

EU-wide reclassification could force up to 250k couriers out of delivery work, as vast majority partner with platforms for flexibility

- *A new first-of-its-kind survey of over 16,000 couriers across 24 European countries reveals the vast majority choose platform work because of the flexibility it provides, and consider it as a complementary activity next to their studies or other jobs.*
- *The accompanying study finds an EU-wide policy shift removing the possibility of flexible work could prevent up to 250,000 couriers from accessing platform work.*
- *Moreover, policies forcing independent couriers to work under a fixed employment scenario would drive up to 75,000 couriers across Europe out of the workforce entirely, and put up to €800m in income at stake.*
- *According to the study, the European food delivery sector sustains over 375,000 working opportunities and brings in over €20bn in revenue for the economy.*

Brussels, 16 November 2021: A new [study](#) published today by Copenhagen Economics on behalf of Delivery Platforms Europe, reveals why flexibility is critical for couriers and for the economic value created by platform work, as well as the potential consequences of a EU-wide policy shift to reclassify European platform workers.

Flexibility critical to access platform work

Based on a novel pan-European survey of over 16,000 couriers, the study found the primary reason (67%) why couriers work with delivery platforms is the flexibility to work when and where they like.

The study also found couriers largely (72%) say platform work is a complementary activity, with 34% delivering while studying and another third (34%) saying they access platform work to top up income from other full or part-time work.

On average only half (54%) of their income is generated from platform work, with the majority working an average 23 hours per week. This flexibility allows couriers to choose the time and the amount of hours they work freely, resulting in an average variance in weekly hours of 42%.

The study also finds that most couriers (69%) would still prefer flexibility over a predetermined schedule, even if they were able to earn a 15% higher income with it.

Losing flexibility leads to fewer jobs, lower pay

According to the study, if independent platform work was replaced by a less flexible employment model, where hours are predetermined by the platforms, between 100-150,000 couriers would be forced to give up their delivery work, rising to as many as 250,000 if they were required to work more hours than they currently can do now.

Furthermore, based on survey evidence, the study finds that up to 75,000 couriers across Europe could be forced out of the workforce completely - putting up to €800m in income for these workers at stake.

Food delivery platforms create value for the entire economy

In addition to offering more than 375,000 work opportunities, food delivery platforms also contribute to the broader economy in Europe. In 2020, consumers placed 19.4m orders per week. Based on this evidence, the study finds that in 2020, the food delivery ecosystem generated around €20bn revenues for couriers, platforms and restaurants.

Commenting on the findings, Dr. Bruno Basalisco, Director at Copenhagen Economics, said: *“This is the first time that such a large number of couriers across multiple countries have been asked about their views on flexible work and about what would happen if this were to be curtailed. It is clear from the evidence that for most couriers flexibility is critical, since delivery work is a complementary activity next to their studies or other jobs. If you take this flexibility away, tens of thousands of couriers across Europe will be discouraged out of work and face a significant reduction in platform work earnings; this would not only hurt them but also consumers, local businesses and the wider European economy.”*

Miki Kuusi, co-founder and CEO of Wolt, one of the founders of Delivery Platforms Europe said: *“The clear majority of couriers value flexibility and would like to remain in control of how much, when and where they work. This comprehensive pan-European survey confirms that. Flexibility should not come at the expense of couriers’ safety and well-being. We want to work with legislators and policymakers to find solutions to pair flexibility and safety nets.”*

Niklas Östberg, CEO and co-founder of Delivery Hero, one of the founders of Delivery Platforms Europe said: *“As representatives of the European local delivery sector, we work alongside policy makers, associations and the rider community. We make sure platform workers are protected, safe and fairly compensated, without compromising the flexibility we know they appreciate the most.”*

Notes to editors:

About the methodology: The survey was conducted among over 16,000 couriers working with Bolt, Deliveroo, Delivery Hero, Uber and Wolt in EU countries (except Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg) and Norway. Additionally, the study sought companies’ data on factors such as hours worked, number of deliveries and delivery value to assess potential consequences for the market.

About Copenhagen Economics: Copenhagen Economics is one of the leading economics firms in Europe. Founded in 2000 and independently held, it currently employs more than 90 staff operating from offices in Brussels, Copenhagen, Helsinki and Stockholm. In particular, in the area of digital economy, the firm has worked on a broad set of research questions of socio-economic importance for a range of public authorities, industry associations, as well as firms across the digital space – starting with a seminal contribution on the value of the EU Digital Single Market over a decade ago. For further information, see www.copenhageneconomics.com.

About Delivery Platforms Europe: Delivery Platforms Europe is a coalition that brings together restaurant and instant delivery platforms to increase awareness of the unique benefits that they bring

to Europe's consumers, merchants, and courier partners. Speaking with one voice, our member companies, Bolt, Delivery Hero, Deliveroo, Glovo, Uber Eats and Wolt, support policy initiatives which favour the sustainable development of the platform economy in Europe and the development of a fair and inclusive platform work environment.

*Please note that this is a Europe-wide average, as are all results of this study.