, platforms, and technology to provide creative, effective, and easily accessible services. Essential elements of this infrastructure consist of:

a. **Online Job Portals:** These platforms let companies post job opportunities and get in touch with possible applicants while also giving job searchers instant access to available positions. Online employment portals enhance PES's overall efficacy and efficiency by streamlining the hiring and job-seeking procedures.

b. **Virtual Career Counselling Services:** PES has incorporated digital technology to provide online evaluations, video consultations, chatbots, and other remote career counselling services. These services help job searchers navigate the digital labour market by offering them individualized advice and assistance.

c. **AI-driven Solutions:** PES uses artificial intelligence (AI) technology more and more to forecast the need for certain talents, evaluate labour market data, and guide decision-making. PES can recognise new trends and customize its services to meet the changing demands of employers, workers, and job searchers due to AI-driven solutions.

ii. *Enhanced Accessibility*

The digitization of PES has considerably increased service accessibility, allowing a wider range of people to benefit from job search aid, career advising, and skill development activities. Key factors of improved accessibility are:

a. **Overcoming Geographical Barriers:** Online PES services allow job seekers in distant or underdeveloped regions to access employment prospects and career help regardless of their location. This allows for more egalitarian access to work opportunities and fosters social inclusion.

b. **Breaking Down Physical Barriers:** Virtual PES services, including online career counselling and web-based job portals, are designed to meet the requirements of those with disabilities or mobility issues. By providing flexible and accessible services, PES ensures that all job seekers may benefit from their assistance.

c. **Expanding Reach:** PES can interact with a broader audience and provide services at scale thanks to the integration of digital technology. PES can now significantly influence employment outcomes and labour market involvement due to its broader reach.

iii. *Adaptive and Data-Driven Approach*

PES in the digital era are distinguished by their capacity to adapt to the changing demands of the labour market. PES may use data analytics and AI technology to make educated judgments and execute customized interventions to help job searchers and develop resilience in employment relationships. Key features of this adaptable and data-driven strategy include:

a. **Real-time Data Analysis:** PES use data analytics to track labour market trends, identify skill shortages, and forecast future demand for specific jobs. This data guides the creation of tailored skill programs and career advice activities.

b. **Personalized Services:** Using AI-powered solutions, PES may provide job seekers with individualized help and guidance based on their specific talents, interests, and career goals. This personalized approach guarantees that services suit the different demands of job searchers.

c. **Continuous Improvement:** By tracking the efficacy of PES activities and utilizing data to drive decision-making, PES may constantly adapt and enhance its services to better serve job seekers and employers in the digital labour market.

After understanding the fundamentals of PES in the digital era, it is critical to investigate the ramifications and prospective areas for future growth. This includes analysing the influence of digital PES on employment relationships, identifying problems, and exploring methods for improving the efficacy of these services in a changing labour market.

8.2.1. Impact on employment relationships

Digital PES projects have the potential to alter employment relationships by enhancing job matching, increasing worker flexibility, and boosting stakeholder engagement. Key implications include: enhanced job matching; improved worker adaptability and strengthened collaboration.

By utilizing digital technologies and data analytics, PES can better link job searchers with appropriate employment opportunities. This results in improved work satisfaction, increased productivity, and lower turnover.

PES helps workers learn new skills and navigate career changes, resulting in a more adaptable workforce in the face of digital disruption.

Digital PES enable collaborations between the government, businesses, and workers to address labour market difficulties and implement targeted actions.

8.2.2. Challenges

Despite the potential benefits of digital PES, some problems must be overcome to ensure its usefulness in promoting employment connections. Firstly the unequal access to digital resources and infrastructure might restrict the scope and effectiveness of digital PES activities.

In order to be relevant and successful, PES must stay current on emerging technology and labour market trends. Getting job seekers, workers, and employers to join digital PES programs can be difficult, especially for individuals who are unfamiliar with digital technology.

8.2.3. Strategies for Enhancing PES Effectiveness

In order to fully utilize digital PES, the following tactics must be taken into account:

Promoting inclusive and equitable PES requires ensuring that digital resources and connections are widely accessible.

Assisting employees in adjusting to the changing nature of the labour market, PES has to make investments in upskilling and reskilling programs.

Targeted and successful PES efforts may be developed by fostering strong collaborations between the government, employers, and employees.

PES should approach service design from a user-centred perspective to make sure that services are easily accessible, intuitive to use, and sensitive to the various demands of employers and job seekers.

Public employment services in the digital era have the power to enhance significant working relationships and foster a flexible, resilient workforce. In the face of a continuous digital revolution, PES can continue to develop and play a critical role in creating inclusive and resilient labour markets by addressing obstacles and putting focused policies into practice.

8.3. Effectiveness of Skills Programs in the Digital Labour Market

The success of skills programs is crucial in determining an individual's employability, workforce resilience, and overall economic competitiveness in the fast-changing digital labour market. This study explores the elements, characteristics, and optimal methodologies that characterize and impact the efficacy of skills programs in promoting flexible and diverse job markets. This investigation highlights the complex relationship between the efficacy of skills

programs and the policy papers, case studies, and scholarly literature that were thoroughly reviewed.

An essential component of efficacy is a skills program's capacity to recognise and cater to the particular demands of the job market. Studies emphasize how important it is to perform thorough labour market assessments to determine the skills employers are looking for and predict future trends (Smith & Johnson, 2020; European Commission, 2018). Skills programs may improve participants' job chances and promote a more efficient labour market by ensuring participants gain marketable and relevant skills through curriculum alignment with these principles (OECD, 2019). Also, the relevance and calibre of the training offered are closely related to the efficacy of skills programs. Reputable schools provide a strong emphasis on experiential learning through real-world settings and industry-specific information (Lee & Choi, 2020). Furthermore, it is essential to combine soft skills like problem-solving and communication with technical abilities to produce well-rounded and flexible workers (World Economic Forum, 2020).

Programs for skills that are accessible and inclusive are better suited to cater to a wide variety of participants and advance fair labour market results. Effective programs provide accessible, adaptable, and distant learning choices to overcome participation obstacles, such as budgetary and geographic limits (ILO, 2021). Targeted programs aimed at disadvantaged populations, including women, youth, and immigrants, can also aid in closing the skills gap that currently exists and promote an inclusive labour force (UNESCO, 2019). Further, strong, collaboration between stakeholders, such as governments, companies, education providers, and employees, is a hallmark of effective skills programs. Programs may guarantee their relevance and responsiveness to labour market trends by collaborating with these actors to identify skills shortages, provide focused interventions, and promote ongoing skill development (Cedefop, 2018). In addition to facilitating the integration of work-based learning and on-the-job training, this collaborative strategy helps narrow the employment and education gaps (OECD, 2015). To be competitive and adaptable, continuous learning is critical in the digital job market. Effective skills programs foster a culture of lifelong learning by providing modular and stackable credentials, career counselling, and job placement services (World Bank, 2019). These programs, which prioritize adaptation and develop resilience, can help individuals navigate the changing demands of the job market (WEF, 2020). Besides, rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems are critical for measuring the effectiveness of skills programs and driving data-driven changes. Employment rates, career development,

salary increase, and participant satisfaction can all provide valuable insights into program efficacy (ILO, 2020). Furthermore, longitudinal studies can provide a complete picture of the long-term advantages and problems of skill development projects (OECD, 2017).

To stay effective in a rapidly changing job market, skills programs must embrace adaptation and innovation. This entails using emerging technology, pedagogical techniques, and learning models to improve the learner experience and results (UNESCO, 2021). Furthermore, building relationships with technology suppliers and research institutes can help to create and execute cutting-edge skill development solutions (WEF, 2018).

The efficacy of skills programs in the digital labour market is dependent on a complex and dynamic combination of criteria. Policymakers, educators, and employers may promote resilient employment relationships and inclusive labour markets by focusing on labour market alignment, high-quality training, accessibility, stakeholder participation, lifelong learning, monitoring and evaluation, and adaptation.

8.4. Impact on Employment Relationships in the EU and Global Context

The digital transformation of Public Employment Services (PES) and the rise of digital skills programs have significantly influenced employment relationships in the European Union (EU) and throughout the world. This section gives a detailed examination of the *essential components* of this influence, backed up by relevant research and empirical data. Digital PES and skills programs are essential in increasing workers' flexibility in the face of fast technological change. These programs help individuals negotiate career transitions and adapt to the changing needs of the digital labour market by providing access to work possibilities and encouraging continual skill development (Cedefop, 2018; ILO, 2021). According to empirical research, involvement in skills programs improves workers' capacity to find work and retain job stability, resulting in more employment connections (OECD, 2019; World Bank, 2019).

PES stages, especially those that utilize AI and information analytics, move forward with work coordination by connecting work searchers to suitable employment based on their skills, interface, and labour market trends (European Commission, 2020). This more noteworthy fit between representatives and employers leads to higher work fulfilment, expanded efficiency, and lower turnover (ILO, 2020). Within the EU, endeavours such as EURES (European Employment Services) and the European Job Portability Entrance have been

fruitful in advancing intra-EU labour portability and job coordination (European Commission, 2021).

Strengthened social dialogue and collabouration: The digitization of PES and abilities programs has encouraged collabouration and data trade over a vast extent of partners, including governments, businesses, workers, and instruction suppliers (CEDEFOP, 2018). This multi-stakeholder collaboration has brought about more comprehensive and facilitated strategies for tackling the challenges of the advanced labour market, such as expertise deficiencies and mismatches (WEF, 2020). Activities within the EU, such as the European Skills Agenda and the European Pillar of Social Rights, highlight the requirement of social discourse and collaboration in building comprehensive and resilient work markets (European Commission, 2020).

Enhanced inclusivity and equality in employment relationships: Digital PES and skills programs can improve consideration and eliminate inequities in employment interactions by meeting the diverse requests of job searchers and specialists (OECD, 2015). This incorporates exercises pointed at underrepresented groups such as women, youth, and migrants, as well as measures to close digital get to gaps and offer impartial openings for long-lasting learning and proficient advancement (UNESCO, 2019). The EU's Advanced Skills and Jobs Platform, for illustration, seeks to close the advanced skills gap and increment employability over other states (European Commission, 2021).

Promotion of lifelong learning culture: Digital PES and skills programs offer assistance in cultivating a culture of long-lasting learning by giving representatives chances to pick up modern skills, reskill, or upskill all through their careers (World Economic Forum, 2018). This emphasis on continual learning advances a person's employability, adaptability, and career progression, inevitably boosting job partnerships (Cedefop, 2018).

Strengthened labour market governance and policymaking: The digital transformation of PES and skills programs produces vital information and bits of knowledge into labour market improvements, skill deficiencies, and mediation viability (WEF, 2020). Policymakers may utilize this information to drive evidence-based decision-making, increment the responsiveness of labour market arrangements, and strengthen business linkages (ILO, 2021).

The digitisation of PES and the creation of digital skills programs have had a noteworthy impact on employment connections both in the EU and abroad. These programs offer assistance to make labour markets more egalitarian by empowering adaptability, boosting job

coordination, advancing social discourse, and expanding incorporation. As the digital labour market advances, continual inquiry and evaluation will be essential to guarantee the viability and significance of these activities.

8.5. Critical Factors and Opportunities in Digital Public Employment Services

The digital transformation of Public Employment Services (PES) and skills programs has opened up modern conceivable outcomes for expanding the viability and reach of these endeavours within the setting of business relations. However, this move presents a number of issues that must be overcome to appreciate the potential benefits of digitization completely. This detailed examination burrows into the problems and possibilities that emerge due to the digitization of PES and skills programs, supported by investigative and viable realities.

8.5.1. Keeping Pace with Rapid Technological Change

Maintaining the pertinence and viability of digital Public Employment Services (PES) and skills programs requires keeping up with the quick advancement of technology. Fast technological advancement may significantly impact labour markets since it can lead to new business conceivable outcomes, change prerequisites for current occupations, and make certain occupations out of date (WEF, 2020). Advanced PES and skills programs ought to alter these advancements and coordinate new technology into their benefit offerings to help workers and job seekers legitimately.

Key components of keeping up with quick technological advances are:

Continuous Innovation: Advanced PES and skills programs must engage in R&D and advancement to discover and actualize developing technology into their offerings. This might incorporate making new instruments, updating current stages, or actualizing new benefit conveyance strategies (Cedefop, 2018).

Partnerships With Technology Providers: By working with innovative businesses and new companies and inquiring about education, digital PES, and skills programs, we may get access to cutting-edge advances and information (European Commission, 2020). These collaborations can offer assistance to suppliers to stay up to date on creating patterns and join innovation into their offerings more rapidly and productively.

Monitoring And Evaluation: Frequently reviewing the viability and adequacy of digital PES and skills programs can help in recognizing ranges for advancement and educating required changes and alterations (ILO, 2021). This may involve measuring key execution

measurements, conducting client overviews, and keeping up a continual communication with partners to guarantee that administrations stay in line with changing prerequisites and desires.

Keeping up with quick technological improvement is basic for digital PES and skills programs to help job seekers and specialists explore the continually changing labour markets. By embracing consistent development, making vital collaborations, and participating in proceeding observation and evaluation, these endeavours may adjust to the changing requests of job searchers, workers, and employers within the digital era.

8.5.2. Addressing Digital Access Disparities

In order to guarantee that digital Public Employment Services (PES) and skills programs can effectively serve diverse populations and cultivate comprehensive labour markets, it is basic that inconsistencies in advanced get addressed. Digital access disparities, defined by differences in access to digital infrastructure, devices, and reliable internet connections, can limit the reach and impact of advanced Public Employment Services (PES) and skills initiatives, particularly among disadvantaged communities. (OECD, 2015). A few strategies that will be utilized to reduce these contrasts include expanding the digital framework by upgrading to digital PES and skills training, as well as investments in digital foundations, such as broadband systems, which can contribute to closing the digital isolation. Infrastructure projects may be altogether financed and actualized by governments and public-private associations, with an emphasis on underserved regions (UNESCO, 2019). The other one is device availability activities, which may help ensure that people have the assets they need to take part in advanced PES and skills programs. Examples of these activities incorporate giving individuals access to computers, tablets, and smartphones. This will be finished through collaborations with tech firms to offer low-cost contraptions, appropriations, or device advance plans (World Bank, 2019). Also, encouraging digital literacy: By providing tools and programs for digital proficiency, individuals can acquire the capacities required to utilize digital PES and skills programs proficiently. Instructions on essential advanced abilities, such as using the internet, accessing online platforms, and communicating online, may drop beneath this category (European Commission, 2021). These programs can empower individuals to ultimately take advantage of digital PES and skills programs as well as new chances within the job market by cultivating advanced education.

To ensure that everybody, regardless of financial foundation or geography, can take advantage of advanced PES and skills programs, it is essential that imbalances in advanced get

to be addressed. Policymakers and program supervisors may offer assistance to make more comprehensive and reasonable labour markets by putting plans into extending advanced frameworks, allowing access to devices, and cultivating digital education.

8.5.3. Encouraging Awareness and Participation

To maximize their effect and make sure they reach the target beneficiaries, digital Public Employment Services (PES) and skills programs must be advanced and cooperation energized. Outreach programs and effective communication procedures may back these activities and motivate job searchers and representatives to utilize the assets that are advertised. Essential strategies comprise of:

Increasing Consciousness Via Regional Networks: Coming out to regional companies, educational institutions, and community organizations can help teach target populations approximately digital PES and skills training (ILO, 2021). In conclusion, these systems may advance peer-to-peer sharing of encounters and success stories and act as reliable data sources, which can raise mindfulness and empower involvement.

Providing User-Friendly Platforms and Support Services: People may be empowered to lock in and take full utilize of the administrations given by making, beyond any doubt, that advanced PES and abilities programs are essential to use and offer adequate client help (Cedefop, 2018). To meet the requests of a shifted client base, this may involve making client interfacing simple to utilize, giving clear information, and giving multilingual help. Programs for digital PES and skills can draw in and keep more clients by emphasizing client involvement.

Targeted Communication Tactics: Creating customized marketing plans and communication methodologies can help in coming to specific businesses or demographics, consequently raising the standard level of engagement in digital PES and skills activities (WEF, 2020). This might involve tailoring outreach techniques and messages to request specific target segments, such as young people, women, or people with impairments. By guaranteeing that digital PES and skills programs are significant and open to a wide range of people, focused on communication strategies can advance more consideration within the job market.

To guarantee the adequacy of digital PES and skills programs and to maximize their impact on employment results, it is fundamental to advance mindfulness of and engagement in them. Through the utilization of user-friendly stages focused on communication strategies and local systems, these activities may effectively promote their administrations and draw in a wide range of imminent workers and job seekers.

8.5.4. Quality Assurance and Standardization

Quality affirmation and standardisation are essential to ensure that workers and job seekers get reliable, high-quality administrations from advanced Public Employment Services (PES) and skills programs. Contrasts in program plan, execution, or geological settings might result in varieties in benefit quality (WEF, 2020). Numerous approaches will be utilised to deal with this challenge.

Setting Benchmarks for Quality: A consistent level of benefit and execution may be guaranteed by making and executing quality measures for digital PES and skills programs (European Commission, 2020). These rules may incorporate the extent of subjects related to the provision of administrations, counting programs, data security, openness, and client encounters. Suppliers may help make a more unified and productive framework of advanced PES and skills programs by maintaining comparable quality standards.

Exchanging Best Practices: Empowering PES suppliers and skills advancement organizations to collaborate and share information will energize the adoption of effective methods and raise the standard of programs (Cedefop, 2018). This may involve planning workshops, conferences, or online discussion boards to encourage the sharing of information, encounters, and creative thoughts among professionals. Advanced PES and ability programs may move forward their benefit offerings and give more prominent help to job seekers and employees by developing a culture of progressing learning and improvement.

Constant Assessment and Development: Keeping up high-quality services can be helped by routinely surveying the adequacy of digital PES and skills programs and making the desired alterations (ILO, 2021). This might involve collecting client input, performing repeating evaluations, and monitoring critical execution measurements to spot potential regions for improvement. Digital PES and skills programs may ensure that their administrations remain related, productive, and adaptable to the changing requests of job seekers, employees, and employers by embracing a data-driven and iterative technique.

Quality affirmation and standardisation are fundamental to ensure that digital PES and skills programs provide reliable, high-quality administrations across demographic groups and geographical areas. Through establishing quality guidelines, trade of best practices, and continuous appraisal and improvement, these endeavours may maximize their impact and cultivate more different and strong labour markets.

8.5.5. Privacy and Data Security

Since advanced Public Employment Services (PES) and skills programs frequently gather, hold, and handle delicate personal data from workers and job seekers, security and data security are critical. Maintaining public certainty in these administrations and securing people's data from mishandling or illegal access require effective data protection measures (European Commission, 2020). Keeping up client privacy and open certainty in advanced PES and skills programs is among the strategies for resolving protection, and data may be accomplished by guaranteeing compliance with relevant data protection enactments, such as the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (ILO, 2021). These laws protect people's right to security by building up rules for the gathering, dealing with, storing, and sharing of personal data. It is conceivable to comply with data protection laws in several ways, including: Developing and Enforcing Privacy Policies; Implementing data security measures; Obtaining Informed Consent.

To ensure that clients are educated and their security preferences are honoured, it can be accommodating to set up express and straightforward security rules that indicate how individual information is handled in digital PES and skills programs (Cedefop, 2018).

Securing personal data from breaches and undesirable access may be encouraged by executing solid data security measures, such as encryption, getting to limits, and visiting security reviews (WEF, 2020).

When collecting, processing, or sharing users' personal information, it is crucial to get explicit and informed consent to ensure individuals are aware of how their data will be used and have control over their privacy decisions. (ILO, 2021). Advanced PES and abilities programs may upgrade their general execution and effect by making a dependable environment for job seekers, workers, and other partners by setting a high need for protection and data security.

8.6. Conclusion

Public Employment Services (PES) and skills programs are crucial components of the dynamic environment of the advanced labour market since they foster strength and adjustment in companies, employees, and job searchers. These projects can effectively handle the issues of information protection, unequal internet access, and quick, innovative improvement by utilizing advanced technology and developing collaborative relationships.

A few advantages exist to embracing digital transformation in PES and skills programs. These incorporate more work prospects, improved work coordinating effectiveness, and support for deep-rooted learning and expertise advancement. Advanced PES stages can assist

the job search by coordinating job searchers with openings that fit their needs and advancing productive communication between employers, employees, and job seekers. Through the advancement of adjustment and versatility within the confront of technological changes, advanced skills programs may give people the abilities they need to succeed within the digital labour market.

For digital PES and skills programs to be actualized effectively and to be persistently improved, stakeholders must work together. These projects may get to a broad range of information bases, resources, and perspectives through collaboration with corporations, governments, academic institutions, and neighbourhood affiliations. These sorts of alliances may spur imagination, energize data trade, and make it simpler for individuals to work together to co-create practical solutions that address the changing requests of the labour market.

In order to guarantee that digital PES and skills programs are comprehensive and successful, current deterrents must be addressed. The general success of these programs will depend on endeavours to keep up with the fast speed of technological improvement, bridge imbalances in digital access, stimulate public information and inclusion, keep up quality confirmation and guidelines, and defend information privacy. PES suppliers and skills improvement organizations may construct a solid and empowering advanced labour market ecosystem that's invaluable to all parties included by aggressively handling these issues. Also, strong, comprehensive, and adaptable workforces within the digital period will be encouraged by advancing and enhancing advanced PES and skills programs within the European Union (EU) and elsewhere. These projects may help make a more flexible and affluent future for individuals, businesses, and economies by embracing digital innovations' potential, building creative relationships, and handling noteworthy issues.

CHAPTER 9: Results and Analysis (Quantitative Analysis)

9.1.   Introduction

This section is supposed to provide both qualitative and quantitative analyses. However, the qualitative findings have been analysed from Chapter 4 to Chapter 8. For more insights about this research, the conclusion provides a summary of the qualitative analysis. As such, this section will majorly discuss quantitive findings from the survey.

This study is based on a survey conducted between February and March (2022/02 and 2022/03), targeting digital platform workers in Albania. The original goal was to collect information from 135 respondents; however, the final dataset includes 128 complete entries

due to incomplete responses. The surveying process was specifically designed to capture the key features of online working in Albania, where the primary focus was factors such as job categories, platforms utilized, worker demographics, and the legal status of digital labour platform workers. It also incorporated five major platforms commonly used in the Western Balkans: Upwork, Fiverr, Freelancer.com, PeoplePerHour, and Guru.com. The research also aimed to represent the national population by including respondents from urban and rural areas across Albania.

While gathering the information, the researcher included different demographics such as age, sex, educational attainment, civil status, and region of residence. The author also collected details of the participants' average monthly income, the number of working hours per week, their employment status, and the duration of their engagement on their platforms. Additionally, they encompassed open-ended questions to explore the worker's motivations for engaging, their challenges, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their work.

9.2. Data Analysis

The data from the survey was cleaned to ensure it was accurate and consistent. The final dataset, consisting of 128 valid entries, was then analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the characteristics of the study population and key variables. Cross-tabulation was used to examine relationships between education levels and income and the influence of gender on platform usage. For example, the dataset analysis revealed a predominance of freelancers from urban areas, with a significant proportion holding a Bachelor's or Master's degree. The income distribution varied, with many earning between EUR 300 and 600 monthly. However, outliers were earning significantly more, particularly among those with more than three years of online experience. The survey was conducted independently of the different media to avoid potential biases and to ensure that the platforms themselves did not influence the responses. This approach was critical in accurately representing online workers' working conditions and experiences in Albania.

9.2.1. Worker Demographics

Age Distribution

The data analysis of the age distribution of Albanian digital platform workers reveals a significant concentration within specific age groups, particularly those in their 20s. This is indicated by the largest frequency of workers falling within the 25-30 age range, followed closely by the 20-25 age group (see Figure 1). This pattern shows a strong presence of

younger individuals in the digital platform workforce. Further evaluation indicates fewer workers in the older age brackets, with a steep decline in frequency beyond age 35 (see Figure 1). The dominance of young age groups suggests that working online is more attractive or accessible to this population because of the flexibility such work offers. Unlike traditional 9-to-5 jobs, this type allows individuals to set their schedules, making it possible to work at times that suit their personal lives. This is particularly appealing to young people who may be juggling multiple responsibilities, such as attending university, pursuing hobbies, or taking care of family members.

Moreover, the digital nature of online work opens up a global marketplace for this demographic, allowing them to access job opportunities that were previously unavailable to them due to geographical constraints. This worldwide reach helps job-seekers secure work in regions where local job markets may be saturated or offer lower wages (Modi, 2024). It also aids them in leveraging their skills in a broader, more competitive market, which often translates into better compensation and more varied work experiences. This exposure to different cultures and work practices further enriches their professional development and expands their perspectives.

Furthermore, the age bracket between 20 and 30 grew with technology as an integral part of their lives. Therefore, they are naturally comfortable with digital tools, online communication, and navigating the Internet, making the transition to online work seamless (Modi, 2024). This proficiency means they can quickly adapt to the demands of online media, whether managing tasks through software, communicating with clients via video calls, or using specialized tools for their work. The ease with which they can learn and apply new technologies is a distinct advantage in the online workspace, where digital skills are highly valued (Modi, 2024). Moreover, the availability of countless resources, tutorials, and communities further supports their continuous learning, making it easier for them to excel in various jobs.

Figure 3

Age Range and Frequency of Albanian Digital Platform Workers
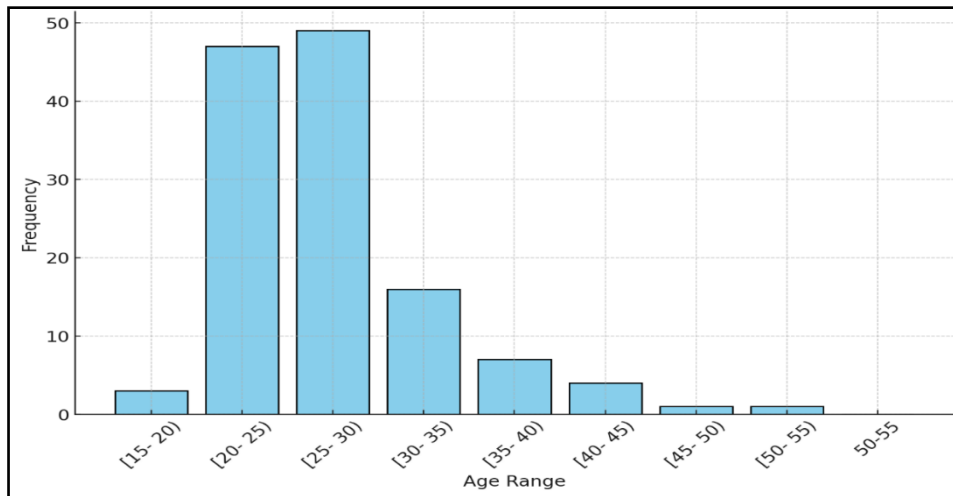
Gender Distribution

Based on the data gathered, the gender distribution in digital platform work is relatively balanced, with 51% of respondents identifying as female and 49% as male (refer to Figure 2). This is an indication that online work offers equal opportunities to all genders. The analysis further shows that most respondents use these platforms as a supplementary source of income rather than as their sole form of employment. Specifically, 41 women and 39 men reported engaging in platform work in addition to a full-time job (Figure 3). However, when it comes to relying solely on this type of job, the number of women (22) slightly surpasses that of men (19) (Figure 3). This is because more women may prefer working online than men due to the flexibility, especially those balancing multiple responsibilities, such as caregiving or household duties, that traditionally fall more heavily on females (Munoz et al., 2024). This kind of work enables one to set their schedule, work from home, and avoid commuting, which can make it easier for them to manage different tasks alongside their professional careers (Grau-Sarabia & Fuster-Morell, 2021). Interestingly, very few respondents (only 1 female and no males) reported using digital platform work in addition to other part-time jobs. This suggests that people in Albania have not yet fully embraced online work as their only source of livelihood. The adoption of this kind of job could be slower due to cultural preferences for traditional, in-person employment (Pinto, 2023).

Figure 4

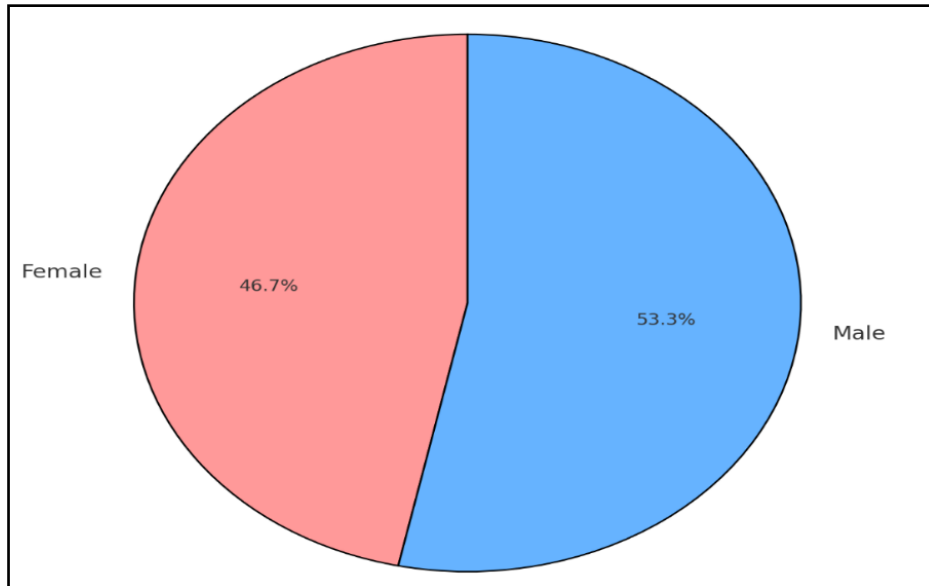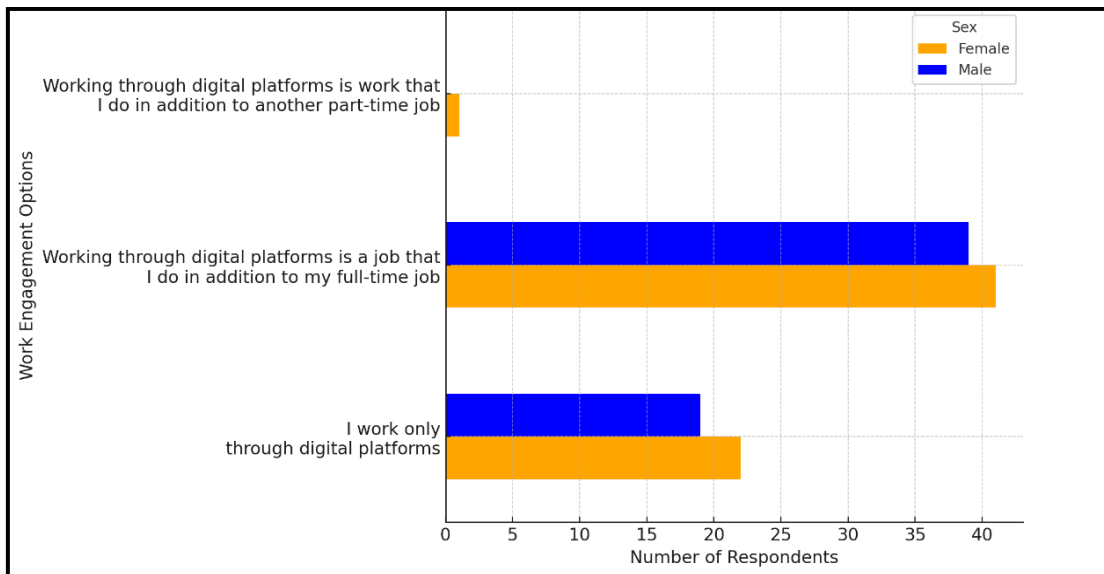*Proportional of Total Income Earned by Gender in Digital Platforms Work*


Figure 5

Gender distribution Across Different Work Engagement Options

The evaluation further indicates a notable difference in average monthly income between genders. The information obtained shows that men earn an average of EUR 519 per month, while women pocket an average of EUR 391 (Figure 4). This disparity is mostly influenced by factors such as the types of job categories each gender tends to pursue. Men often dominate higher-paying tech roles, while women are more represented in lower-paying positions. Additionally, women may work fewer hours due to other domestic duties.

Figure 6

*Average Monthly Income by Gender in Digital Platforms*
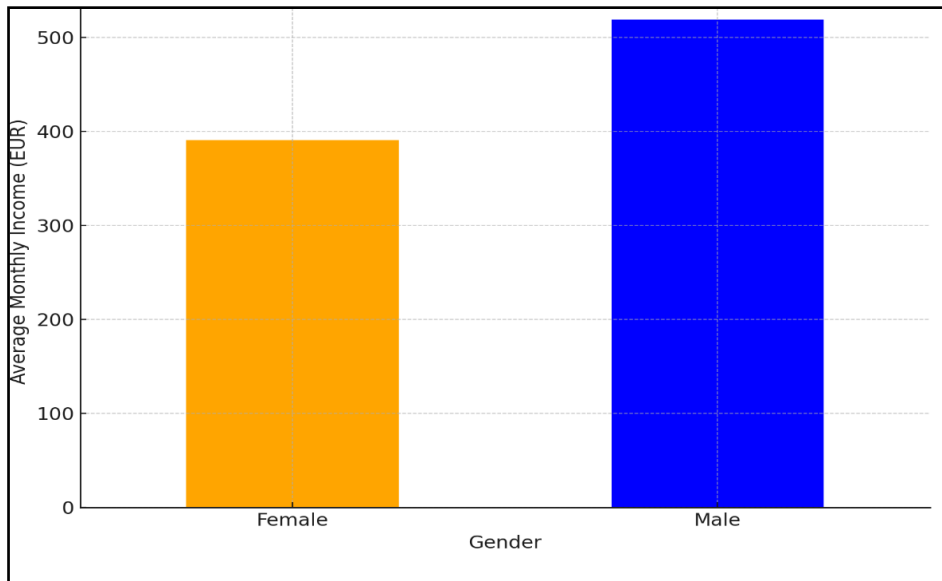
Education and Skill

Further evaluation of the educational attainment of these online workers reveals that the workforce is predominantly composed of highly educated individuals. Specifically, the data analysis shows that 53.9% of them hold a Master's degree, making it the most common level of education among the respondents (refer to Figure 5). Additionally, 22.7% have a Bachelor's degree, and 14.1% have completed a Bachelor's level of education. This makes up 90.7% of those interviewed, indicating that the vast majority of those working online have attained at least a university-level education (Figure 5). Furthermore, 3.1% of the workers have a PhD, which implies that these jobs also attract persons with advanced specialized skills. Smaller proportions of workers have other educational backgrounds, with 3.9% having only secondary school education, and 0.8% each for those with compulsory education, those still pursuing advanced degrees (e.g., a 5th-year student in Dentistry), and those with specific professional qualifications (e.g., School of Advocacy)

Figure 7

Educational Attainment of Digital Platforms Workers
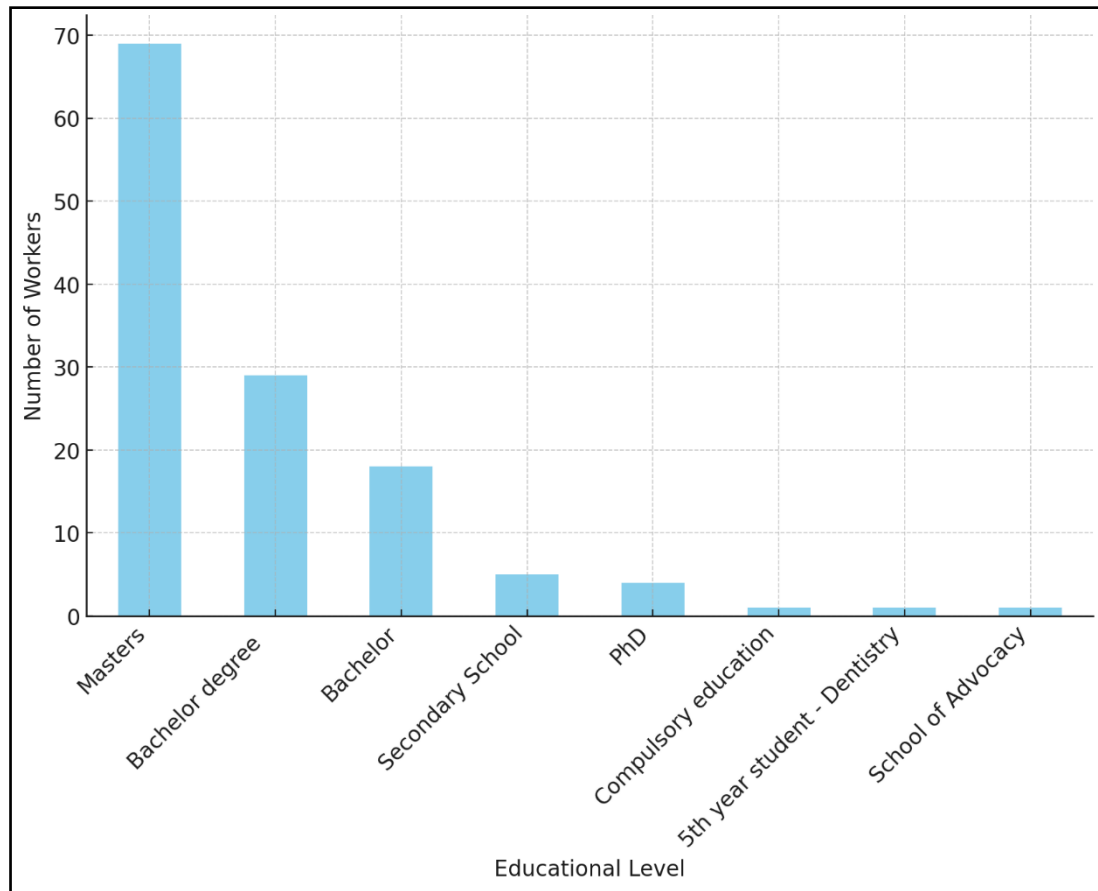
More dataset analysis shows a connection between education levels and the types of jobs performed on these platforms. The workers with a Bachelor's degree or higher are more likely to be engaged in technical roles, particularly those with a Bachelor's degree (65.52% in technical jobs compared to those involved in non-technical tasks at the same educational level). However, even among those with advanced degrees like a Master's, a significant majority (69.57%) still occupy non-technical positions (refer to Figure 6). This outcome indicates that an individual can take on any task within their field of study. Additionally, the broader availability of non-technical roles and personal preferences for job flexibility or career shifts might lead highly educated individuals to choose less complex jobs. This suggests that factors beyond education, such as job market dynamics and individual career goals, influence the work these online freelancers undertake. On the contrary, people with lower levels of education, secondary school, and compulsory education primarily engage in non-technical jobs (83.3% of the total) such as marketing. One of the main reasons for such inclination is that tasks that are technically complex require matching skills and capabilities, which are most gained in higher education.

Figure 8

*Educational Attainment vs. Job Category*
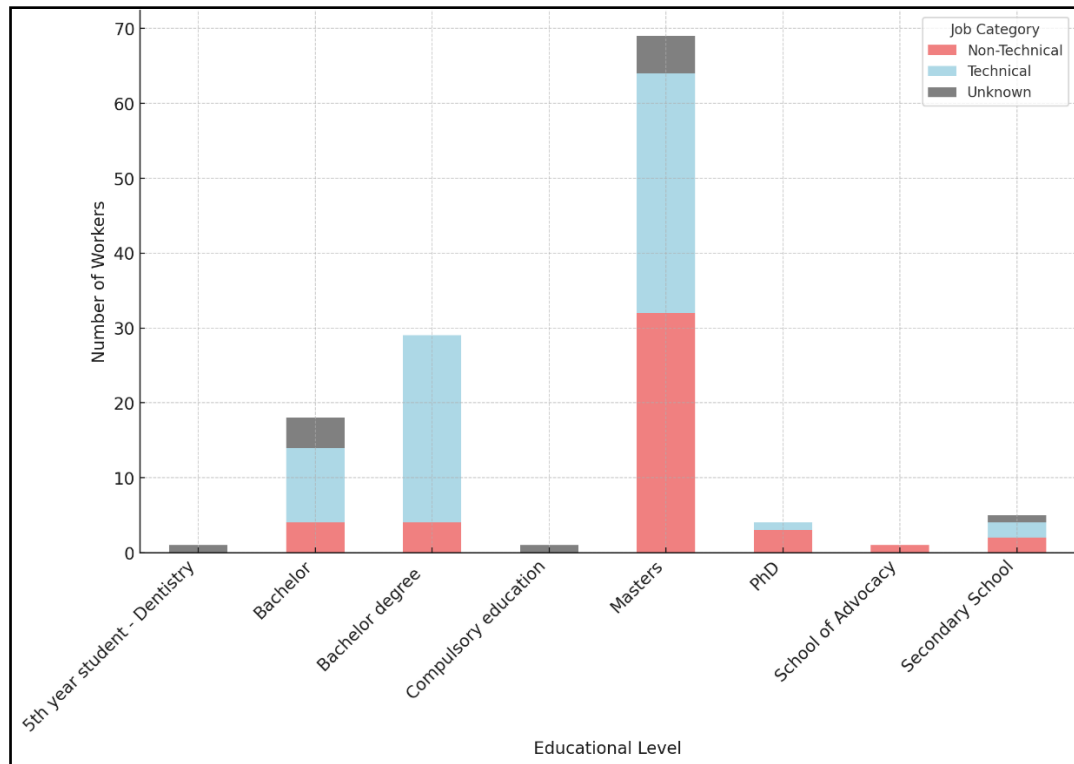
Geographical Distribution

Furthermore, an in-depth examination of the dataset shows a huge difference in the geo-graphical location of the participation in online work across Albania, with 82.8% of workers in urban areas and the rest in rural areas (Figure 8). Tirana alone accounts for 73.4% of the total respondents, which leaves a smaller portion, 9.4%, distributed across other cities, with Durrës having 5.5%, Vlorë 2.3%, and other smaller ones together making up 1.6% (Figure 9). Several factors support these findings. One is the presence of better internet connectivity within major urbanized regions driven by high demand for faster and more reliable internet (Brasemann, 2022). Besides, the government prioritizes connecting the Internet in urban centres to support administration processes and businesses (Richardson, 2022). Moreover, most educational institutions that offer digital training are found in these localities, which provides residents with better access to the skills needed for online work.

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Figure 9

Geographical Distribution of Workers (Urban vs. Rural)
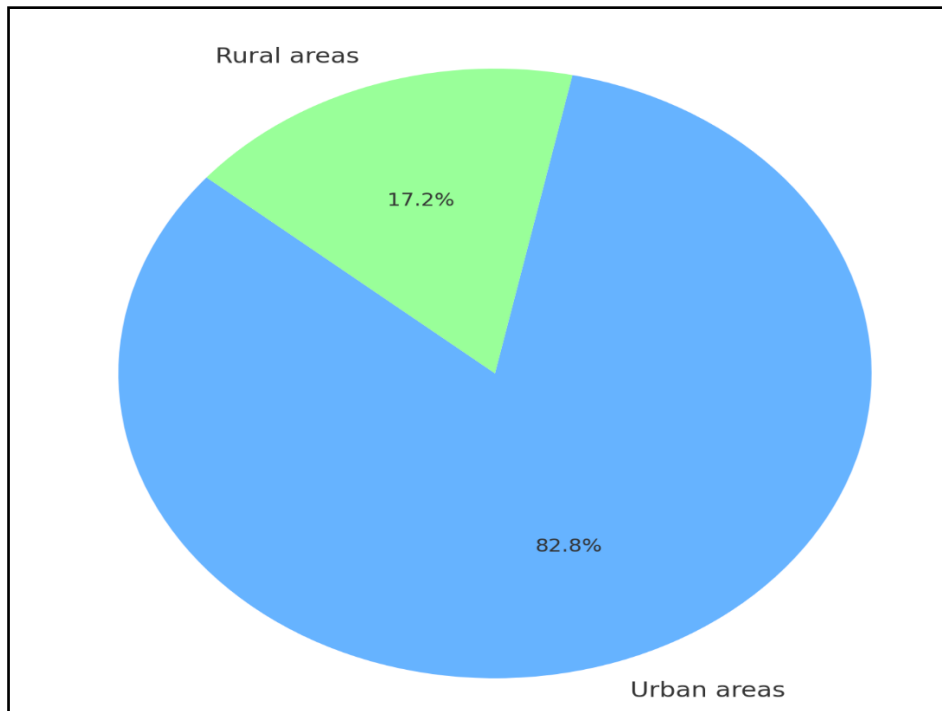
From the analysis, remote areas account for 17.2% of the total number of individuals who participated in the survey, including places such as Shkoder, Durres, and Berat (Figure 9). This lower involvement in online jobs can be attributed to several factors. For instance, these places generally have less developed digital infrastructure that supports this type of online work, thus discouraging the number of people willing to engage in this kind of work (Brase-mann, 2022). Additionally, educational resources and technological training in these areas are often limited, making it challenging for residents to effectively acquire the necessary skills to undertake jobs from digital platforms (Gussek et al., 2023). Furthermore, the economic opportunities in rural regions are typically fewer, leading to reduced awareness and utilization of online media for employment.

Figure 10

Geographical Distribution of Workers by City and Rural Areas
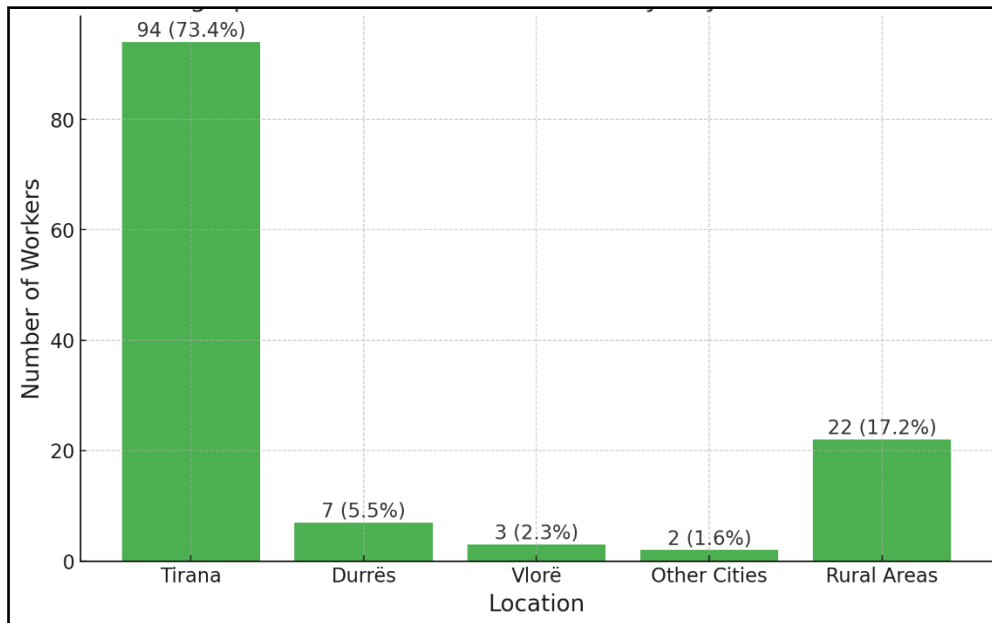
9.2.2. *Job Categories and Platforms Utilized*

Job Categories

Examination of the data on the type of work undertaken by the participants also shows a diverse range of job categories, with a significant concentration in the IT/Technical sector. This category alone accounts for 31.25% of the total respondents (refer to Figure 10). Most workers are in software engineering, IT specialist, and web development roles. This suggests that Albania, like much of the Western Balkan region, is experiencing a solid shift towards IT and digital-related jobs, consistent with global trends, where digital and technological transformation is a priority for economic growth. Marketing is another major area, comprising 13.28% of those interviewed (Figure 10). Their work included digital marketing, social media marketing, and SEO specialists (Zhezha et al., 2023). This indicates that the country has significantly embraced digital promotion in businesses, which, according to Satka et al. (2023), helps support their operations and outreach, which aligns with the global trend of being interconnected.

Other notable sections include finance/economics (10.16%), individuals like economists/financiers, and design/creative (5.47%), such as graphic designers. Administrative/management (4.69%) and legal (3.13%) roles were areas noted where the freelancers would get engaged (Figure 10). There was also a substantial portion of unidentified (23.44%), indicating either new or niche job roles that are not easily categorized.

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Compared to the broader Western Balkan region, Albania's job landscape reflects a similar pattern of adopting this online working adoption, albeit with its unique distribution. The strong showing in the IT/Technical sector aligns with regional initiatives to boost tech education and entrepreneurship, positioning Albania as a potential hub for digital services in the Balkans (Ördögh, 2023). However, the relatively lower percentages in traditional sectors like legal and administrative/management roles may suggest that these areas are either well-established or not growing as rapidly in comparison.

Figure 11

*Job Categories and Corresponding Percentages*
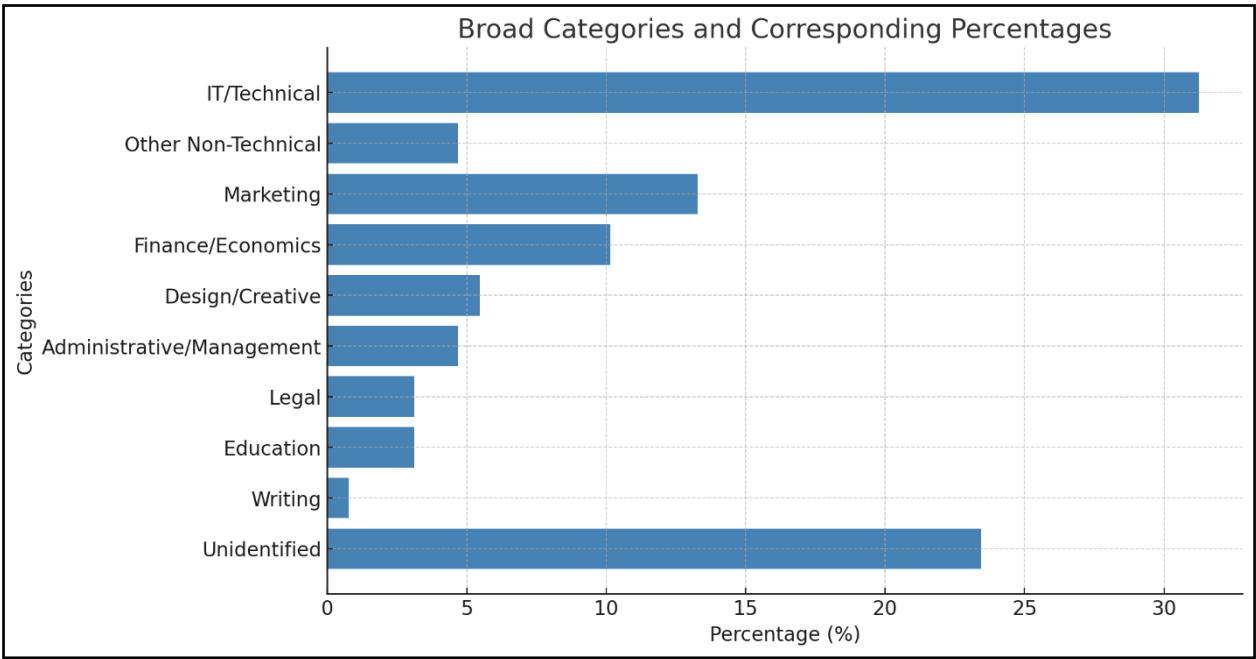
Income Levels

The data analysis of income levels among these workers reveals a varied distribution, with a significant portion of workers earning within the mid to upper ranges. Specifically, 26.8% of workers fall within the EUR 600 - 1200 income range, while 24.4% are in the EUR 300-600 range (refer to Figure 11). These two categories collectively account for over half (51.2%) of the respondents, indicating that many digital platform workers earn a moderate to high income. This is further supported by the statistics showing that the overall average income across all reported data, excluding non-disclosed figures, is approximately €578.05. On the other end of the spectrum, 18 workers (14.6%) reported making more than EUR 1200, which shows that a smaller yet significant

Conversely, the lower end of the income scale shows that 13% of workers earn EUR 150-300, 8.1% earn EUR 50-150, and 5.7% earn Under EUR 50. This demonstrates that while most workers are earning mid-level incomes or higher, a notable percentage still earns relatively low amounts. The evaluation also includes 3 workers (2.4%) reporting €0 income, which represent freelancers who have yet to generate significant earnings. This analysis aligns with broader trends in the gig economy, where making money online can vary widely based on the type of work, client base, and worker experience. The higher income brackets likely reflect workers who have established a strong international client base or possess specialized skills that command higher rates. Also, from the dataset, most of these individuals work more than 40 hours a week and take freelancing as a full-time job. This range of higher earners comprises expertise in IT and technical fields, some of whom work fewer hours but still make more than EUR 900 a month. The lower earners, including those earning under €50, represent new entrants to the market, those working on less lucrative platforms, or workers supplementing other income sources.

Figure 12

*Percentage Distribution of Income Ranges*
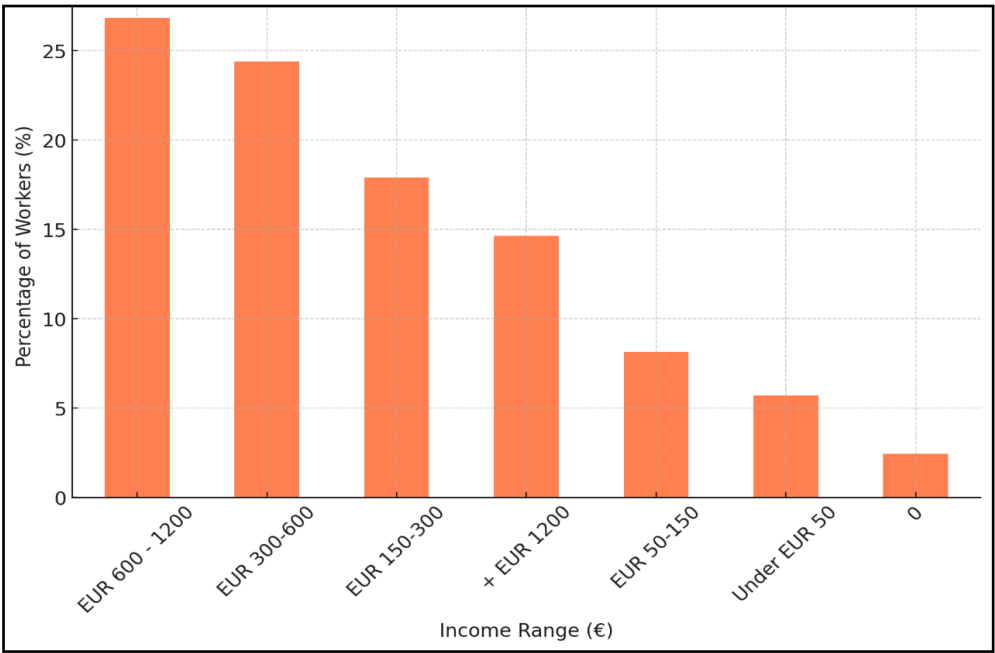
9.2.3. *The Legal Status of Digital Platform Workers*

The dataset reveals a diverse distribution of participants' employment statuses and their corresponding contractual agreements with the employers. Notably, about 51% of the

respondents are full-time employees. Among these individuals, 49% of them have contracts, while 51% do not (Figure 12). This is one of the challenges that online workers face because the majority of these websites lack clear-cut guidelines on proper work agreements, which makes it difficult for workers to secure social protections, like health insurance, pensions, or paid leave, which are typically associated with formal employment (Parks, 2023). Furthermore, the data shows that independent contractors and self-employed individuals are more likely to have contracts, with 65% and 59% having formal platform agreements (Figure 12). This trend may reflect the nature of freelance and self-employed work, where formal contracts are often necessary for establishing clear terms of engagement and securing payment.

However, the dataset shows the vulnerabilities of part-time employees and employees with a legal employment status of 'None of the above'. Only part-time employees did not have a contract, allowing for questioning of basic labour rights and social protection. And similarly, 59 percent of respondents in the "None of the above" category also don't have contractual agreements. Because of a lack of formalisation in employment relationships, the problems of income instability and limited access to benefits arise (Parks, 2023). From the findings, policy interventions are needed to improve digital platform worker security, particularly in more precarious employment situations.

Figure 13

*Legal Employment Status and Contract Comparison*
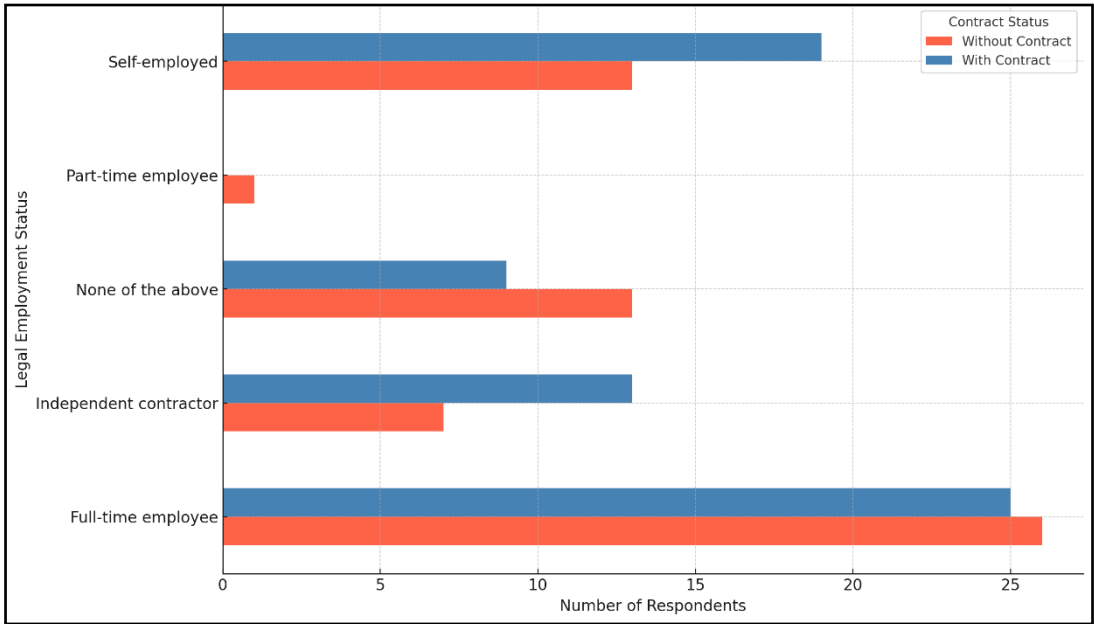
9.2.4. Working Conditions and Decent Work

In the final examination of the data, the evaluation shows that relatively more than half of the respondents, 59%, associate their payment satisfaction with fair working conditions. This indicates that a majority of them feel that their compensation is fair in relation to the working conditions provided. The second-largest group, making up 26.8% of responses, expressed that they are "Very satisfied" with their payment (Figure 13). This suggests that a significant portion of respondents are content with their pay. Lastly, 14.2% of participants fall into the "Somehow" category, which suggests that they are moderately happy with what they earn. The analysis further reveals a correlation between working hours and satisfaction with payment. Among workers who are "Very satisfied" with their payment, 51.5% work a standard 40 hours per week, while 42.4% work less than 10 hours per week. This indicates that stable, full-time work is a significant factor in achieving satisfaction with earnings. Conversely, workers who are not satisfied with their payment mostly work less than 10 hours per week (63.6%), which is an indication that irregular or minimal working hours contribute to financial instability and lower satisfaction levels.

Moreover, "Very satisfied" freelancers reported various issues such as time management, lack of long-term contracts, and difficulties with client communication. However, these problems were each reported by only one respondent, which indicates that while challenges exist, they do not have significant impacts on how the workers feel about the amount of money they earn. On the other hand, those who are unsatisfied with their face more frequent and severe problems, including payment delays, competition for jobs, and issues with client behaviour. These recurring problems likely exacerbate their dissatisfaction and contribute to a less stable and more precarious work environment.

Figure 14

Satisfaction with Payment (Percentage)
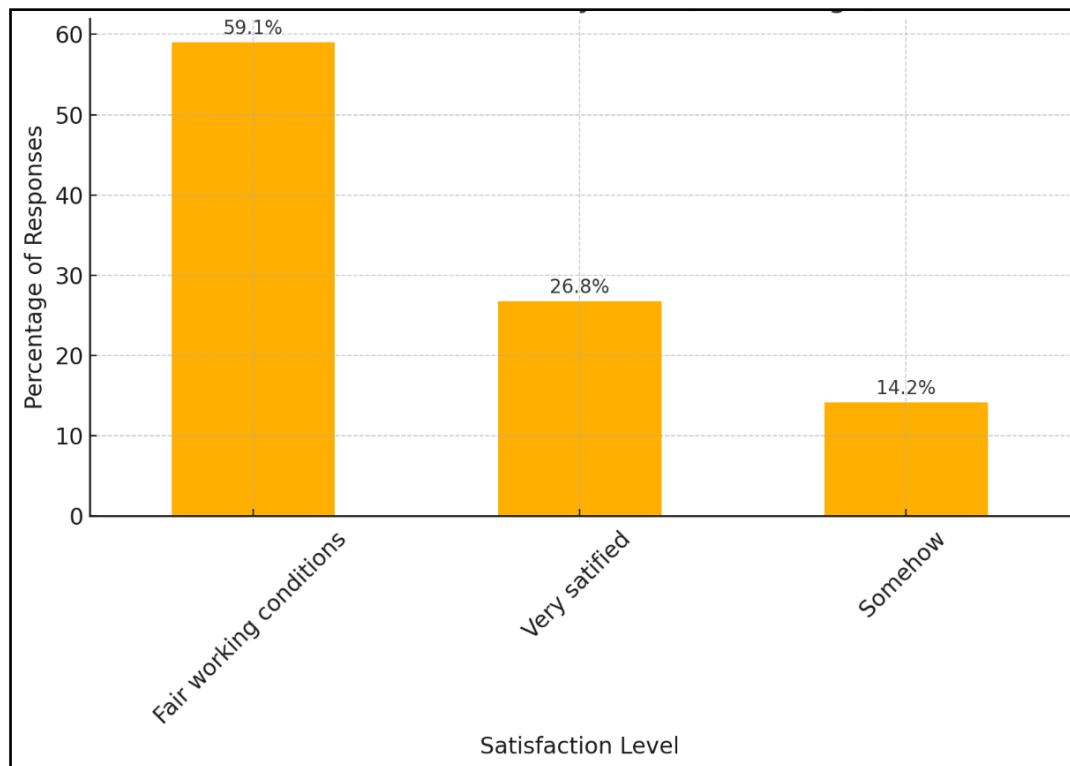
9.3. Conclusion

The digital platform work sector in Albania reflects trends not only in the Western Balkans but also across the globe. The examination of the dataset has provided valuable insights, revealing that most online workers are primarily situated in urban areas like Tirana. This inclination is not unique to Albania, but it also cuts across other nations since most cities have better infrastructure to support online working, such as faster internet connection. The evaluation has also shown that this type of work is predominantly composed of younger individuals, aged 20-30, who are well-educated, with a high percentage holding Bachelor's and Master's degrees. These individuals naturally find this kind of job attractive and flexible since they are well conversant with technology, making it easier for them to adapt.

Despite these promising opportunities, there are notable challenges of online work, such as gender disparities in income, where men earn an average of EUR 519 compared to women who make EUR 391 per month. Moreover, the data also reveals that a significant % of free-lancers, 51%, lack formal employment contracts that would enable them to secure social protections, like health insurance, pensions, or paid leave. This issue highlights some of the hurdles faced by these platform workers. Therefore, there is a need to implement policies that mandate fair compensation, security coverage, and proper agreements among these

employees. Additionally, the government should promote digitally-related literacy and provide better internet infrastructure in remote religions to help bridge the gap between urban and rural participation in this type of job to ensure there is inclusive progress in this sector.

Looking ahead, the future of digital platform work in Albania and the Western Balkans presents both prospects and difficulties. The continued growth of the gig economy, supported by regional initiatives to boost education and support systems, offers a pathway for economic development. However, this advancement must be accompanied implementation of regulations that protect workers' rights and promote decent working conditions.

CHAPTER 10: Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research

10.1 Conclusion

This dissertation has successfully met its five objectives since the author has managed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the characteristics and legal status of digital platform workers in Albania within the broader context of the EU and Central & Eastern Europe. Besides, it has examined the regulatory challenges that remote workers face and assessed whether the working conditions of these workers in Albania align with national labour standards and ILO definitions. Through reviews of the literature, the research further evaluated the effectiveness of national and EU regulations when it comes to addressing the challenges workers encounter when working online. The author also identified the areas that both Albania and the broader region could improve to address these issues, such as reforms of the current labour laws. Furthermore, this study explored organizational strategies for digital workers in Albania by highlighting collective representation practices and offering recommendations that would help increase their power in terms of campaigning for their rights. Also, it has evaluated how effective Albania's public employment services and skills programs are, compared them with EU and CEE initiatives, and proposed strategies for improving access to the digital-based labour market.

10.1.1 Qualitative Analysis Conclusion

From the qualitative analysis results, the dissertation concludes as follows;

Employment Misclassification

The review of the literature has revealed that employment misclassification is a major issue in the gig economy in Albania as well as in the Eastern and other parts of Europe. Many digital platform workers are labelled as independent contractors instead of employees who enjoy the benefits associated with traditional 9 to 5 types of work. This classification prevents them from receiving social security, health insurance, and paid leave, as per the findings from the research. A good example to back this fact is Mullaraj v. Bank (2016). The court ruled that Mullaraj was not an employee and denied him compensation for unfair dismissal. Similarly, in Jorida Baliko v. Kosmonte Foods Tirana (2016), the court decided that Baliko was not entitled to employee benefits because her contract did not include such a clause. These rulings show that Albania's labour laws do not protect remote workers.

Even through this, online jobs are increasingly becoming a source of income for many young people.

Algorithmic Management and Worker Autonomy

This research also shows that algorithmic management is common in online jobs. Platforms like Upwork, Fiverr, and Uber use this technology to assign tasks, monitor the performance of workers, and even penalize them for underperforming. From the literature analysis, this system reduces workers' freedom as it makes their work feel more like traditional employment, even though the workers are classified as working independently. As seen in the Roamler Case (Germany, 2020), algorithmic-based control dictates workers' access to jobs. The platform allocates the assignments based on performance-driven metrics, response times, and rankings, creating an incentive system restricting workers' freedom. The French Supreme Court's Uber ruling (2020) supports this idea, saying that Uber's algorithm regulates drivers by setting prices, giving penalties, and limiting their ability to refuse rides. This ruling highlights that online control of jobs creates an employer-employee relationship, which, even though employees do not where enjoy the benefits of traditional-based employees, essentially, they should be considered as regular workers since they cannot negotiate their wages, schedules or working conditions, which leads to economic dependence on platform-based jobs.

Regulatory Challenges and National Labor Law Frameworks

As the findings from the LR outline, there are regulatory challenges surrounding platform work, ranging from national labour laws that fail to accommodate digital-based work structures. The study shows that, in Albania, labour laws such as Law No. 7961/1995 primarily focus on traditional employment relationships but fail to recognize remote workers as employees. As seen in Mullaraj v. Bank (2016) and Jorida Baliko v. Kosmonte Foods Tirana (2016), courts in Albania continue to rule against gig workers due to a lack of legal clarity regarding worker classification and contractual rights. However, other countries like Germany and France have taken steps to address issues. Germany's Roamler ruling (2020) set a precedent for reclassifying online workers based on actual working conditions rather than contractual labels. The same is seen in France's Uber decision (2020), which recognized these workers as regular employees since they economically rely on the platforms for their incomes. In addition, the EU has introduced the Platform Work Directive, which aims to create a presumption of employment for digital workers across member states. However, Albania has yet to implement any similar laws, which means there is a need to adopt and

make changes to already existing labour laws in the country to be at par with other nations in the EU. Besides, since the same issues of lack of clear regulations to safeguard remote workers are observed in the Western Balkan countries like Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the countries should also push to make reforms in their laws to include platform employees, especially since dynamics employment are changing with most people, especially the youth prefer online working.

Comparative Legal Analysis of Platform Work in Other Countries

It is evident from Chapter 4 that different countries have responded to digital worker misclassification and labour rights challenges in varying ways. For instance, Japan's Freelancers Act (2024) introduced clear regulations for gig-based employees by directing the companies to provide written contracts, prevent payment delays exceeding 60 days, and give workers at least 30 days' notice before contract termination. The U.S. Department of Labour's rule (2024) also adopted an "economic reality" test to determine whether a worker is genuinely independent or should be classified as an employee entitled to minimum wage, overtime pay, and labour protections. Germany has also taken legal steps, recognizing "employee-like persons" under Section 12a(1) of the Act on Collective Agreements, where the country grants collective bargaining rights to economically dependent freelancers.

10.1.2 Quantitative Analysis Conclusion

From a quantitative perspective, the results, which are based on 128 valid responses, show that the majority of platform-based workers are young (ages 20-30), are highly educated and are mostly based in urban areas, particularly Tirana. The findings indicate that most freelancers work on internationally recognized platforms such as Upwork and Fiverr. Most of these individuals work in IT, marketing and finance. However, when it comes to income, it varies, with most workers earning between EUR 300-600 per month, although a minority surpassed EUR 1200. One key observation in this evaluation is that male freelancers earn higher average incomes (EUR 519) compared to females (EUR 391). Although the study did not explore the reason behind this difference, it is likely job categories pursued and working hours.

Furthermore, the study uncovers concerns regarding job security and protections for online workers. From the data analysis, more than half (51%) of respondents lack formal employment contracts that include benefits such as health insurance, pension contributions, and job stability. The survey further reveals there was a relationship between satisfaction with

income and working hours. Those working full-time are more satisfied than those with irregular or part-time work schedules. For workers who show dissatisfaction they cite delays in payment delays, client disputes, and job competition as major reasons. Moreover, the study shows that there are geographical disparities in participation where rural workers face barriers due to limited internet access and digital literacy training.

10.2 Recommendation

Implementation of Social Security Systems and Ensuring Proper Classification of Workers

Platform workers in Albania and most Western Balkan countries lack access to essential social security benefits. This situation places them at a significant disadvantage, as they do not have coverage for health issues, unemployment, or retirement as the regular 9 to 5 employees. To resolve this, governments should implement social security systems by reforming the already existing Albanian Labour Code (Act No. 7961/1995) to include clauses that would ensure online workers are treated and enjoy the same benefits, such as health insurance and pension schemes, just like the regular employees (Kapisyzi *et al.*, 2024). They could adopt Germany's approach that stipulates that platform-based workers should be considered as other traditional workers since they have an economic dependency on the platforms' jobs and have little freedom, just like Uber drivers, who cannot decline ride requests at their will (Hießl, 2021). This would help these employees to have a safe net income, reducing the financial risks associated with job instability or personal health crises. Within these cases, the government should also focus on the proper classification of remote and online workers. In most cases, these workers are wrongly labelled as independent contractors. However, they perform tasks online under the direction of platform operators, meaning they are treated as self-employed. This creates a scenario of misclassification that deprives them of normal employee rights, such as paid sick leave and vacation time. As the government amends the laws, it should clearly define who qualifies as an employee or independent contractor to avoid confusion and further protect online workers.

Promotion of Bargaining and Worker Representation and Cross-Border Coordination

Platform workers often find themselves in a vulnerable position because they lack the means to negotiate better pay, benefits, or working conditions. Unlike traditional workers who can join unions or participate in collective bargaining, many of these employees do not have such rights (Kapisyzi et al., 2024). Therefore, the Albanian government, alongside other

governments of the Western Balkan region and private sector, namely platforms, should create a framework that allows digital workers to organize and negotiate collectively. The framework should support the formation of unions or workers' groups that can negotiate on behalf of online employees whenever crises or needs arise. This approach would ensure the workers have a stronger voice and push for fair treatment. Additionally, since many digital platform workers operate across borders, it is essential for international cooperation to ensure consistent labour protections for these workers (Kapisyzi *et al.*, 2024). This is because online workers in different countries may face varying legal protections, which creates disparities in their treatment. Governments should thus work together to harmonize across borders.

Enhanced Access to Skills Development and Suspension/Deactivation of Account

Platform work offers many opportunities for people to earn income, but workers need the right skills to succeed. Unfortunately, many people aspiring to work online lack the necessary training to access higher-paying or more stable jobs. To help the citizens, especially young people, the government should invest in programs that help workers develop the digital capabilities required for jobs offered through online platforms. The areas of interest should include digital literacy, coding, web development, graphic design, and online marketing to help citizens access better opportunities and improve their earning potential. However, there are always some other risks, even when someone has the right knowledge since the online-based accounts could be suspended or deactivated without warning or clear justification. This can cause severe financial instability, as workers rely on platforms for income (Kapisyzi et al., 2024). To prevent this, the government should ensure transparent and fair rules regarding account suspensions. If workers feel unfairly suspended, there should be a platform that enables them to challenge the decision and return to work as quickly as possible. Besides, since there are no specific laws to safeguard these workers, it is high time the Albanian government took serious initiatives to implement relevant legislation regarding platform employees.

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