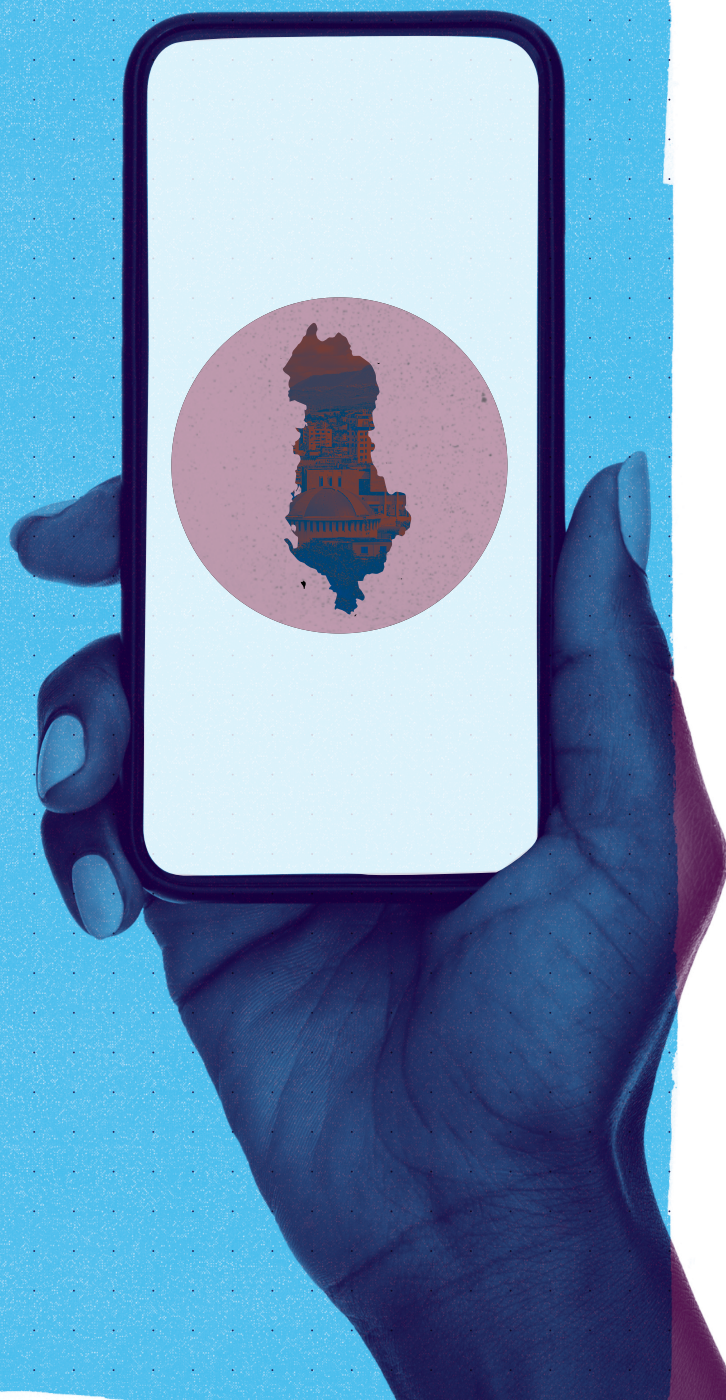


Fairwork

**ASSESSING WORK IN THE
ALBANIAN PLATFORM ECONOMY**

Fairwork Albania Ratings 2023



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Executive Summary

The first Fairwork report for Albania analyses digital labour platforms in an evolving policy and labour market context. In Albania, such platforms have recently faced scrutiny from the media and academic community regarding the increasingly precarious situation of workers. Our Fairwork Albania ratings, which cover five platforms across four sectors (food delivery, e-commerce, courier services, and taxi services), show that while most platform workers continue to face unfair working conditions and lack social protections, in the case of one platform, workers are receiving benefits comparable to, or sometimes even better, than the statutory entitlements of the standard employment contract.

Most of the platforms examined in this report were established post-2010, enjoying a significant popularity increase in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Food delivery and online shopping platforms are the most dominant in the sector. Precarity and low pay is a frequent feature of the Albanian labour market, however, when compared to other informalised sectors such as agriculture or construction, platform workers are paid better. Despite this, many workers are still not paid the living wage for their work. The significant physical demands this job puts on workers' bodies, combined with the high risks involved in the job (such as traffic collisions) mean that these platforms are often characterised by their young workforce. Platforms must take measures to mitigate risk and support workers in the case of work-related accidents.

The urban landscape, especially in the capital city of Tirana has changed since the introduction of platform work, with considerable increases in the number of taxis, motorcycles and bicycles placing strain on the city's infrastructure.

This is particularly exacerbated in busy cosmopolitan areas with a high density of workplaces and restaurants. Furthermore, these new professions in the Albanian labour market – particularly the increase in couriers and delivery workers – has precipitated a range of social issues. For example, physical and mental health issues, vehicle thefts, loneliness at work, discrimination, stress, and verbal mistreatment, are some of the issues that are newly circulating in discourses surrounding the Albanian labour market.

This report assesses five of Albania's digital labour platforms against five principles of fairness—fair pay, fair conditions, fair contracts, fair management, and fair representation—giving each a rating out of ten. In this year's scoring, Baboon leads the table with seven points, with SpeedTaxi and Aladini both in second place with two points. As per our methodology, we only give points to platforms when they have provided verifiable evidence that they satisfy the principle.

Key Findings



FAIR PAY

Three of the platforms—Baboon, Aladini and SpeedTaxi—could evidence that they could ensure workers' gross pay is at or above the minimum wage after all work related costs have been accounted for, which was 40,000 ALL /month net (approximately €379) in Albania at the time of writing.

The scores also factored in waiting times between jobs. When extending this net calculation to consider the real living wage (currently assessed by the WageIndicator to be 67,200–87,700 ALL (net) per month) no platforms were able also evidence that they met this principle of fair pay.



FAIR CONDITIONS

Out of the five platforms assessed, only two – Baboon and Aladini – were able to evidence that they take meaningful action to mitigate task-specific risks.

Specifically, these platforms ensured that safety equipment is provided to workers, emergency response systems are in place, and private insurance is provided free of charge. Almost all the platforms allow workers to rest if they feel unwell during work, while Baboon and Aladini provide a place to rest for 30 minutes, charge phones, use toilets, and eat a meal that is provided free of charge. In all five platforms, managers and dispatchers were available to support in troubleshooting and resolving problems workers may face in their tasks.



FAIR CONTRACTS

Platforms in Albania organise their contractual arrangements differently depending on the size and type of the business.

Two platforms – Baboon, and SpeedTaxi – hire their delivery workers via a written contract, so were awarded the first point for fair contracts.



FAIR MANAGEMENT

Baboon was the only platform able to evidence an effective system of due process for decisions affecting workers, entailing a clear and documented process for workers to meaningfully appeal low ratings, non-payment, payment issues, deactivations, and other penalties and disciplinary actions, providing workers greater recourse.

In Albania, there is still a low awareness of the importance of diversity and inclusion in the work environment. A structured dialogue with target groups is needed to drive future equality and diversity throughout the Albanian labour market.



FAIR REPRESENTATION

Collective organisation and representation should be a fundamental right for all workers and employees.

To achieve the first point, platforms need to provide evidence of avenues for meaningful expression of collective worker voice and a formal written statement of willingness to negotiate with a trade union (e.g. offering them physical or virtual channels to collectively gather without fear of repercussion). If no union exists to represent workers, then a statement of willingness to negotiate with a union should one be founded must be issued. As we show in this report, workers may or may not be issued with a contract by the platform. Workers without contracts have no protection from being discriminated against should they engage in collective action. No platforms scored a point for Principle 5.

EDITORIAL

Changing Work Standards in Digital Labour Platforms: The 2023 Albania Report

Digital labour platforms have continued their rapid expansion throughout Albania in recent years. This expansion accelerated throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath, reshaping the economy and labour market development. Online shopping in particular has revolutionised the predominantly bricks and mortar high street retail environment dominant in the Albanian context; simultaneously expanding the range and segmentation of customers – and thus creating new jobs for platform workers – whilst also undermining the high street.

This expansion has occurred through platform capitalism's disruption of traditional business models and the emerging of new ways of doing business such as food delivery, ride-hailing, cleaning, cargo transport, online shopping delivery and e-commerce.

The digitalisation of work in Albania has increased rapidly with the emergence of so-called "cloudwork" (online work that can be done from anywhere around the globe) and location-based (geographically tethered) platform work which must be done in place, like ride-hailing or logistics. Workers in the first sector are mainly highly qualified

people, working on a contractual basis to deliver white-collar tasks as freelancers. By contrast, location-based platforms predominantly employ workers with primary or secondary education. Policymakers' attention is currently focused on the former, that is, on the new opportunities that employment digitalisation is providing to qualified people. This has come at the expense of attention being paid toward geographically tethered platform workers.

The dynamic evolution of the platform economy in Albania is taking place in a context of high unemployment rates (10.9%), endemic corruption, low standards of education

and health services, and widening socio-economic and spatial inequalities. Taken together, these factors make it more challenging for policy makers and academics alike to conduct research on the sector. For example, national level data do not consider this new category of workers, nor does the occupational inspectorate have regulations to monitor the employers of these new sectors.

Ensuring good working conditions on digital labour platforms is a challenge that is exacerbated by legal gaps, a lack of practices guaranteeing labour rights, and low expectations of trade unions from workers. According to the 2023 ITUC Global Rights Index, Albania is a place characterised by regular violations of people's rights. This is typified by the dysfunction of trade unions in more traditional sectors, such as agriculture and light industry, which makes the unionisation of workers in newer sectors like digital platform work even more difficult as there is significant mistrust in the possibilities of labour organising without corruption.

The Fairwork Albania team recognise the specific challenges of the Albanian context and business climate of informality, the weak presence and role of public

institutions, mistrust in governmental policies, scepticism toward the change trade unions can make, and low awareness among workers regarding the liabilities and responsibilities of their employers. Thus, the issues of this sector reach further than merely payment, and instead reflect a context of lack of policies and regulations for fostering inclusive work environments.

We applaud some platforms, such as Baboon, for recognising the precarious situation of many of their workers and making significant strides toward improving working conditions by applying new measures (such as providing a place to rest, organising periodic meetings with workers to discuss problems they face, providing risk and security training, etc.), but there is still a long way to go across the platform market. In addition to raising worker participation in trade unions, a new way of thinking about diversity, inclusion and mental health is needed. This is the first year that Albania has been part of the Fairwork project. This report suggests that significant reforms are needed from digital labour platforms to provide fairer working conditions for their workers.



Helge Lindau / Shutterstock

Towards Decent Labour Standards in the Platform Economy

Fairwork evaluates and ranks the working conditions of digital labour platforms. Our ratings are based on five principles that platforms should ensure in order to be considered to be offering basic minimum standards of fairness.

We evaluate platforms annually against these principles to show not only what the platform economy is today, but also what it could be. The Fairwork ratings provide an independent perspective on labour conditions of platform work for policymakers, platform companies, workers, and consumers. Our goal is to show that better, and fairer, jobs are possible in the platform economy.

The Fairwork project is coordinated from the Oxford Internet Institute and the WZB Berlin Social Science Center. Our growing network of researchers currently rates platforms in 39 countries across 5 continents. In every country, Fairwork collaborates closely with workers, platforms, advocates and policymakers to promote a fairer future of platform work.

Fairwork countries

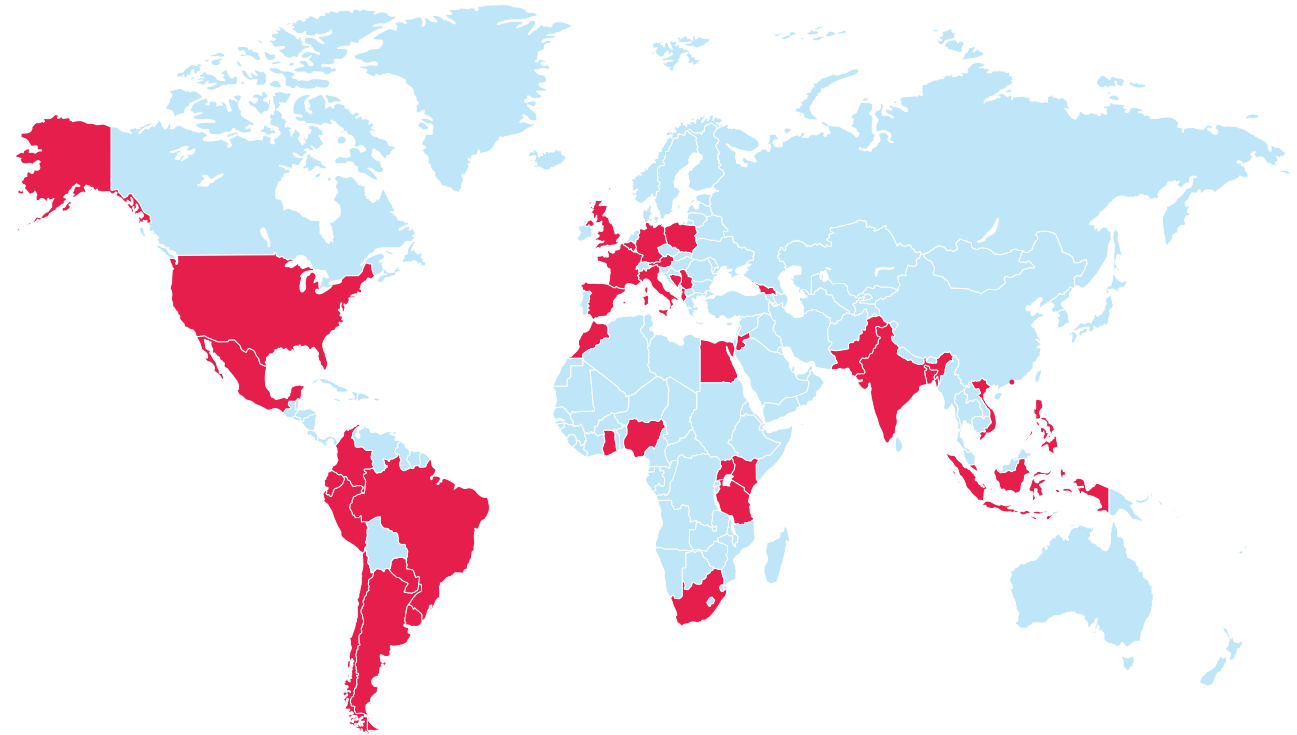


Figure 1. Map of Fairwork countries.

AFRICA

Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda

ASIA

Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam

EUROPE

Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, Georgia, Germany, Italy, Poland, Serbia, Spain, UK

SOUTH AMERICA

Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay

NORTH AMERICA

Mexico, US

The Fairwork Framework

The five Fairwork principles were developed through multiple multi-stakeholder workshops at the International Labour Organisation. To ensure that these global principles were applicable in the Albanian context, we have subsequently revised and fine-tuned them in consultation with platform workers, platforms, trade unions, regulators, academics, and labour lawyers.

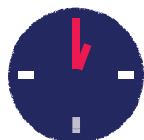
STEP 1

The five principles



Fair Pay

Workers, irrespective of their employment classification, should earn a decent income in their home jurisdiction after taking account of work-related costs. We assess earnings according to the mandated minimum wage in the home jurisdiction, as well as the current living wage.



Fair Conditions

Platforms should have policies in place to protect workers from foundational risks arising from the processes of work, and should take proactive measures to protect and promote the health and safety of workers.



Fair Contracts

Terms and conditions should be accessible, readable and comprehensible. The party contracting with the worker must be subject to local law and must be identified in the contract. Regardless of the workers' employment status, the contract is free of clauses which unreasonably exclude liability on the part of the service user and/or the platform.



Fair Management

There should be a documented process through which workers can be heard, can appeal decisions affecting them, and be informed of the reasons behind those decisions. There must be a clear channel of communication to workers involving the ability to appeal management decisions or deactivation. The use of algorithms is transparent and results in equitable outcomes for workers. There should be an identifiable and documented policy that ensures equity in the way workers are managed on a platform (for example, in the hiring, disciplining, or firing of workers).



Fair Representation

Platforms should provide a documented process through which worker voice can be expressed. Irrespective of their employment classification, workers should have the right to organise in collective bodies, and platforms should be prepared to cooperate and negotiate with them.

STEP 2

Methodology Overview

The Fairwork project uses three approaches to effectively measure fairness of working conditions at digital labour platforms: desk research, worker interviews and surveys, and interviews with platform management. Through these three methods, we seek evidence on whether platforms act in accordance with the five Fairwork Principles.

We recognise that not all platforms use a business model that allows them to impose certain contractual terms on service users and/or workers in such a way that meets the thresholds of the Fairwork principles. However, all platforms have the ability to influence the way in which users interact on the platform. Therefore, for platforms that do not set the terms on which workers are retained by service users, we look at a number of other factors including published policies and/or procedures, public statements, and website/app functionality to establish whether the platform has taken appropriate steps to ensure they meet the criteria for a point to be awarded against the relevant principle.

In the case of a location-based work platform, we seek evidence of compliance with our Fairwork principles for location-based or ‘gig work’ platforms, and in the case of a cloudwork platform, with our Fairwork principles for cloudwork platforms.

Desk research

Each annual Fairwork ratings cycle starts with desk research to map the range of platforms to be scored, identify points of contact with management, develop suitable interview guides and survey instruments, and design recruitment strategies to access workers. For each platform, we also gather and analyse a wide range of documents including contracts, terms and conditions, published policies and procedures, as well as digital interfaces and website/app functionality. Desk research also flags up any publicly available information that could assist us in scoring different platforms, for instance the provision of particular services to workers, or the existence of past or ongoing disputes.

The desk research is also used to identify points of contact or ways to access workers. Once the list of platforms has been finalised, each platform is contacted to alert them about their inclusion in the annual ranking study and to provide them with information about the process. All platforms are asked to assist with evidence collection as well as with contacting workers for interviews.

Platform interviews

The second method involves approaching platforms for evidence. Platform managers are invited to participate in semi-structured interviews as well as to submit evidence for each of the Fairwork principles. This provides insights into the operation and business model of the platform, while also opening up a dialogue through which the platform could agree to implement changes based on the principles. In cases where platform managers do not agree to interviews, we limit our scoring to evidence obtained through desk research and worker interviews.

Worker interviews

The third method is interviewing platform workers directly. A sample of 6-10 workers are interviewed for each platform. These interviews do not aim to build a representative sample. They instead seek to understand the processes of work and the ways it is carried out and managed. These interviews enable the Fairwork researchers to see copies of the contracts issued to workers, and learn about platform policies that pertain to workers. The interviews also allow the team to confirm or refute that policies or practices are really in place on the platform.

Workers are approached using a range of different channels. For our 2023 ratings, this included, in addition to our tried and tested participant recruitment methods, Facebook and Instagram advertisements and snowballing. In all these strategies informed consent was established, with interviews conducted both in person and online.

The interviews were semi-structured and made use of a series of questions relating to the 10 Fairwork (sub) principles. In order to qualify for the interviews, workers had to be over the age of 18 and have worked with the platform for more than two months. All interviews were conducted in Albanian.

Putting it all together

This threefold approach provides a way to cross-check the claims made by platforms, while also providing the opportunity to collect both positive and negative evidence from multiple sources. Final scores are collectively decided by the Fairwork team based on all three forms of evidence. Points are only awarded if clear evidence exists on each threshold.

How we score

Each of the five Fairwork principles is broken down into two points: a first point and a second point that can only be awarded if the first point has been fulfilled. Every platform receives a score out of 10. Platforms are only given a point when they can satisfactorily demonstrate their implementation of the principles. Failing to achieve a point does not necessarily mean that a platform does not comply with the principle in question. It simply means that we are not – for whatever reason – able to evidence its compliance.

The scoring involves a series of stages. First, the in-country team collates the evidence and assigns preliminary scores. The collated evidence is then sent to external reviewers for independent scoring. These reviewers are both members of the Fairwork teams in other countries, as well as members of the central Fairwork team. Once the external reviewers have assigned their scoring, all reviewers meet to discuss the scores and decide final scoring. These scores, as well as the justification for them being awarded or not, are then passed to the platforms for review. Platforms are then given the opportunity to submit further evidence to earn points that they were initially not awarded. These scores then form the final annual scoring that is published in the annual country Fairwork reports.

**FURTHER DETAILS ON
THE FAIRWORK
SCORING SYSTEM ARE
IN THE APPENDIX.**



BACKGROUND

Digital Labour Platforms in Albania

Digital labour platforms are growing fast across the world, and the Balkan region and Albania are no exception. The platform economy in Albania, although still emerging, has experienced substantial growth in recent years. A regional report by GigMetar showed that 12,800 Albanians were employed online in 2023, with approximately 4447 gig workers per 100,000 inhabitants. However, the digital labour market presents numerous challenges in this newly created work environment which is generally lacking in regulation.

The platform economy's development in Albania can be attributed to various factors, such as technological advancements, globalisation, governmental policies, and a growing demand for flexible work arrangements. In fact, the platform economy in Albania started to take shape in the early 2010s with the proliferation of Internet access and mobile technology. The impact of technological change on the Albanian economy was made evident especially during and after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic when digitalisation trends accelerated at a significant rate. New non-standard forms of employment enriched the labour market, especially in regard to platform work which provided new online-based employment opportunities. The steady increase over the last decade of e-commerce and online business has further diversified this market, and platform work has emerged as a new form of employment in the country's labour market.

Indeed, in all the six Western Balkan countries, platform work is emerging as a notable and growing aspect of the employment landscape, mirroring the global trend. This new employment structure includes remote (i.e. work undertaken at the computer that can be done for international clients) and location based (i.e. work that

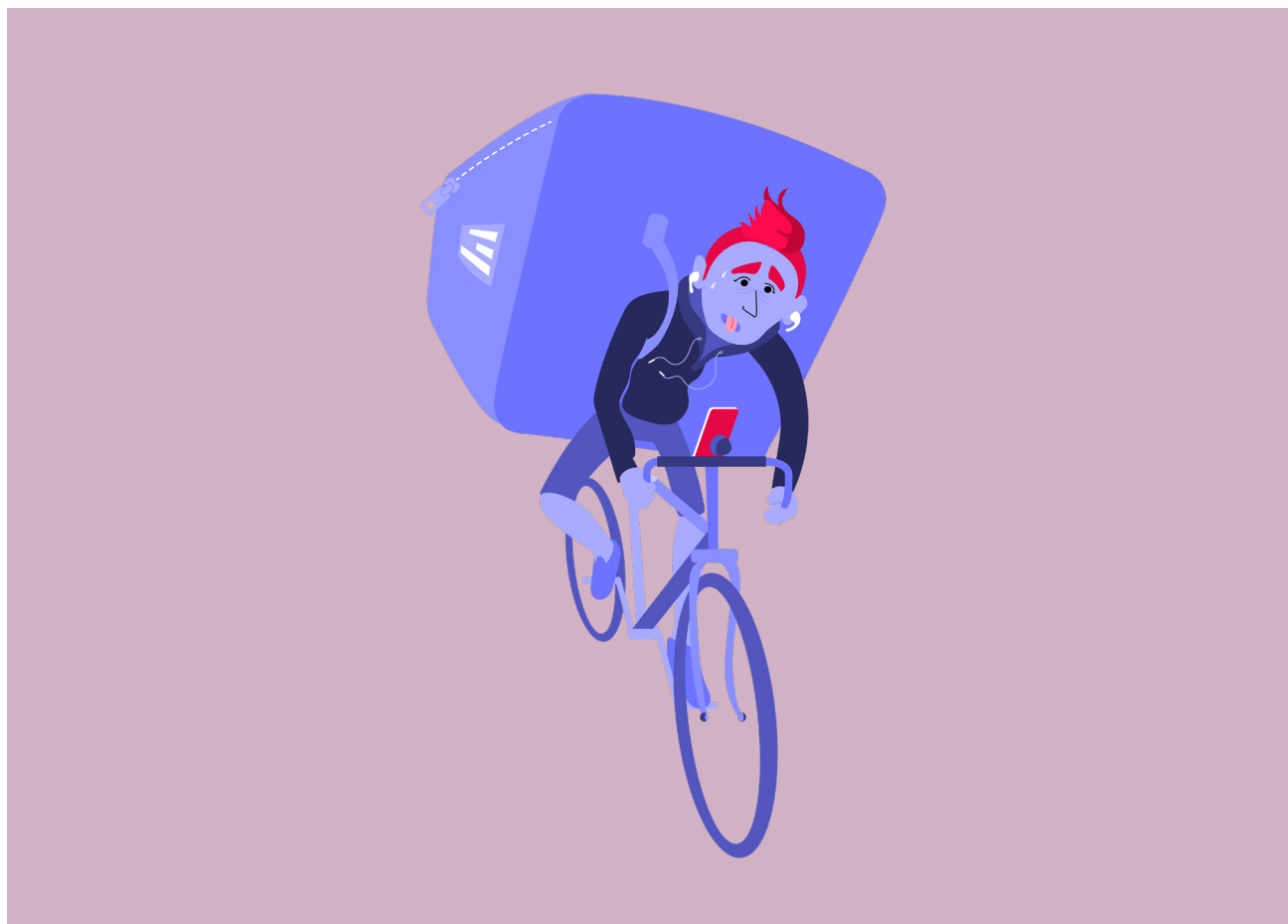
must be undertaken in place, such as food delivery or ride hail) forms. However, this report only focuses on location based platform work. For more on remote platform work, see Fairwork's Cloudwork 2023 report.

While remote service platforms are receiving more attention from media and policymakers in Albania, on-location service platforms are independently evolving, with their growth being strongly oriented toward market needs and profitability. Interest has been growing toward location-based platform workers, such as delivery drivers, specifically regarding their working conditions. In contrast to other Western Balkan countries, location-based platforms are local (national) firms, founded and developed in Albania, and there are still no international platforms operating within the Albanian market. It is currently unclear whether international platforms such as Glovo or Uber see the possibility for market entry into Albania in the near future. Food delivery, ride-hailing, online shopping delivery, and various arts and crafts are the main services they offer. The proliferation of digital labour platforms has been largely segregated by gender where work remains almost entirely male dominated. All of the workers we interviewed were male, their ages varying from 19 to 66 years old. All of the interviewees

are Albanian, reflecting the fact that the sector is not yet oriented towards hiring migrants, given immigration is still a relatively new phenomenon in Albania. The food delivery sector is largely dominated by Baboon. In terms of geography, digital labour platforms are mainly concentrated in the capital city, Tirana, reflecting Tirana's dominance in Albania (as the capital, but also where wealth, jobs and cultural events are centralised, and as home to the largest population in the country). As such, the regional inequalities of accumulated economic wealth and resources in Tirana create the strongest consumer market, while peripheral regions experience a lack of investment and development. This is clearly evident in the food delivery sector. This also impacts workers, with people coming from the secondary cities or rural areas to live in Tirana and enter the labour market, constituting the higher percentage of the drivers and couriers.

As international institutions have forecast, Albania's economy experienced a slowdown in the first months of 2023. This is reflected in the decrease in VAT revenues for the January-April period by 0.58% in comparison to

the same time the previous year, and a contraction of imports of the main groups such as food, by 11.2%. One of the main causes for this slowdown is the high level of emigration. For instance, 26,751 people left Albania and applied for asylum in other countries in 2022. In addition to emigration, informality is another cause. The country currently experiences a high level of informality and inflow of currencies from unknown services which is distorting all real indicators. This often leads to unfair competition in the market between digital labour platforms which utilise informal workers and those that do not. This in turn affects workers' wages. Informality and informal competition penalises businesses that do operate formally and that provide workers with the protections they are entitled to. Thus, the cost of doing formal business can be higher than informal business, which serves as a disincentive for companies to become 'formal', due to the barriers to entry and the ease of operating informally in the local economy. This is felt particularly strongly outside of Tirana.



The Forward March of Labour Stunted

The legacy of Albania's communist era (1945–1990), when trade unions more resembled propaganda machines than a genuine means for social dialogue and change, means that trade unions in Albania are still seen with scepticism among large segments of the labour force, including platform workers.

This scepticism, combined with the decline of unions in the years since the fall of the Hoxha dictatorship in 1990, poses a major threat to the achievement of the decent work agenda in the contemporary labour market as workers are left without the structural tools to articulate their demands for improved conditions of work. According to the Global Workers' Rights Index, employee rights are regularly violated, especially the right to strike and the right to collective bargaining. Industrial relations in Albania are characterised by a weak bipartite social dialogue due to the insufficient organisation of trade unions at the company level or above; scepticism of employers towards trade unions at all levels; and a general work culture that lacks dialogue between workers and employees. All of this is underscored by a significant informal sector that – by virtue of not being formalised – means workers are left without formal means to protect themselves at work. Whilst, in accordance with International Labour Organization (ILO) requirements, the law provides the legal framework for trade unions, in practice, attempts to create such unions for platform workers have so far been unsuccessful.






The legal framework for trade unions in Albania is as follows:

Constitutional Protections: The Constitution of the Republic of Albania recognises the right to establish and join trade unions as a fundamental human right. Article 46 of the Albanian Constitution protects the right to organise and participate in trade unions for the protection of labour rights.

- **Trade Union Registration:** Trade unions in Albania must register with the relevant government authorities to operate legally. Registration typically involves submitting the necessary documents and meeting the specific requirements outlined in the law.
- **Freedom of Association:** As a member of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Albania is committed to upholding the principles of freedom of association. This includes the right of workers to form and join trade unions of their choice without interference from employers or the government.
- **Collective Bargaining:** Trade unions in Albania have the legal right to engage in collective bargaining on behalf of their members. Collective bargaining agreements can cover a wide range of labour-related issues, such as wages, working hours, and workplace conditions.
- **Labour Code:** Albania has a Labour Code that governs various aspects of labour relations, including trade union rights and responsibilities. The Labour Code outlines the legal framework for trade union activities, including the procedures for strikes and industrial actions.
- **Strikes and Industrial Actions:** Article 197 of the Labour Code regulates the right to strike in Albania. It sets out the procedures and conditions for conducting strikes, including notice requirements and dispute resolution mechanisms. Strikes must be peaceful and not disrupt essential public services.
- **Protection and Trade Union Membership:** The Labour Code provides protection against discrimination or retaliation for trade union members and leaders. Employers are generally prohibited from taking adverse actions against employees based on their trade union activities.
- **Trade Union Confederations:** Trade unions in Albania often organise themselves into trade union confederations to collectively represent workers' interests on a broader scale.
- **If applied and available to all workers in practice, this could be effective.** However the significant mistrust of collective association bodies like unions, combined with the high levels of informality in the labour market render much of this law-making redundant in practice.

Fairwork Albania Scores 2023

Minimum standards
of fair work

Baboon	7 /10	
Aladini	2 /10	
SpeedTaxi	2 /10	
ADEX	—	
Foodini	—	

THE BREAKDOWN OF SCORES FOR INDIVIDUAL
PLATFORMS IS AVAILABLE AT:

WWW.FAIR.WORK/ALBANIA



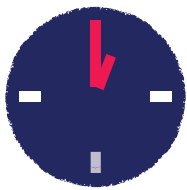
Fair Pay

Only platforms that ensure workers are paid at least the local minimum wage after work-related expenses are subtracted from workers' earnings can meet this threshold. The payment per hour, whether informal or formal, is calculated to match the national minimum wage. Informal payments complicated the scoring process because of the lack of protection for workers' payments, meaning platforms with informal work conditions were unable to achieve a point for principle 1. This was a common theme across all five principles.

All five platforms could evidence that the gross pay for *formal* workers was 40,000 ALL, which is the minimum

wage in Albania, but not all workers in all the platforms are formalised meaning many do not earn that much. Baboon and Aladini were able to demonstrate that all workers were formally employed. All five platforms paid for work-related expenses such as fuel and vehicle maintenance, minimising the expenses for workers.

Worker evidence included some workers admitting they could not afford the cost of living by relying on the platforms' income. None of the platforms could reach the living wage threshold without bonuses, which do not form part of the guaranteed wage.



Fair Conditions

Platforms that show they are aware of workers' risks and provide steps to mitigate them can achieve this point.

Food delivery service Baboon met this point through the provision of helmets, safety and work equipment, and developing more ergonomic baskets for carrying packages. Drivers of the other platforms confirmed they do not need additional equipment, and the company provides the car. These Speed Taxi and Adex demonstrated that they own the cars and cover the costs for everything (such as fuel, maintenance, etc.), excluding fines which are charged to the

drivers. Car and health insurance were also covered by the company.

Baboon evidenced that they are aware of workers' risks and provided steps to mitigate them. This included training workers with ways to deal with the risks of the job and providing workers with a place to rest and a free meal every shift. Speedtaxi provides communication pathways and training to mitigate risk.

Only Baboon was able to provide evidence of providing workers with sick pay to meet the second point.



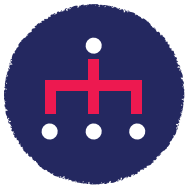
Fair Contracts

For platforms to meet 3.1, they must demonstrate that the contract or terms and conditions are clear and accessible to all workers.

Many platforms have both formalised and informal workers, who operate with and without a contract. Workers often choose to work without a contract because they do not want

to lose the social assistance – such as unemployment pay – or they do two or more jobs at the same time.

No platform was able to evidence that workers are always provided with notice of any contractual changes.



Fair Management

To meet this point, platforms must demonstrate that workers are not arbitrarily deactivated, and that there is an avenue for workers to meaningfully appeal disciplinary actions.

Communication is crucial when lone working. Workers of Aladini, Baboon, Speed Taxi and Adex reported that the management communication channel is very polite and understandable. They make the work flow smoothly.

Platforms operate in principle by app or web page, but these only cover the payment and allocation of work, not the delivery part, which is done by mobile communication with

the clients. There were no reported cases of deactivations. Customers can contact the call centre for any complaints at any of the five platforms. We found evidence of an appeals process at Baboon.

We acknowledge the significant homogeneity of the workforce in the Albanian platform economy. Almost all workers are men, and we have heard reports of women leaving their jobs as a result of the conditions of work. The only case of active attempts to increase diversity we have found evidence for was of Baboon hiring two women as delivery drivers, in addition to employing Roma people to work on the platform.



Fair Representation

For platforms to get this point, they must assure freedom of association and the expression of collective worker voice.

None of the platforms achieved a point for this principle. As explored above, attempts to create a trade union for

platform workers have so far been unsuccessful.





















There are no signs of collective representation agreements at any of the platforms.



PLATFORM IN FOCUS

Baboon

Baboon tops the league table, providing better working conditions for workers compared to other digital labour platforms in the country. Baboon was created in 2015 as an online food delivery market place that enables users to order online at more than 200 restaurants in Tirana through its website or mobile application. It was founded by Genti Selenica who is currently CEO of Baboon. Baboon won the “Mobility of the Year” award at the Albania ICT Awards in 2016.

Principle	First point	Second point	Total
 Principle 1: Fair Pay	 Ensures workers earn at least the local minimum wage after costs	 Ensures workers earn at least a local living wage after costs	 1
 Principle 2: Fair Conditions	 Mitigates task-specific risks	 Ensures safe working conditions and a safety net	 2
 Principle 3: Fair Contracts	 Provides clear and transparent terms and conditions	 Ensures that no unfair contract terms are imposed	 2
 Principle 4: Fair Management	 Provides due process for decisions affecting workers	 Provides equity in the management process	 2
 Principle 5: Fair Representation	 Assures freedom of association and the expression of worker voice	 Supports democratic governance	

Baboon's Total Score



In many respects, Baboon is a world-leading platform among the Fairwork principles, particularly through the provision of a company doctor, and of spaces to rest for platform workers. The addition of a free meal included per shift is also excellent, and ensures riders do not need to incur further costs on food at work. It is the first company of the five studied to try to implement diversity measures by actively recruiting for women in the motor drivers group, even though have not been successful in retaining them among the employees. Baboon also has Roma people among its workers. We look forward to seeing continued efforts to extend and diversify the workforce at Baboon.

All of Baboon's workers are formalised, with the contract respecting the terms and conditions of the labour code in Albania. Workers are entitled to all the employment rights of traditional employees, including to be paid at least the national minimum wage, health and safety protections, statutory sick and holiday pay. Safety equipment is made available to Baboon couriers at no additional cost. The management have expressed that they are open to improving the working conditions, inclusion, and collective representation in the future.



Workers' Stories

Jon*, is 38 years old and has been doing food delivery for fifteen years. Four years ago he began working for a food delivery platform. His family came to Tirana in 1996 from a small city in South Albania that was almost abandoned after the fall of the communist regime.

Jon confirms that compared to other companies there are advantages to the platform he works on. He also admits that he has seen improvements in terms of salaries and working conditions when comparing his experience now to when he began work. Today he is paid 200 ALL per hour plus 100–300 ALL per delivery, depending on the distance. His daily routine begins at 8 o'clock in the morning, meeting with other drivers and waiting for the app to notify him of incoming orders. For Jon, delivery work is just like any other type of job. He knows that clients follow every move he makes. "GPS is good, but you have to know Tirana, its roads, addresses and traffic because the performance depends on how quickly the orders are delivered. It's the algorithm, that is like a person looking at the system, that does the ranking automatically," explains Jon. According to him, workers' groups or associations are not needed because "We are not protest people, we get along".

Dritan* is 52 years old. He works 8 hours per day and finds this work very tiring. He admits that he can get more income on the food delivery platform when compared to other sectors, but he considers this to be a job for young people.

He is now facing health problems, including kidney disease, and he gets nervous about his cell phone because

of the attention he needs to pay it in controlling the orders and talking to his manager. To Dritan the way management assign orders is not fair. He thinks youngsters are favoured and so they get offered more orders, orders that cover further distances (and thus pay more). For Dritan, traffic collisions and thefts are the other primary challenges of working for the platform: "There are times when people open the car door without noticing the motorcycle... I have crashed twice for myself. There are also thefts of orders. They tell you to bring the order to the fifth floor, you go, and someone steals the order". Previously Dritan had worked in a Western European country for a long time, and he can tell the differences when comparing the working conditions especially regarding health insurance: "Everything is covered by the state there. Here we pay health insurance, but no one answers you when you are in need..."

Alban* is 22 years old and has finished a high school programme in professional education. He began working for a food delivery platform in response to a call for workers during the pandemic.

The app is very easy and practical for Alban. He finds two weeks of holidays to be enough, because he wants to profit as much as possible from the orders, even though he admits that the company pays for four weeks of holidays. The cold, the sun, and the traffic are the main challenges of this work. However, for Alban, physical and mental health are not a concern: "For the moment I am still young," he explained. He can't remember the details of his employment contract, even though he has signed one. But he likes to stress that he has "all very good ratings", laughingly adding that he is "a super driver". Gathering with his colleagues to play football is another thing he enjoys about the work environment.

***Names changed to protect worker's identity**

THEME IN FOCUS

Informality and platform workers

Three types of platforms were identified from our interviews in relation to the way employees are hired: platforms which have all of their employees formalised, platforms which operate with a mixed work force, formalised and unregulated; and one platform operating with only unregulated workers.

This, however, is not abnormal to the Albanian context where informality has represented a significant part of the market since the transition from a planned economy to a market economy. The first signs of the informal economy in Albania appeared during the initial phase of the transition to a market economy in the 1990s and early 2000s, when the development of a legal, institutional, fiscal and regulatory framework lagged behind the development of the private enterprise sector. Furthermore, it became a structural part of the economy and its most dynamic sector, as political interests dominated by corruption (which captured every segment of the state), found in informality the right instrument to create profit and to selectively destroy rivals or other areas of economic activity. Today, the informal economy is estimated to be at dangerously unstable levels, up to 50% of GDP. The ILO estimates that as much as 56.7 percent of total employment (including in the agricultural sector) may be informal in Albania. The statistical snapshot of Albania, provided by the ILO (Figure 1) shows the sectors most represented in the informal economy, with agriculture representing the most dominant sector. The graph below shows what percentage of informal employees work in the respective sector. While the graph on the right shows what percentage of employees in that sector are informal. From the first chart it can be said that 63.9% of all informal employees work in agriculture. From the second graph, it appears that of all employees in Domestic workers, 95% are informal. The first chart shows the economic sectors according to their contribution to the unmonitored economy.

Many agricultural workers are seasonal, leading to high informality figures. In the second graph, the sectors of the economy that are most exposed are the sectors that have mainly seasonal effects, such as construction, wholesale and retail trade, accommodation and food, transport and other services. Whilst only a small sector at present (0.9%), the 95.3% informality rate for domestic workers is alarming. This presents fertile ground for platforms to emerge and help formalise domestic work arrangements to improve conditions for domestic workers in the future.

The terminology and concept of 'platform worker' is quite new in the Albanian employment law framework, and companies working in this sector are not yet properly defined in the market. This creates a blurry environment in terms of legal status. Whilst traditional models of work are properly defined in the legal code, they are frequently bypassed as a result of the significant informality in the market. Unstable social relations between employers and employees thus makes it easier for workers to be left without the benefits and obligations owed to them by employers. It is hoped that platforms can be part of correcting this trend and supporting sustainable work in Albania. However, it is not yet clear if that will be the case because most businesses consider it more of a cost than a benefit to be formal. If they hire only formalised workers, costs will increase and as a result they will not be able to compete with other companies in the same sector who hire unregulated workers as well. High levels of informality also undermine the incentive structures in the domestic labour market.

The sectoral dimension: The 10 sectors the most represented in the informal economy

The 10 sectors the most exposed to informality

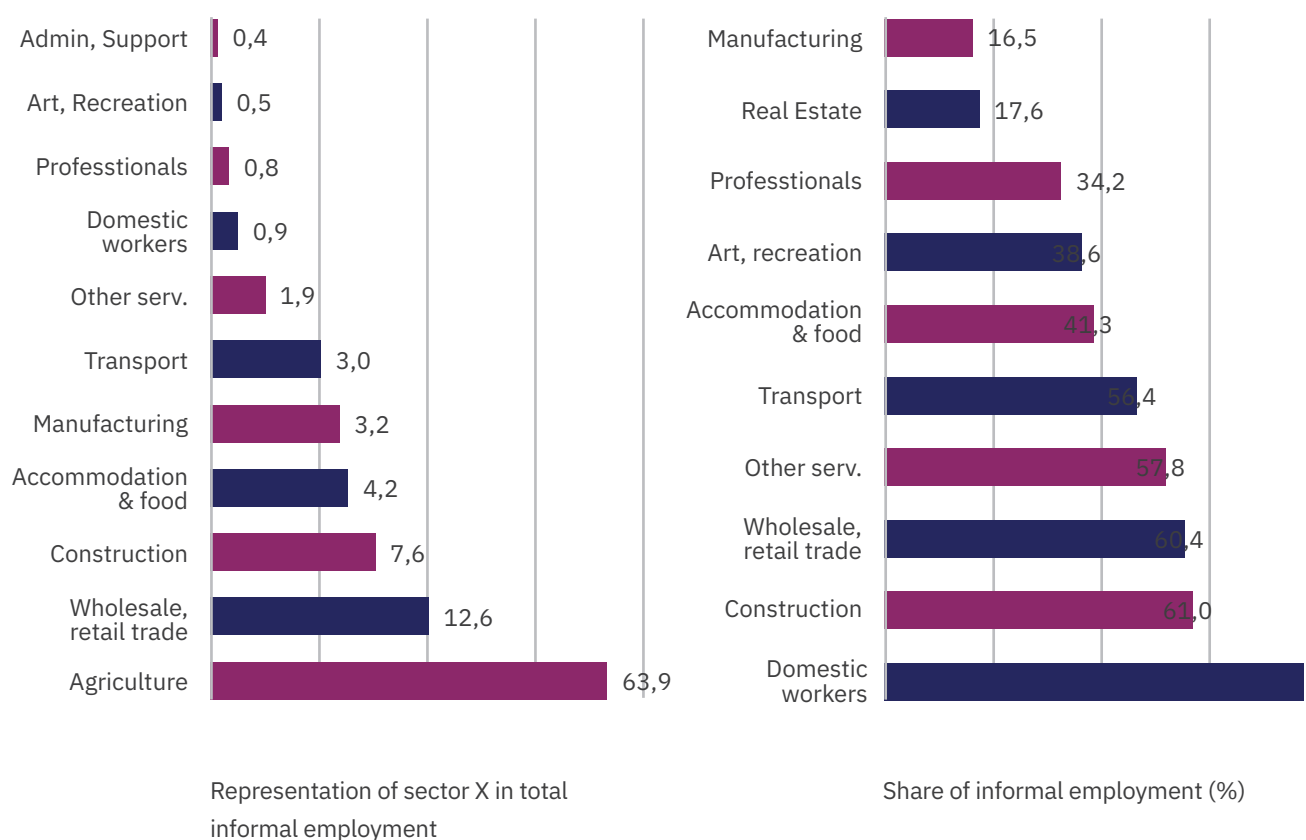


Figure 2: Informal Economy in Albania. Source: International Labour Organisation ILO. (2020). Overview of the informal economy in Albania.

Platform workers in Albania are mainly young people coming from primary and secondary education. Students who want to earn while studying at the same time are also part of this workforce. Being less favoured by the difficult labour market in Albania, young people work in these platforms for a short period of time – several months – looking for quick money rather than attachment to their job or aspirations of a long term platform work career. One of the main problems platforms face is the lack of a consistent work force, and the high rate of staff turnover. Young people frequently prefer to work for two or three months, generally in summer, and then leave. According to the International Monetary Fund, since the pandemic, Albania has lost an estimated average of 20,000 inhabitants per year - a trend that is likely to continue. Fighting informality and improving

domestic work would help rein in emigration pressures. Many of the drivers we spoke to reported doing more than one job, so they prefer to stay unregulated and work all day long, which increases the risk of accidents as well as earnings. Others prefer to not be formalised because they do not want to lose the social welfare they get as unemployed people. The lack of trust in official institutions leads workers unable to think in the long term, unable to care about health insurance, and unable to think about saving for a pension for when they retire.

MOVING FORWARD

Platform Changes

Platforms have the ability to improve conditions for their workers, while continuing to provide income opportunities. In consultation with the Fairwork team, the following platforms agreed to implement changes to their policies or practices:

Fair Management

Generally, communication is polite across most platforms reviewed. Baboon has established two channels of communication: between management and workers for more difficult issues, and between the worker and dispatcher for routine everyday small issues.

Fair Representation

Even though efforts have been made to create a trade union for platform workers, this has not yet been achieved. Mistrust in collective organisations and workers' fear of losing their jobs, are the main factors preventing the establishment of such organisations. We hope to see future change in relation to representation as workers become more aware of their rights and can mobilise the policy frameworks that enable them to form worker unions and collective organisations.



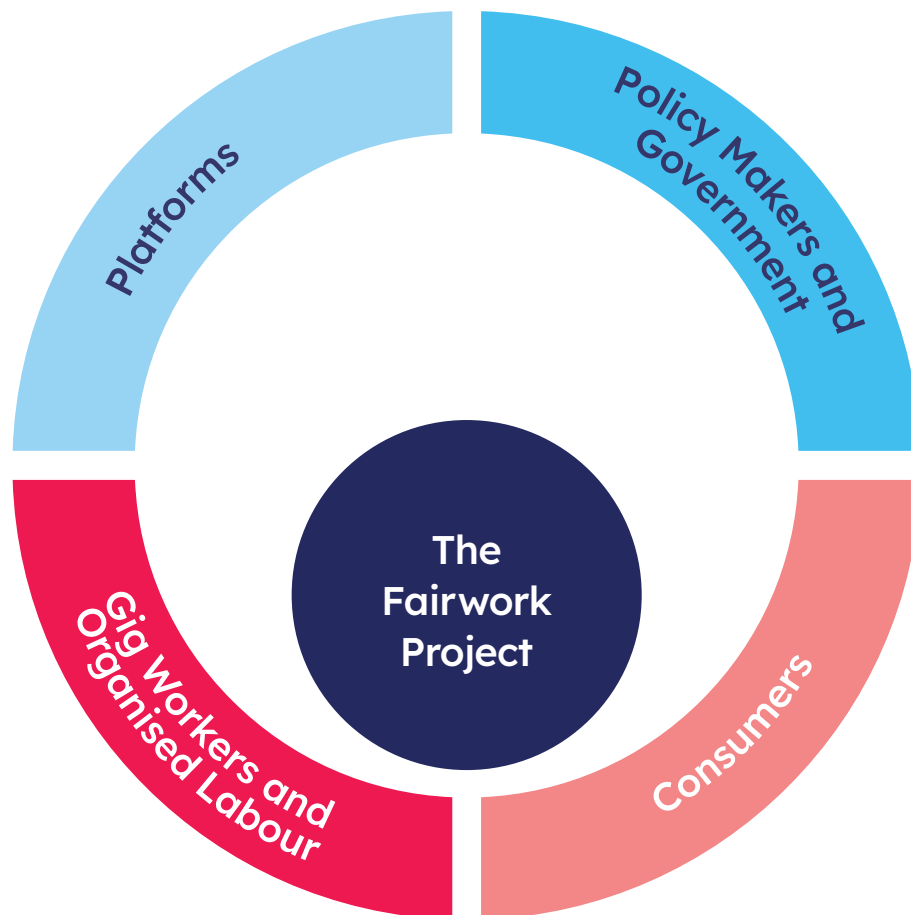
Pathways of Change

Fairwork's theory of change relies on a humanist belief in the power of empathy and knowledge.

There is nothing inevitable about poor working conditions in the platform economy. Despite their claims to the contrary, platforms have substantial control over the nature of the jobs that they mediate. Workers who find their jobs through platforms are ultimately still workers, and there is no basis for denying them the key rights and protections that their counterparts in the formal sector have long enjoyed.

Our scores show that the platform economy, as we know it today, already takes many forms, with some platforms displaying greater concern for workers' needs than others. This means that we do not need to accept low pay, poor conditions, inequity, and a lack of agency and voice as the norm. We hope that our work – by highlighting the contours of today's platform economy – paints a picture of what it could become.

Figure 3: Fairwork's Pathways to Change



The Fairwork Pledge

As part of this process of change, we have introduced the Fairwork pledge. This pledge leverages the power of organisations' procurement, investment, and partnership policies to support fairer platform work. Organisations like universities, schools, businesses, and charities who make use of platform labour can make a difference by supporting the best labour practices, guided by our five principles of fair work. Organisations who sign the pledge get to display our badge on organisational materials.

The pledge constitutes two levels. This first is as an official Fairwork Supporter, which entails publicly demonstrating support for fairer platform work, and making resources available to staff and members to help them in deciding which platforms to engage with. A second level of the pledge entails organisations committing to concrete and meaningful changes in their own practices as official Fairwork Partners, for example by committing to using better-rated platforms where there is a choice.

**MORE INFORMATION ABOUT
THE PLEDGE, AND HOW TO SIGN UP,
IS AVAILABLE AT**

FAIR.WORK/PLEDGE



APPENDIX

Fairwork Scoring System

Which companies are covered by the Fairwork principles?

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines a “digital labour platform” as an enterprise that mediates and facilitates “labour exchange between different users, such as businesses, workers and consumers”. That includes digital labour “marketplaces” where “businesses set up the tasks and requirements and the platforms match these to a global pool of workers who can complete the tasks within the specified time”. Marketplaces that do not facilitate labour exchanges - for example, Airbnb (which matches owners of accommodation with those seeking to rent short term accommodation) and eBay (which matches buyers and sellers of goods) are obviously excluded from the definition. The ILO’s definition of “digital labour platform” is widely accepted and includes many different business models.

Fairwork’s research covers digital labour platforms that fall within this definition that aim to connect individual service providers with consumers of the service through the platform interface. Fairwork’s research does not cover platforms that mediate offers of employment between individuals and employers (whether on a long-term or on a temporary basis).

Fairwork distinguishes between two types of these platforms. The first, is ‘geographically-tethered’ platforms where the work is required to be done in a particular

location such as delivering food from a restaurant to an apartment, driving a person from one part of town to another or cleaning. These are often referred to as ‘gig work platforms’. The second is ‘cloudwork’ platforms where the work can, in theory, be performed from any location via the internet.

The thresholds for meeting each principle are different for location-based and cloudwork platforms because location-based work platforms can be benchmarked against local market factors, risks/harms, and regulations that apply in that country, whereas cloudwork platforms cannot because (by their nature) the work can be performed from anywhere and so different market factors, risks/harms, and regulations apply depending on where the work is performed.

The platforms covered by Fairwork’s research have different business, revenue and governance models including employment-based, subcontractor, commission-based, franchise, piece-rate, shift-based, subscription models. Some of those models involve the platforms making direct payments to workers (including through sub-contractors).

How does the scoring system work?

The five Principles of Fairwork were developed through an extensive literature review of published research on job quality, stakeholder meetings at UNCTAD and the ILO in Geneva (involving platform operators, policymakers, trade unions, and academics), and in-country meetings with local stakeholders.

Each Fairwork Principle is divided into two thresholds. Accordingly, for each Principle, the scoring system allows the first to be awarded corresponding to the first threshold, and an additional second point to be awarded corresponding to the second threshold (see Table 1).

The second point under each Principle can only be awarded if the first point for that Principle has been awarded. The thresholds specify the evidence required for a platform to receive a given point. Where no verifiable evidence is available that meets a given threshold, the platform is not awarded that point.

A platform can therefore receive a maximum Fairwork score of ten points. Fairwork scores are updated on a yearly basis; the scores presented in this report were derived from data pertaining to the 12 months between November 2022 and October 2023, and are valid until November 2024.

Table 1 Fairwork: Scoring System

Principle	First point	Second point	Total
 Principle 1: Fair Pay	 Ensures workers earn at least the local minimum wage after costs	 Ensures workers earn at least a local living wage after costs	 2
 Principle 2: Fair Conditions	 Mitigates task-specific risks	 Provides a safety net	 2
 Principle 3: Fair Contracts	 Provides clear and transparent terms and conditions	 Ensures that no unfair contract terms are imposed	 2
 Principle 4: Fair Management	 Provides due process for decisions affecting workers	 Provides equity in the management process	 2
 Principle 5: Fair Representation	 Assures freedom of association and the expression of collective worker voice	 Supports democratic governance	 2

Maximum possible Fairwork Score



Principle 1: Fair Pay

1.1 - Ensures workers earn at least the local minimum wage after costs (one point)

Platform workers often have substantial work-related costs to cover, such as transport between jobs, supplies, or fuel, insurance, and maintenance on a vehicle²⁹. Workers' costs sometimes mean their take-home earnings may fall below

the local minimum wage³⁰. Workers also absorb the costs of extra time commitment, when they spend time waiting or travelling between jobs, or other unpaid activities necessary for their work, such as mandatory training, which are also considered active hours³¹. To achieve this point platforms must ensure that work-related costs do not push workers below local minimum wage.

The platform takes appropriate steps to ensure both of the following:

- Payment must be on time and in-full.
- Workers earn at least the local minimum wage, or the wage set by collective sectoral agreement (whichever is higher) in the place where they work, in their active hours, after costs³².

1.2 - Ensures workers earn at least a local living wage after costs (one additional point)

In some places, the minimum wage is not enough to allow workers to afford a basic but decent standard of living. To achieve this point platforms must ensure that work-related costs do not push workers below local living wage.

The platform takes appropriate steps to ensure the following:

- Workers earn at least a local living wage, or the wage set by collective sectoral agreement (whichever is higher) in the place where they work, in their active hours, after costs^{33 34}.

Principle 2: Fair Conditions

2.1 - Mitigates task-specific risks (one point)

Platform workers may encounter a number of risks in the course of their work, including accidents and injuries, harmful materials, and crime and violence. To achieve this point platforms must show that they are aware of these risks and take basic steps to mitigate them.

The platform must satisfy the following:

- Adequate equipment and training is provided to protect workers' health and safety from task-specific risks³⁵. These should be implemented at no additional cost to the worker.
- The platform mitigates the risks of lone working by providing adequate support and designing processes with occupational safety and health in mind.

2.2 - Ensures safe working conditions and a safety net (one additional point)

Platform workers are vulnerable to the possibility of abruptly losing their income as the result of unexpected or external circumstances, such as sickness or injury. Most countries provide a social safety net to ensure workers don't experience sudden poverty due to circumstances outside their control. However, platform workers usually don't

qualify for protections such as sick pay, because of their independent contractor status. In recognition of the fact that most workers are dependent on income they earn from platform work, platforms should ensure that workers are compensated for loss of income due to inability to work. In addition, platforms must minimise the risk of sickness and injury even when all the basic steps have been taken.

The platform must satisfy ALL of the following:

- Platforms take meaningful steps to ensure that workers do not suffer significant costs as a result of accident, injury or disease resulting from work.
- Workers should be compensated for income loss due to inability to work commensurate with the worker's average earnings over the past three months.
- Where workers are unable to work for an extended period due to unexpected circumstances, their standing on the platform is not negatively impacted.
- The platform implements policies or practices that protect workers' safety from task-specific risks³⁶. In particular, the platform should ensure that pay is not structured in a way that incentivizes workers to take excessive levels of risk.

Principle 3: Fair Contracts

3.1 - Provides clear and transparent terms and conditions (one point)

The terms and conditions governing platform work are not always clear and accessible to workers³⁷. To achieve this point, the platform must demonstrate that workers are able to understand, agree to, and access the conditions of their work at all times, and that they have legal recourse if the other party breaches those conditions.

The platform must satisfy ALL of the following:

- The party contracting with the worker must be identified in the contract, and subject to the law of the place in which the worker works.
- The contract/terms & conditions are presented in full in clear and comprehensible language that all workers could be expected to understand.
- Workers have to sign a contract and/or give informed consent to terms of conditions upon signing up for the platform.

- The contracts/terms and conditions are easily accessible to workers in paper form, or via the app/platform interface at all times.
- Contracts/terms & conditions do not include clauses that revert prevailing legal frameworks in the respective countries.
- Platforms take adequate, responsible and ethical data protection and management measures, laid out in a documented policy.

3.2 - Ensures that no unfair contract terms are imposed (one additional point)

In some cases, especially under ‘independent contractor’ classifications, workers carry a disproportionate amount of risk for engaging in a contract with the service user. They may be liable for any damage arising in the course of their work, and they may be prevented by unfair clauses from seeking legal redress for grievances. To achieve this point, platforms must demonstrate that risks and liability of engaging in the work is shared between parties.

Regardless of how the contractual status of the worker is classified, the platform must satisfy ALL of the following:

- Every worker is notified of proposed changes in clear and understandable language within a reasonable timeframe before changes come into effect; and the changes should not reverse existing accrued benefits and reasonable expectations on which workers have relied.
- The contract/terms and conditions neither include clauses which exclude liability for negligence nor unreasonably exempt the platform from liability for working conditions. The platform takes appropriate steps to ensure that the contract does not include clauses which prevent workers from effectively seeking redress for grievances which arise from the working relationship.
- In case platform labour is mediated by subcontractors: The platform implements a reliable mechanism to monitor and ensure that the subcontractor is living up to the standards expected from the platform itself regarding working conditions.
- In cases where there is dynamic pricing used for services, the data collected and calculations used to allocate payment must be transparent and documented in a form available to workers.

Principle 4: Fair Management

4.1 - Provides due process for decisions affecting workers (one point)

Platform workers can experience arbitrary deactivation; being barred from accessing the platform without explanation, and potentially losing their income. Workers may be subject to other penalties or disciplinary decisions without the ability to contact the service user or the platform to challenge or appeal them if they believe they are unfair. To achieve this point, platforms must demonstrate an avenue for workers to meaningfully appeal disciplinary actions.

The platform must satisfy ALL of the following:

- There is an easily accessible channel for workers to communicate with a human representative of the platform and to effectively solve problems. This channel is documented in the contract and available on the platform interface. Platforms should respond to workers within a reasonable timeframe. There is a process for workers to meaningfully and effectively appeal low ratings, non-payment, payment issues, deactivations, and other penalties and disciplinary actions. This process is documented in a contract and available on the platform interface³⁸.
- In the case of deactivations, the appeals process must be available to workers who no longer have access to the platform.
- Workers are not disadvantaged for voicing concerns or appealing disciplinary actions.

4.2 - Provides equity in the management process (one additional point)

The majority of platforms do not actively discriminate against particular groups of workers. However, they may inadvertently exacerbate already existing inequalities in their design and management. For example, there is a lot of gender segregation between different types of platform work. To achieve this point, platforms must show not only that they have policies against discrimination, but also that they seek to remove barriers for disadvantaged groups, and promote inclusion.

Platforms must satisfy ALL of the following:

- The platform has an effective anti-discrimination policy laying out a clear process for reporting, correcting and

penalising discrimination of workers on the platform on grounds such as race, social origin, caste, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sex, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, age or any other status³⁹.

- The platform has measures in place to promote diversity, equality and inclusion on the platform. It takes practical measures to promote equality of opportunity for workers from disadvantaged groups, including reasonable accommodation for pregnancy, disability, and religion or belief.
- Where persons from a disadvantaged group (such as women) are significantly under-represented among a pool of workers, it seeks to identify and remove barriers to access by persons from that group.
- If algorithms are used to determine access to work or remuneration or the type of work and pay scales available to workers seeking to use the platform, these are transparent and do not result in inequitable outcomes for workers from historically or currently disadvantaged groups.
- It has mechanisms to reduce the risk of users discriminating against workers from disadvantaged groups in accessing and carrying out work.

Principle 5: Fair Representation

5.1 - Assures freedom of association and the expression of worker voice (one point)

Freedom of association is a fundamental right for all workers, and enshrined in the constitution of the International Labour Organisation, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The right for workers to organise, collectively express their wishes – and importantly – be listened to, is an important prerequisite for fair working conditions. However, rates of organisation amongst platform workers remain low. To achieve this point, platforms must ensure that the conditions are in place to encourage the expression of collective worker voice.

Platforms must satisfy ALL of the following:

- There is a documented mechanism⁴⁰ for the expression of collective worker voice that allows ALL workers, regardless of employment status, to participate without risks.
- There is a formal, written statement of willingness to recognise, and bargain with, a collective, independent body of workers or trade union, that is clearly communicated to all workers, and available on the platform interface⁴¹.
- Freedom of association is not inhibited, and workers are not disadvantaged in any way for communicating their concerns, wishes and demands to the platform, or expressing willingness to form independent collective bodies of representation⁴².

5.2 - Supports democratic governance (one additional point)

While rates of organisation remain low, platform workers' associations are emerging in many sectors and countries. We are also seeing a growing number of cooperative worker-owned platforms. To realise fair representation, workers must have a say in the conditions of their work. This could be through a democratically governed cooperative model, a formally recognised union, or the ability to undertake collective bargaining with the platform.

The platform must satisfy at least ONE of the following:

1. Workers play a meaningful role in governing it.
2. In a written document available at all times on the platform interface, the platform publicly and formally recognises an independent collective body of workers, an elected works council, or trade union. This recognition is not exclusive and, when the legal framework allows, the platform should recognise any significant collective body seeking representation⁴³.

Credits and funding

Fairwork is a project run out of the Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford and the WZB Berlin Social Science Center, and draws on the expertise and experience of staff at Access to Knowledge for Development Center (A2K4D) at the American University in Cairo's School of Business, Audencia Business School, Center for Development Evaluation and Social Science Research (CREDI), Center for Health Consultation and Community Development (CHD), Centre for Labour Research, CIPG Innovation Policy Governance, CREDI, De La Salle University, FLACSO-Ecuador, Institute for a Fair Economy, International Institute of Information Technology Bangalore (IIITB), International University of Rabat, iSocial, KU Leuven, Lagos Business School, Luigi Gurakuqi University of Shkodër, Observatorio de Plataformas Perú, Phenix Center for Economics & Informatics Studies, Pollicy, Public Policy Research Center (CENTAR), Qhala, REPOA, Sapienza University of Rome, TEDIC, The Policy Initiative, TU Wien, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, Universidad Católica del Uruguay, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad del Rosario, University of California College of the Law, San Francisco, University of Manchester, and University of São Paulo.

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External scoring reviewers:

Oğuz Alyanak

Editing:

David Sutcliffe

Please cite as:

Fairwork (2023) Fairwork Albania Ratings 2023: Assessing Work in the Albanian Platform Economy Oxford, United Kingdom; Berlin, Germany.

Please note that this report contains sections in common with other Fairwork reports, notably the Fairwork Framework, parts of the Impact and Next Steps section and the Appendix.

Report Design:

One Ltd.

Communications and typesetting:

Navneet Gidda, Pablo Aguera Reneses, Creative Mouse

Funders:

This publication arises from research funded by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Special Thanks:

Katia Padvalkava, Duncan Passey, Maisy Gills, Sara Spinks, Lucy Hennings, Isabelle Malcolm, Philip Hind, Ornella Sciuto, Caroline Hampshire, Tabitha Baker, and David Sutcliffe at the University of Oxford for their extensive administrative support for the project since its inception. The project team is deeply grateful to Shakhlo Kakharova, Lukas Sonnenberg, and Kirsten Schuettler at GIZ for their continuing support and guidance as we take our work to the next stage. Finally, we would like to acknowledge a large number of workers and platform managers in Albania for taking the time to help us build our platform ratings. All of the work in this project was shared not just amongst our research team, but also amongst the stakeholders whom our ratings ultimately affect.

Conflict of interest statement:

None of the researchers have any connection with any of the platforms and the work undertaken received no funding or support in kind from any platform or any other company, and we declare that there is no conflict of interest.

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN



WZB

Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin
für Sozialforschung



FUNDED BY



Bundesministerium für
wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit
und Entwicklung

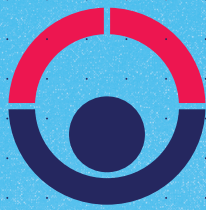
giz

Deutsche Gesellschaft
für Internationale
Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

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29. Work-related costs include direct costs the worker may incur in performing the job. This may include, for instance, transport in between jobs, supplies, vehicle repair and maintenance, fuel, road tolls and vehicle insurance. However, it does not include transport to and from the job (unless in-between tasks) nor taxes, social security contributions or health insurance.
30. The ILO defines minimum wage as the "minimum amount of remuneration that an employer is required to pay wage earners for the work performed during a given period, which cannot be reduced by collective agreement or an individual contract." Minimum wage laws protect workers from unduly low pay and help them attain a minimum standard of living. The ILO's Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 C135 sets the conditions and requirements of establishing minimum wages and calls upon all ratifying countries to act in accordance. Minimum wage laws exist in more than 90 per cent of the ILO member states.
31. In addition to direct working hours where workers are completing tasks, workers also spend time performing unpaid activities necessary for their work, such as waiting for delivery orders at restaurants and travelling between jobs and undertaking mandatory training (i.e., training activities that must be completed for workers to continue accessing work on the platform). These indirect working hours are also considered part of active hours as workers are giving this time to the platform. Thus, 'active hours' are defined as including both direct and indirect working hours.
32. In order to evidence this, where the platform is responsible for paying workers the platform must either: (a) have a documented policy that ensures the workers receive at least the local minimum wage after costs in their active hours; or (b) provide summary statistics of transaction and cost.
33. Where a living wage does not exist, Fairwork will use the Global Living Wage Coalition's Anker Methodology to estimate one.

34. In order to evidence this, where the platform is responsible for paying workers the platform must either: (a) have a documented policy that ensures the workers receive at least the local living wage after costs in their active hours; or (b) provide summary statistics of transaction and cost data evidencing all workers earn a minimum wage after costs.
35. The ILO recognises health and safety at work as a fundamental right. Where the platform directly engages the worker, the starting point is the ILO's Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (C155). This stipulates that employers shall be required "so far as is reasonably practicable, the workplaces, machinery, equipment and processes under their control are safe and without risk to health", and that "where necessary, adequate protective clothing and protective equipment [should be provided] to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, risk of accidents or of adverse effects on health."
36. The ILO recognises health and safety at work as a fundamental right. Where the platform directly engages the worker, the starting point is the ILO's Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (C155). This stipulates that employers shall be required "so far as is reasonably practicable, the workplaces, machinery, equipment and processes under their control are safe and without risk to health", and that "where necessary, adequate protective clothing and protective equipment [should be provided] to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, risk of accidents or of adverse effects on health."
37. The ILO's Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC 2006), Reg. 2.1, and the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (C189), Articles 7 and 15, serve as helpful guiding examples of adequate provisions in workers' terms and conditions, as well as worker access to those terms and conditions.
38. Workers should have the option of escalating grievances that have not been satisfactorily addressed and, in the case of automated decisions, should have the option of escalating it for human mediation.
39. In accordance with the ILO Convention No. 111 concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation and applicable national law.
40. A mechanism for the expression of collective worker voice will allow workers to participate in the setting of agendas so as to be able to table issues that most concern them. This mechanism can be in physical or virtual form (e.g. online meetings) and should involve meaningful interaction (e.g. not surveys). It should also allow for ALL workers to participate in regular meetings with the management.
41. For example, "[the platform] will support any effort by its workers to collectively organise or form a trade union. Collective bargaining through trade unions can often bring about more favourable working conditions."
42. See the ILO's Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (C087), which stipulates that "workers and employers, without distinction, shall have the right to establish and join organisations of their own choosing without previous authorisation" (Article 2); "the public authorities shall refrain from any interference which would restrict the right or impede the lawful exercise thereof" (Article 3) and that "workers' and employers' organisations shall not be liable to be dissolved or suspended by administrative authority" (Article 4). Similarly the ILO's Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (C098) protects the workers against acts of anti-union discrimination in respect of their employment, explaining that not joining a union or relinquishing trade union membership cannot be made a condition of employment or cause for dismissal. Out of the 185 ILO member states, currently 155 ratified C087 and 167 ratified C098.
43. If workers choose to seek representation from an independent collective body of workers or union that is not readily recognized by the platform, the platform should then be open to adopt multiple channels of representation, when the legal framework allows, or seek ways to implement workers' queries to its communication with the existing representative body.



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