



WP3 - SLASH WORKERS IN A EUROPEAN CONTEXT

**Labour identities, working and living conditions,
social protection and collective representation**

University of Cádiz – UCA Team

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1. Introduction

Slash workers against the backdrop of current job trends

For the SWIRL project, slash workers are defined as people who are engaged in multiple paid activities that require different skills and are likely to be developed in various sectors. Holding more than one job is a growing phenomenon in many European countries, which expansion has been linked to the decline of the "standard" employment relationship (Piasna et al. 2020). This decisive shift of the normative model of work, characterised by the fading away of many of the parameters that defined a "job" in the past (Huws, 2013), has attracted much scholarly attention in recent years. There is a considerable consensus among researchers to attribute this trend to the combined effect of a set of economic (economic globalisation, company policies such as increased flexibility in the use of labour, downsizing or outsourcing), political (deregulation and increasing flexibility of the labour market, changes in policies and values promoted by the European Social Model) and technological developments (extension of the use of advanced information and communication technologies), and in placing the turning point around the 1980s (Neff et al., 2005; Vallas and Christin, 2018; Taylor, 2018; Palier, 2018; Serrano and Jepsen, 2019; Eurofound, 2020a). There is also a remarkable consensus on the consequences of these processes on 21st-century labour markets: the "fissuring" of the workplace (Weil, 2014), the fragmentation of work, the spread of non-standard forms of employment, and the growing exposure of workers to labour market uncertainty (De Stefano, 2016; Vallas, 2019). The Great Recession further accentuated these effects (Taylor, 2018; Katz and Krueger, 2019).

While "standard" employment (permanent, full-time, based on labour law) remains dominant, labour markets in the global north are increasingly characterised by a diversity of employment forms. Business practices ranging from firing and then rehiring employees as independent contractors or retaining "permatemps" (Neff et al. 2005) to the rising use of contingent and part-time work (Barley et al., 2017; Crouch, 2018; Mandl, 2020), and also phenomena such as the growth of underemployment (Palier, 2018) or the so-called "renaissance of self-employment" (Conen, 2020), have become a reality for an increasing portion of the workforce. Evidence from Eurofound (2020a) shows that most of these new forms of employment have grown over the last few years and are likely to continue their expansion in the future. This means that more and more workers are -and will be- falling into the cracks between the categories (active or not, employed or unemployed, salaried or self-employed, regular or irregular) that just a few years ago clearly defined the position of workers in the labour market (Huws et al. 2018). In this scenario, new essential challenges to traditional forms of collective representation and social protection systems have emerged (Bureau and Corsani, 2018; Doellgast, 2018; Jolly, 2018; Brodersen and Martínez, 2020).

Instability and contingency have ceased to constitute unwanted effects; they have become central elements in the current stage of capitalism; they are "the nucleus on which the organisation of work and ideological adherence to the system are based" (Alonso y Fernández, 2009:250). This shift in the normative model of work has been accompanied by policies (promoted, among others, by European institutions) oriented towards the production of the

subjects and work identities that are more adjusted to the new game rules of the productive model and the labour market (Serrano et al., 2012).

Our study of the profiles, labour identities, living and working conditions, and representation needs of slash workers must be situated against this backdrop. Slash workers can be conceptualised as one of the forms of non-standard employment since the decision to combine several jobs is interrelated with features such as the growth of part-time jobs, the spread of contingent work, increased underemployment (Bamberry and Campbell, 2012), the "renaissance" of self-employment (Conen, 2020) and the reshaping of work identities (Huws, 2013; Taylor and Luckman, 2018). Even though holding more than one job is not a new phenomenon -moonlighting has been an overall survival strategy for many workers in the past- all these trends place pluriactivity in a renewed context (Conen, 2020). In particular, there are two recent developments that, from our point of view, justify approaching the upsurge of multiple jobs holding from a differentiated analytical perspective. These developments are the rise of the gig economy and the spread of new values and expectations attached to work.

Concerning the first of these developments, different studies have suggested that the growth of slash work can be linked to expanding the platform economy (Casilli et al., 2019; Brodersen and Martínez, 2020; Eurofound, 2020c; Piasna et al. 2020). Indeed, according to Taylor and Luckman (2018), most of the literature finds that a majority of platform workers use their earnings to supplement other sources of income. While it has been demonstrated that digital platforms increase casualisation and help undermine the standard employment relationship (Huws, 2013; Wood et al. 2019), it can also be argued that in a labour context such as the current one, they facilitate many workers to seek alternative work arrangements when traditional employment is not available. By acting as intermediaries for the supply and demand of fragmented work (Valenduc, 2019), offering a high degree of spatial and temporal flexibility (Wood et al., 2019), and applying relaxed personnel selection criteria (Vallas and Schor, 2020), platforms generate job opportunities that ease -and even encourage- workers to diversify and multiply their paid activities. Therefore, regardless of whether labour platforms are considered as the continuation of structural trends towards the casualisation of work that has long been underway (De Stefano, 2016; Crouch, 2018; Palier, 2018) or it is argued that they represent a distinctively new form of economic activity (Taylor and Luckman, 2018), the analysis of slash workers has to be contextualised in relation to the digitalisation of the economy.

The second development that gives slash work a differentiated character with respect to other forms of moonlighting or multiple jobs holding is the emergence of new norms, expectations and aspirations attached to work. This trend has been identified and analysed by some scholars (Huws, 2013; Taylor and Luckman, 2018), who argue that the ongoing wide-ranging transformation in terms of the spread of non-standard forms of work and employment status goes hand in hand with the change of the expectations of what "normal" working behaviour should be. Even though the "standard" employment remains the benchmark against which forms of flexible work are judged (Guest et al. 2006), there are more and more people who place themselves in a different "social imaginary" (Taylor, 2018) for work and working lives. These new work identities have been linked to the process of individualisation, the extension of the entrepreneurial ideology and the normative discourses and conceptions that come with

them (Serrano et al., 2012; Vallas and Christin, 2018) and are characterised by prioritising self-fulfilment -the "labour of love" narrative, according to Demetry (2017)-, individual responsibility, creativity, autonomy and flexibility at work. This "flavour of self-management" (Pérez Zapata et al., 2016:36) also involves the individualised acceptance of market risks. As Neff et al. (2005:309) put it, "the new economy's cutting edge -and its true social innovation- is the production of a new labour force that is more 'entrepreneurial' than previous generations of workers".

Some researchers deem these new conceptions of the employment relation and work identities to represent the qualities required to survive in the current work and employment circumstances (Taylor, 2018; Vallas and Christin, 2018). Moreover, it has been suggested that the figure of the artist or creative maker constitutes the archetype of this new entrepreneurial ideal of work (Taylor, 2018); there has been a discursive drift through which work identities and practices in the arts and culture industries have become associated with contemporary work more generally, through the figure of the entrepreneur (Neff et al. 2005; Taylor and Luckman, 2018). Possibly because the precariousness of cultural and artistic careers has spread to other sectors, creative work practices have become a model of behaviour for freelance or self-employed, shaping working lives beyond the arts and culture industries. These practices would include the resource to combine several jobs to balance passion with economic sustainability, common in artistic careers (Bamberry and Campbell, 2012).

As we have just pointed out, these processes and trends currently characterise the nature of work and affect more and more workers constitute the background against which the analysis of slash workers' practices, self-perception, and evaluation of their situation will be carried out. First, we present the methodology we have used and the sociodemographic characteristics of our informants. Second, we analysed the work practices and identities of slash workers. In this section, we also dedicate a more in-depth analysis to platform workers and those in the art and culture industries due to the relevance that, according to the literature, these profiles have to understand the phenomenon of slash work. Third, we present the result of the analysis of the living and working conditions of these workers. Since most interviews were carried out during the first waves' lockdown of the COVID-19's pandemic, we include in this section a more in-depth analysis of the informant's experience of its impacts and their assessment of the measures implemented to address it. Fourth, we focus on their aspirations for collective representation and their experiences of mobilisation. Fifth, the final section offers some general conclusions.

2. Methodology and profiles

2.1. Methodological decisions

One of the SWIRL project objectives was to analyse the protection and representation needs and aspirations of slash workers in the five countries of the project consortium. That is, how these needs and aspirations are (or are not) represented and promoted, and what type of organisations should carry out this representation. Following these objectives and the collective discussion at the Paris 2020 project meeting, the UCA research team, leader of WP3, designed a methodological guide for open-ended, in-depth qualitative interviews with slash workers and the country reports (see annex 1). These instructions aimed to guide and unify the analysis in the different countries by providing standard criteria for selecting the persons to interview, a grid for the interviews, and a proposal for the country reports' structure. According to the guide, the interviews should be conducted around three broad areas:

- A) Socio-professional profiles and labour situations: worker's socio-professional profile; the reasons that explain his/her status as slash worker; labour situation; companies/platform(s) where the s/he works.
- B) Workers' self-perception and assessment of their situation: results and consequences of being a slash worker; perception about strengths and weaknesses of being a slash worker/platform worker; self-perception; need/difficulty of work-life balance; perception of COVID-19 crisis
- C) Protection and representation needs, aspirations and experiences: collective resistances; experiences of activation and mobilisation; relations with (and general feelings towards) actors such as trade unions, associations and other relevant organisations; individual resistance, if any.

The respondents would be selected for being slash works and on the bases on two significant characteristics: a. level of skills required by the (main) job; and b. the nature of their two (or more) work activities (both online, both of line and one online and other offline). The level of skills required to carry out the work was considered a factor that would probably determine the specific needs and demands of the slash workers and the type of organisation they feel represented. Additionally, the work organisation (task, mission and project) was supposed to interplay and overlapped with the required skills. Therefore, these variables would give information about individual bargaining and organisational power.

The guide indicated 20 interviews per country with slash workers aged 30 to 49 years with secondary or higher education and recommended men/female parity. Specifically, it suggested the following tentative distribution:

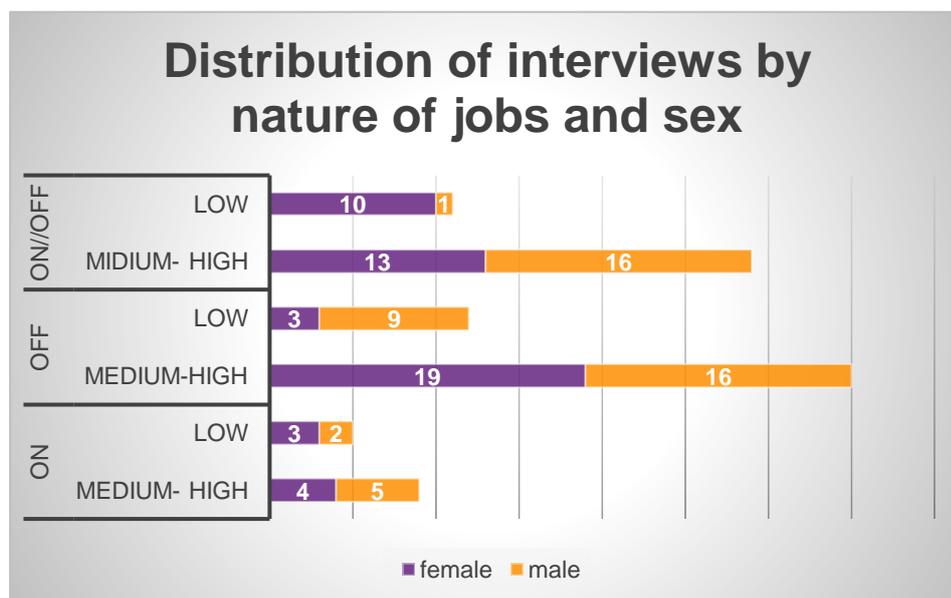
Table 1 Tentative distribution of the interviews

Nature of the services		High or medium-skilled jobs	Unskilled jobs
Online (virtual/global)	N° of interviews	2-3 interviews	1-2 interviews
	Examples	Translator, graphic /web designer, consultant, coach	Crowd / Platform / Click worker
Offline (physical/local)	N° of interviews	2-3 interviews	5-6 interviews
	Examples	Architect, tourist guide, sound technician, actors, musician	Dog walkers, cleaners, waiters, caretakers
Online + Offline	N° of interviews	5-6 interviews	3-4 interviews

The fieldwork was developed within the COVID-19's pandemic context with restrictive health-related measures and reduced social contact possibilities and recommendation. Consequently, most of the interviews were carried out online or by phone (see annex 2 for more details) and digitally recorded. The project team conducted a total of 101 interviews (52 to women and 49 to men) between June and November 2020 in the five European countries part of the Swirl project consortium: Bulgaria (20 interviews), France (17 interviews), Germany (15 interviews), Italy (28 interviews) and Spain (21 interviews). Each partner developed a content or discourse analysis of their country's interviews and prepared a national report.

The distribution of interviews (see Table 2) was as follows: 14 interviews were done with Online slash workers; 9 of them have high or medium skills jobs (4 females and 5 males) and five low skilled jobs (3 females and 2 males). Forty-seven offline slash workers were interviewed; 35 had high or medium skills jobs (19 female and 16 male) and 12 low skilled jobs (3 female and 9 male). Finally, 30 interviews were done to slash workers combining online and offline work, of whom 19 had high skills jobs (13 female and male) and 11 low skilled jobs (10 female and one male).

Table 2. Final distribution of interviews



Source: Own elaboration from country reports' data.

This distribution implies that most of the interviewed (for the three possible natures: Online, Offline and Online and Offline) responded to medium-highly qualified job profiles doubling the number of low-qualified profiles (73 vs 28). The reports also highlight that the recruitment of platform workers was difficult, particularly for microtask workers. German report poses whether this has to do with the nature of the labour market or due to the closed nature of microwork platforms (denial of access for interviews, the difficulty of the matching process and geographical restraints).

UCA team collected and analysed the whole national reports set, identifying common patterns and divergences among them. Comparison analysis was not possible since there was no guarantee that the sample chosen in each country representative of slash workers' national reality. Therefore, this task aimed to build up a global report, not a comparative report.

1.1. 2.2. Sociodemographic and labour characteristics of the interviewees

The slash workers interviewed cover a diversified sample of workers from a sociodemographic, educational, and occupational perspective. Our goal was to provide a picture of the socio-economic profiles and family and labour situations as comprehensive and diversified as possible.

Gender

The distribution by gender is adequately balanced: 53 out of the 101 interviewees identified as women. However, in some countries, like Italy, women are overrepresented, while in Spain and Germany, are slightly more men than women. Despite this, the occupations are not evenly distributed between women and men, particularly in platform/online work where low-skilled workers tend to be women (apart from riders, all men). In contrast, high skill jobs tend to be

performed by men. In fact, in France's case, all the micro-workers interviewed were women, something that replicates previous research findings (Turbaro&Casilli 2020).

AGE

Concerning the age distribution, the statistical data provided by the "Report Contingent and Slash Workers in Europe. An analysis of Eurostat Data" stated that "The incidence of slash-workers out of the total workforce grows as age increases, reaching its highest point between 40-49 years and then declining, especially after the age of 59" (Soru and Zanni -ACTA 2000, 26). In most countries, the 30- to 39-year-old group was also relevant; therefore, the recommendation was to focus the interviews on slash workers between 30 and 49. However, considering the objective difficulties to develop the fieldwork within the pandemic circumstances, the team agreed to have flexibility as a primary criterion. The availability of interviewees has inevitably influenced the final age profile of the respondent. Country reports show an age range from 21 to 65, although most informants are, indeed, within the range 30-49. The information provided by these informers within other age ranges was deemed relevant and worthwhile, including in the sample. The younger (those who are less than 30 years old) sum 19 cases, and the older (50 or more years old) sum 13 cases. Interestingly, interviewees aged 20-39 are predominant in online profiles.

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

The analysis of national reports indicates that the respondents are generally characterised by having a relatively high education level, independently if they are doing medium-high skill jobs and low skill jobs. This profile is coherent with the findings of the policy brief from Eurofound (2020:6), which states that "Multiple-job holders are better educated than the workforce on average". Five respondents have a doctorate, one is a PhD student, 29 have at least a Master's Degree (some of them two or even more) and 29 a Bachelor Degree or equivalent, 10 have vocational training, 2 a dance diploma. The rest have secondary education, of which three are currently university students and some others who, having started university, did not complete their studies.

In any case, it is evident that unskilled jobs are usually connected to a lower level of education profiles (secondary or vocational education). Bulgarian report points that the oldest people (within Bulgarian interviews) with low educational level and lack of certificated skills are a typical case of slash worker combining different temporary employments and frequently changing workplaces (e.g., BG 4.5 primary job is a freelance gardener, doing in parallel various other jobs like a construction worker or mail sorter in a courier company). However, there are some clear examples of overqualification: slash workers performing platforms low skilled jobs, for instance, a PhD doing microwork (FR_3.1) or people with a Master degree working in food delivery (remarkably, he is also a Union Coordinator) (FR_4.2). Additionally, for university students, specific unskilled jobs provide the opportunity to work from home and with a flexible working schedule and, therefore, open the possibility to combine work and education (see BG_2.1 engaged as a click worker or BG_4.2 as a bartender). However, as we will see later, these arrangements are far from perfect due to the precarity and poor working conditions that characterise these jobs.

Some country reports show that many of the interviewees possess multiple qualifications. Those diplomas or certification cover a wide range of disciplines, not always related to their main occupation (see the information provided in tables in annexe 2). The fields of education seem to be relatively diversified, including Computer Science, Psychology, Chemistry, Physics, Social Work, Political Science, Literature, Languages, Law, Tourism, Graphic design, Marketing, Translation or Dance. This diversity may facilitate the slash condition, allowing the respondents to develop different jobs. In France, it is characteristic of individuals belonging to the "intermittent" status; in Spain, it seems to be more frequent in self-employed. The Bulgarian report describes how high skilled online slash workers (BG_1.1, BG_1.2, BG_1.3,) having university degrees, skills or work experience in different sectors, combine jobs (the regular one with an additional one) requiring the same educational and skills level, for example (BG_1.1, BG_1.2, BG_1.3) marketing and advertisement but also design and IT. The report also provides examples of an offline high-skilled worker (BG_5.4) developing a slash career around a job as an English teacher (her primary university education) and as a Human Resource manager (her specialisation) in a company. There are even examples of very faraway fields such as hairdressers and IT companies. *I have worked, and I am working as a hairdresser - this is my secondary education. I have worked, and I work [using his qualifications as an IT specialist] for a computer company that deals with software installation.* (BG_5.1)

It is also worth mentioning that the Spanish report shows a set of respondents having a self-taught profile (accompanied or not by official certification on other disciplines). In low skill-jobs, this may be because they have been working in these activities since such activities were not very frequent and not very regulated.

Well, practically self-taught because when I started this, it was not a very common thing here in [town], I mean, not even in the whole of Spain at that time because it was kind of highly specialised [...]. But that was it, it was simply courage, to seize, to get your hands on something, to try to get it going, to achieve it, to have the idea. Totally and absolutely self-taught. However, curiously enough, over time, the Bajo Guadalquivir Association of Municipalities allowed me [...] without any qualifications to teach courses on sound engineering that was even later officially recognised by the Andalusian Regional Government. Well, it was funny [smiles] because the students came out with more qualifications than I had, [laughs] I, who had been their teacher. (ES 4.2)

There are also those who, despite having university degrees, currently work (as a primary or additional job in their professional life) using self-taught skills. In many cases, these skills were initially developed first as a hobby (a typical patten revealed across reports like the following sections show):

I hold a PhD in Architecture and (...). And then I am a self-taught musician, all my life I have been... ever since I started in high school because I started playing the guitar and then other string instruments, in a self-taught way. On an educational level, I think that is the most remarkable thing. (ES_3.3)

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

Concerning household composition, we can also find a wide heterogeneity. This variety is crucial because different household compositions influence different configurations concerning care and household division of paid and unpaid labour. Therefore household composition needs to be analysed in connection to labour conditions in labour markets, as we will address in the section life and working. The reports describe different models:

- Single living alone // partner not cohabiting – living with flatmates
- Singles living with their parents
- Couples without children
- Couples with children
- Single mothers // women/mother separated in charge of the children
- Men/father separated (children living with the mother)

It is noticeable that people having children are scarce among the interviewees. This childless is especially visible in France or Germany, where only two or three of the respondents have children, while Bulgarian fieldwork includes parents. Only 36 interviewees have children at the time of the interview, and, in two cases, they were already off age. In addition, some males who reported having children were separated and children living with the mother most of the time. Conversely, four mothers declared being single mother and others being separated and having children living with them. None of the reports indicated that any of their interviewees had elderly or highly dependent people in their care. In the next section, we will address household work and care arrangements.

NATIONALITY

The variable nationality was not considered a central variable in the methodological design; therefore, nationality analysis was not mainstreamed through all the reports. Despite this, it has gained relevance in the German one, and there are some related issues at the French one.

The German sample of respondents has the particularity of including a large share (seven in total) of non-Germans or dual German/other national living and working in Germany –Germans with migration backgrounds such as Japanese, Turkish, Polish and Greek/Turkish. The report provides several possible explanations for this national diversity:

- German nationals with German as their mother tongue and traditional trajectories in the vocational and educational systems tend to enter the regular labour market and remain there.
- Foreigners looking for work in Germany and hope to use their foreign language skills turn to internet platforms as an employment source because it overcomes their deficits of being non-German speakers on the local labour market.
- There might be a certain amount of skew in the sample. International platforms such as Upwork or Freelancer and freelance cooperatives such as Smart DE and some international Facebook sites seem to attract foreign respondents. The coordinator of Smart DE from Germany recommended publishing the notice to recruit interviews with slash workers in both English and German (Mail 2020, 1-2).

The French report only refers to one interviewee without French nationality (FR_4.1), a young man who works as a rider. Both in France and Spain, informants working as riders denounced

how "bike couriers seem to be increasingly recruited among the most precarious parts of the population" (Cornet and Casilli 2020, 7):

The sociodemographic characteristics of the couriers have changed a lot since 4/5 years ago. We are going toward an increase in precariousness. (...) Platforms are attracting the most precarious populations. Uber is leading off-track recruitment in the ghettos [sic]. They put down a table, two chairs, a few bags, and they sign people up. (...) [Plus] there is the growing issue of app account subletting to undocumented migrants, who have basically no rights. There is a massive fall in working conditions and pay rate. (FR_4.2)

ACTIVITY SECTOR AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Slash work is a heterogeneous reality developed around a diversity of **different sectors**. However, as the following section will address in more detail, all country reports suggest a notable presence of slash workers who perform at least one of their jobs in the creative industries and through digital platforms. According to our data, on the one hand, creative work (Taylor and Littleton, 2012; Taylor 2015) is more frequent within the high skilled interviewees, in particular those who have offline or online/offline works, but also present in online work. Creative offline work covers diverse occupations such as musician (ES_3.3), artist (FR_1.3) or dancer/actress (IT_3.9) or journalist (IT_3.5). At the same time, creative online works seem to be suitable for activities such as design (BG_1.1) and translation (ES_5.6).

On the other hand, an important number of our interviewees have accessed their additional job through digital platforms. Platform work is particularly spread within unskilled work. These slash workers tend to do micro-work (FR_3.1; FR3.2; FR3.4; FR3.5) or work for delivery platforms (as riders) (BG_4.2; BG_4.4; IT_6.1). Meanwhile, according to the national reports, high skilled worker who work through platform usually do it as a side job (connected or not with their main job) and offer specialised services, for example, as psychologists (ES_5.2 and ES_5.3); or translator (ES_5.6).

Additionally, slash work is materialised around different contractual legal arrangements and employment status. We will address this issue in detail in the section "Life, work and employment conditions". However, at this point, and considering the total sample of interviewees, it is essential to highlight how most high-skilled workers first/main jobs are divided almost equally between those who have permanent employment (as the first job) and those who are self-employed. Only one in five would have as the primary job a part-time /temporary job. However, within unskilled profiles, the distribution is different, there are few with permanent jobs, and the vast majority are equally distributed among self-employed and more precarious or contingent profiles. This greater or lower stability have an impact and could be related to labour identities and practices, which would be analysed in the next section.

3. Labour identities and practices: between survival and self-fulfilment

Slash workers are a heterogeneous category with many different circumstances, motivations, and factors that encourage them to take up additional jobs. Among our interviewees, there is, for example, an immigrant woman in Germany who survives by combining an unregistered job as a kitchen assistant in a restaurant with cleaning tasks through a digital platform. At the other end, there is the case of a Bulgarian woman with a permanent job in a pharmaceutical company who, to develop her creative inclinations, has started as a freelance designer of marketing campaigns. Generalising, as Bamberly and Campbell (2012) put it, some slash workers experience their situation more as a plight, and others share it more as a pleasure.

From this diversity, in this section, we intend to offer a general classification of the slash workers we have interviewed according to their position about work and the motivation that has led them to take over their current job situation. Based on these criteria we have tried to determine the different work identities shown by this wide-ranging category of workers. Additionally, we will analyse in more depth the slash workers who develop at least one of their jobs through digital platforms and in the art and culture industries, given their relevance to understanding the implications of this phenomenon.

3.1. Reasonings, motivations and profiles

For this analysis, we must start from the fact that the diversity and overlapping of slash workers' motivations complicate assessment. Since multiple job holding is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, we cannot strictly consider the different categories of slash workers mutually exclusive. As we will see, the reasons and justifications indicated by the interviewees are often combined -sometimes in unusual ways. Indeed, some of the defining elements of one category can - and usually do - occur, albeit in a secondary or less pronounced way, in the other category. In any case, according to the country reports and broadly speaking, we can distinguish two main types of motivations behind the decision to become slash workers: financial reasons and what we have called, inspired by the Italian report, "passionate" justifications. Being aware of the limitations this approach entails, we consider that the broad distinction that we have made allows us to ascertain the labour identities that these workers present and highlight the differences in meanings and implications for workers of labour market flexibility and fragmentation. Moreover, as we will see later, these circumstances condition their needs and aspirations for protection and representation in a relevant way.

1.1.1. 3.1.1. Financial reasons

“For me being slash is a matter of necessity” (IT_3.1).

The financial reasons stress the importance of economic factors as the main driver behind engaging in different paid activities. This category includes slash workers with very diverse circumstances and motivations, which could be positioned on a continuum from the strict need to combine jobs to survive to the desire to obtain extra income to spend on hobbies or unpredictable expenses. In an intermediate position would be those for whom the additional paid employment constitutes a safety net if possible adverse circumstances in the main activity.

SURVIVAL STRATEGY

For most interviewees who argue financial reasons for engaging in an extra job, becoming a slash worker has not been a choice; it is more of a survival strategy. It is a decision driven by necessity, a strategy to tackle financial constraints and make ends meet. This profile appears as relevant in all the country reports (for example, IT_3.7, IT_3.11, ES_2.1, ES_2.2, BG_1.2, BG_5.3, BG_4.5). These slash workers are characterised by labour trajectories that follow the traditional scheme of stringing together jobs one by one and have only recently combined more than one job. They are, therefore, unexpected and involuntary slash workers, pushed by a necessity to compensate for the unpredictable or non-sufficient income provided by the main job. The following extracts, that highlight the involuntary nature of their status as slash workers, show the most common stance of the workers in this category:

“Of course, you start that, you start out of necessity not because you want to... if you have all your needs covered with just one job, what need is there to have two?” (ES_4.1).

“I do this solely because I have to” (FR_4.1)

“I was just forced to find an option in which to have additional income with which to live in a normal way, although in reality - we are still below normal” (BG_4.1).

The country reports reveal two main situations that lead to opting for slash work as a survival strategy. The first one is structural precariousness. As the last fragment cited (BG_4.1) reflects, this circumstance has forced some interviewees to get involved in a puzzle of jobs to make ends meet. BG_4 is a 45-year-old man with a Bachelor's degree who currently works as a bagpiper and carries out construction and repair works. His main activity does not provide enough income to cover the family's economic needs, since: *My salary is a little above the minimum wage for the country, which is highly insufficient for the support of a family of four” (BG_4.1).* The structural precariousness also explains the condition of slash worker to which IT_3.14 has been pushed:

“I am a single mom because my daughter's father died eight years ago, I no longer have parents, I don't have a family network, I have to manage and support my daughter alone. I certainly couldn't have done it with journalistic work alone, but this job wouldn't have been enough to support me even without a daughter” (IT_3.14).

In the same way, IT_4.1 occasionally works as a full-time aesthetician and as a shop assistant in a laundry *"for the earnings: we have a lot of expenses and two children. My husband's salary was not enough anymore"* (IT_4.1). ES_3.1 is also in a similar situation. She is a woman with university studies and a long career as a slash worker, who currently works as a tourist guide, trainer, and organiser of scientific events for children *"because none of them covers your economic needs, they are activities that have a minimal economic impact on your monthly income, so it's your family's economy, so you have to do several or you won't make it"* (ES_3.1). Finally, the case of DE_14, an immigrant in Germany, shows how precariousness can overlap - and be intensified - with other vulnerability situations, accentuating the need to engage in additional paid activities. She moved to Germany from Argentina. Although trained as an actress and with a university degree in teaching theatre, her imperfect knowledge of the language made it difficult for her to find work. To support herself, she has to take several cleaning jobs through the platform Helpling and supplement this income with a job working as a kitchen assistant at a Spanish restaurant as a non-registered (black economy) employee.

2007-2008 downturn's effect on employment have also been cited by some interviewees as triggers for their precarious situation and, therefore, for their switch to slash work. The crisis fuelled the use of non-standard work and employment forms by companies, causing the "fissuring" of the workplace (Weil, 2014) and fostering job insecurity. These circumstances have led many workers to the need to engage in additional paid activities. This is the case, for example, of FR_3.3, a 27-year-old woman who currently combines her part-time employment as an administrative secretary with tasks as a micro-worker: *"When my boss fired me, he said he wanted to keep me as a self-employed subcontractor (auto-entrepreneur). For him, it meant smaller payroll taxes and cheaper labour. He promised me a lot of contacts. In the end, he hired me for two days a week, as I still had unemployment benefits"* (FR_3.3). Also, for BG_5.4., who used to work only as a consultant, the crisis marked a turning point: *"The crisis in 2008 led to a reduction in the company's activities, of the company which we established with friends in 2000. I had a lot of time. This made me start looking for an extra job. I had to find a way to increase my income so that we could at least survive"* (BG_5.4). He currently combines the job in this company with those of a lecturer and translator, both online and offline.

According to the country reports, the second type of circumstances push to resort to an extra job as a survival plan is usually temporary. Some interviewees, most of whom have a job that under normal conditions would allow them a more or less adequate standard of living, relate their decision to become slash workers with specific family circumstances that require increasing their income during a certain period. ES_56 has a full-time job as a software programmer with a salary that allows him to live adequately; however, *"everything kind of exploded when we bought the house, in 2016 we bought the house and I was in the red for the first time in my life, so I was looking for ways to earn extra money because we had a lot of expenses"* (ES_5.6). As soon as he managed to solve his financial problem, he left the second job. Also, becoming a parent and other family changes can force the respondents to search for better financial options and thus underpin the need to carry out multiple activities:

"The main motivation is financial - it is important for my child to be good, not to be miserable and not make ends meet (...). The first job as a public one is safer - I work

with people I know or admire—a unique experience. However, the income is not enough, especially as a parent. The choice is completely different. It's one thing to be alone, a free electron; it's quite another to be responsible for another person." (BG_6.1)

In short, two types of circumstances lead to hold multiple jobs as a survival strategy: extreme precariousness and a specific and temporary need to increase income. Even though the starting situations are very different concerning precariousness, both groups share a pressing financial need as the main reason for slash work. In no case is this a situation they have actively sought; it is a temporary situation. They begin out of necessity, and most of them intend to leave the slash worker scenario as soon as their economic resources allow them to do so. They expect to improve their situation over time and thus avoid having to supplement their income. Even BG_4.1, whose case could be considered highly precarious, thinks that he will be focusing on his main job in 'better times', as illustrated by the following statement:

"I continue to combine work by profession (as a bagpiper) with coercive work (as a master) until better times are achieved (note on int.: higher incomes) in the main job" (BG_4.1).

SAFETY NET

Among those who justify their status as slash workers on financial grounds, a group deems having more than one job as a sort of safety net. We can distinguish two reasons. On the one hand, for some interviewees, their secondary job is a kind of insurance if possible adverse circumstances in the main activity. The interviewees who fit this profile have a more or less stable first activity that provides them with sufficient income to make ends meet, but they are concerned about its continuity. Rather than looking for extra income, what they seek is to guarantee the continuity of their income. This type of justification emerges above all in interviews from Italy and Spain, which share highly segmented labour markets. In these countries, the precariousness and unemployment rates are high; therefore, protection against these contingencies is highly valued. The primary advantage pointed out by the slash workers interviewed in Spain is the economic security provided by having several sources of income. Cases IT_5.2 and ES_5.3 exemplify this rationale.

IT_5.2, a 28-year-old e-commerce analyst, journalist and copywriter, considers her involvement in various jobs as a strategy to diversify risk:

"In today's world, one must always have a plan B because the job is always uncertain: mine is indeed open-ended, nothing can happen to you, but with the world we live now, it is very uncertain, one must always have a plan B and a Plan C to be able to play in case something goes wrong. In my opinion, it is too risky to know how to do just one thing; you need to know how to do more than one" (IT_5.2).

ES_5.3 exhibits a similar rationale. Although he has an open-ended contract in the auto industry, he still feels his continuity in that job threatened by labour market insecurity. This concern is what motivates him to continue combining this job with another professional activity as a freelance psychologist through the Psonr e platform:

“For me, the strength is that it gives me security, that's what I was saying before, it gives me that security that if one of them goes wrong such as the economy is, at least the other one will continue to bring home some money and I won't be unemployed for a year and a half, or a year in unemployment. That does give me security, and I think that's the strong point. And the one that motivates me to continue with both” (ES_5.3).

The second reasoning related to the notion of slash work as a safety net is quite different. In this case, workers seek to rely on primary employment's financial security and stability. At the same time, they achieve the viability of another entrepreneurial activity that they have just started. To ensure a steady income, they retain their primary jobs, sometimes until the new second activity is financially stable and other times intending always to keep two jobs. These are DE_2, DE_3 and BG_6.2's plans. DE_2 keeps his job as a technician at a company in the machine-building industry while making profitable the taxi company he is starting. DE_3 is a professional dancer who used to work with the Nurnberg ballet company. Last year, he left the ballet company and began working as a choreographer and developing projects with other artistic colleagues. While he gets known enough to live from this new job, he continues to dance for other companies. Regarding BG_6.2, who carries out her main job in the financial sector with a permanent contract, she is trying to consolidate as a business two activities -yoga instructor and aromatherapist- that she used to carry out for pleasure. Her description of how she is experiencing the transition reflects well this account:

“I am risky, and I am afraid. I have to throw myself like Alice in Wonderland - and say, ok, I'm ready to lose everything - let me try this thing. But I'm not prepared. At this stage, I prefer to have a stable job, which has a contract, with a salary every month - on a specific day and this (note on the int. the two other professions) to be extra” (BG_6.2).

PIN MONEY

Although three interviewees have only mentioned it in Italy, there is a third financial driver worth considering. It is linked to the desire to make up the primary activity's income, defined as satisfactory and more than sufficient to live. The extra income is allocated to hobbies and unpredictable expenses. An example could be that of IT_5.4. He holds a full-time, open-ended contract in a bank. Also, he works around 20 hours per week as an English teacher as a way to top up the monthly household income: *“The money and the stakes you are referring to, that is, if you had to stop out of the blue, you would have a sharp decline, yes, but on extra consumptions, on ancillary costs, from a tangible point of view” (IT_5.4).* Slash workers who fit into this category highlight the usefulness of digital platforms to find small and flexible activities to top up the monthly income and defray extraordinary expenses. IT_2.1 is registered in more than 20 platforms providing surveys online; her comment about someone else shows that she is enthusiastic about the possibilities they offer to earn extra income: *“there is this lady in Naples, sorry for telling in this way, who married two daughters with the money of the online survey!!” (IT_2.1).*

“PASSIONATE” JUSTIFICATIONS

“Somehow, I am doing what I always wanted to do”. (ES_3.3).

This profile is the true reflection of the previously mentioned emergence of new norms, aspirations and expectations attached to work and working lives. The common element in this cluster of slash workers is described in the Italian country report as "passion". They search for personal development at work through "occupational callings" (Berg et al. 2010). Jobs that they feel central to their identity and are valued as intrinsically enjoyable and meaningful. When questioned, these interviewees present their status of slash workers as a personal decision; they have chosen to combine several jobs to turn at least one of their work activities into an outlet for fulfilment. Even though the economic reason is always present, their primary motivation is not financial but to enrich their work experience by developing their creative nature, artistic concerns or vocational activity. Our interviews show two types of profiles.

"DOUBLE LIFE"

The most widespread profile among the so-called "passionate" slash workers is that of those who try to find the balance between self-fulfilment at work and economic sustainability by adopting a "double life" as described by Taylor and Littleton (2012). It is a strategy of hedging risks. Workers seek to combine a primary job that pays the bills and guarantees adequate living conditions with an additional meaningful activity that cannot provide them with sufficient income even though it is their priority. This underlying rationale corresponds to the "Work-what a passion!" and "Cynicism in the workplace" drivers in the Italian country report, the "Self-fulfilled" and "Entrepreneurial" profiles in the Spanish report, and the "Personal reasons" in the Bulgarian report. Within this profile, three slightly different rationales can be distinguished by the role and meaning attributed to the second ("passionate") job.

In the first case, the priority is to satisfy “the desire to do the work that one likes, for which one feels suited, often a dream pursued since childhood” (Italian report). For it, an additional job is required. Frequently, a meaningful job does not guarantee adequate income or enough working hours, so it is necessary to get involved in another instrumental work activity and usually becomes the main job in terms of economic relevance. Economic motivation intersects with the pursuit of personal fulfilment, but according to our interviewees, the latter is the priority. For example, IT_3.3 works as a Pilates teacher in a sports centre to supplement her income as a journalist. She considers journalism a central part of her identity, as she clearly states:

“for me to do something I don't like, I live it really badly: not a little bad, really bad! [...] For me my profession is that as a journalist, the other one was a fall-back I ran into at some point!” (IT_3.3).

Similarly, IT_3.2, who combines three jobs (shop assistant, publishing industry and translation), argues that she willingly assumes a heavy workload to remain linked to the job she loves:

“I have been called to do the maternity replacement in the publishing house, and it went very well. I was living the same busy life I do now because I used to work in this place

in the morning, go out and go to the shop in the afternoon and, in the meantime, I had translations to finish at home so that you can imagine! It was an intense moment! [...] the effort is really a lot, but it has its positive side ... I need to know that I do not lose the part linked to the literary world. Therefore, I prefer to struggle than get into a job that may have its hours and salary, but it is completely detached from what really interests me. The effort is there: I go out in the morning at 7 am and come back in the evening at 9 pm, so many hours... (IT_3.2).

Another interesting case that fits into this rationale is that of ES_3.3. When he finished his architecture degree, he started a studio together with two other colleagues and combined it with performances with a musical group on weekends. For him, *"music was like an escape route"* (ES_3.3). In 2008, coinciding with a sharp reduction in activity in the architecture studio due to the crisis, he began working as a part-time university lecturer. After the closure of the studio in 2012, he decided to focus on the activity that really satisfied him and started a musical production and performance project that has become his main activity: *"for me, music is no longer a liberation from the architecture part, it is already my main field of practice [...] I feel fortunate, I can work on what I like and have a fairly decent life economically"* (ES_3.3). To make this feasible, he currently combines his musical project with part-time university teaching, which allows him *"to pay for the self-employment (fee), pay the apartment, have basic expenses covered and then be able to develop artistic practice outside the university"* (ES_3.3).

The priority of keeping the job that is meaningful and enjoyable for him also plays a crucial role in ES_4.2's decision to engage in more than one job. Besides, this case makes evident the importance of the dimension of change -in terms of stages of the life course and the current changing nature of working conditions- to understand slash work. ES_4.2 has been combining his occupation as a disc jockey throughout his working life, which is the activity he likes and feels identified with various other jobs. The main reason that has always led him to get involved in other jobs is that disc jockey's job must necessarily be carried out part-time and with atypical schedules (weekend evenings). At first, he could make a living from this job since it was well paid, but as he explains: *"I was bored during the weekdays, and then I asked for a job at my sister's store"*. He ended up working long hours, which he could do because he still had no family: *"It was 65 hours a week or something like that, it was leaving one thing and running to the other [...] I lived alone because in another case it would have been impossible"*. Nowadays, his situation has changed in many aspects: the job of a disc jockey is no longer well paid, so to make a living, he has to combine it with a full-time job as an electrician, and he also has two daughters. These changes have led him to evaluate his situation differently and even to question the viability of maintaining his vocational job:

"... If I had excellent working conditions and were well paid, then the most normal thing is that I would work from Monday to Friday, which most of us want. However, since it is not like that, then I am forced to do an extra. Nevertheless, that extra [...] I like, and it's actually the profession I'd like to practice, but logically a disc jockey doesn't have much to do on a Monday morning at eight o'clock, does he? Nor on a Tuesday at three o'clock in the afternoon, I say. So, you have to look for an extra something" (ES_4.2).

ES_4.2's case also illustrates how long working hours and free time sacrifice are inherent situations to slash work. References to time squeeze and the stress associated with simultaneous involvement in several jobs appear in all the country reports. This is especially the case when the interviewees maintain the main full-time occupation to pursue a passion and seek greater personal realisation without jeopardising their job security. IT_5.2, IT_5.3 and IT_3.5 are examples of this option. We will delve into this aspect in section 4.

The second variant is that of those for whom the trigger to become slash workers is dissatisfaction with the main job. The majority of those who comprise this variant are people with more or less stable work, which provides them with an entire or partial livelihood but does not satisfy them. Due to this, they have decided to undertake a second activity to seek to develop their creativity, interests, or vocation; they seek self-realisation through this secondary activity. Often, it is this second activity that enables them to cope with an unmotivating main job. As one of our interviewees expressed, *"it is true that there are times when we have to look for things that make us happy to endure coming in on Monday"* (ES_3.7).

In some cases, such as those of IT_5.7 and ES_3.7, the interviewees have been able to identify the trigger for their decision to get involved in their second activity. IT_5.7, after a university degree in physics, got a full-time, open-ended contract as a marketing analyst. This activity has been rewarding for him for almost ten years in terms of financial returns and career. When he started experiencing a lack of engagement and a growing disappointment in this job, he decided to follow his passion for the world of counselling. This passion drove him to launch a secondary activity as a counsellor that he wishes to gradually transform into his primary source of income, being aware of the difficulty:

"I started with a desire to escape, then I found a way to live better in the work that I already do, and I like very much, I found a way to return to perform. Furthermore, I have always said to myself: this plan B will never become plan A now because I just started to understand how it works" (IT_5.7).

Similarly, ES_37 decided to start a new business venture consisting of organising parties for children with teepees when she began to have problems in her main job in a large telecommunications company: *"... It was a hard work moment [...] my job pays me the mortgage, but it doesn't complement me, it doesn't make me feel fulfilled, it is a complicated job that requires much concentration, but you have to see something emotional to stay motivated. And I ran out of everything at that moment; that is where teepees come from"*. The second job allows her to disconnect, organise herself in her way and express her creativity:

"...teepees allow me to be creative, to do things the way I want, to adapt myself as I think I should... it gives me freedom in terms of schedule, organisation, decision making..., it gives me... I don't know, creativity, everything. I have no limits; with the teepees, I can say yes or no to everything" (ES_3.7).

In other cases, there is no specific turning point. The decision to get involved in the second job is caused by the desire to compensate for the lack of incentive in the main job or the need to develop their creativity. BG_1.3 has a permanent position in the pharmaceutical industry; the

lack of opportunities to develop her creative inclinations in this job led her to start as a freelancer marketing campaign designer:

“... personal satisfaction, not financial support. My work in the pharmaceutical company is related to databases, with many numbers - by checking drug licenses from suppliers in Africa and Asia. I miss brilliance and creativity there. As a freelancer, they just kept looking for my services. That is why I do it. To get the creative side that I miss in my main job” (BG_1.3).

A similar case is ES_5.1, a computer engineer who combines an indefinite main job as a copier repair technician with freelance computer application development tasks through the Workana platform. The first job is not very motivating for him but gives him stability, and the second one takes him out of the routine and poses intellectual challenges:

“For example, these works that I do online are often a challenge for me because sometimes they ask me for very complex or abstract things that have to be designed and have to be understood. There are often modules that you have never seen or languages that you have never been exposed to, and you have to learn them. So, I find that very stimulating. However, the other work is, well, more of a... normal: you go, you do it, and that's it. It's like being a bit of a waiter for the computer guys” (ES_5.1).

Another interesting example is that of ES_3.2. She has a vocational slash worker profile, with a career path characterised by diversity (graphic design, digital marketing, waitress...). She currently works in the fleet management of a home delivery company and also teaches yoga classes. Her first activity helps pay the bills, but she is not passionate about it. As she explains: *“It is a stable activity for me, that I am well, that I am happy, that I do not develop professionally either in things that I would say that interest me a lot”*. Yoga classes, an activity that provides her with the fulfilment of core personal values and meaning, allow her to disconnect:

“Well, it helps me a lot to switch the chip. I go out and have a hard day's work at [courier's name]. I arrive and sit down in the yoga class. It quickly changes me, I see the students, and I'm already like in something else, and it helps me to finish the day in a different way (...) as if I was balancing one thing with the other (...) as if they were rescuing each other” (ES_3.2).

Finally, there is a third modality in which the worker's agency plays a less relevant role. Some interviewees explain how their slash status also responds to the undertaking of a leisure activity or one that, at first, was done for pleasure but eventually became financially viable, frequently by chance, without any prior intention of generating an additional source of income. The Bulgarian country report describes some of these cases. For example, BG_5.2 combines a freelance job as a mountain guide, previously his hobby, with a highly skilled and well-paid job in the financial sector. Equally, BG_5.1 combines his usual position as a hairdresser with an old hobby that has ended up being paid employment. As he explains, this situation was never deliberately sought:

“It simply came by accident to work in two places. I have a friend who ran a computer company and said there were no people to work for him. I started with the idea of helping him. Computers have always been my hobby, and I've always been interested.

So, things went more professionally, and I stayed to work in the company. But I've never stopped hairdressing because I just really like it." (BG_5.1)

The Spanish report also presents cases based on a similar logic, but with the particularity that the old hobby turned into paid work currently constitutes a way out of the unemployment situation caused by the COVID-19 crisis. ES_2.2 used to work as an accountant. When he became unemployed, he decided to turn his hobby (cycling) into his new way of making a living and currently works as a rider for two home delivery platforms:

"I generally did it for the bike; I did it because I was already an urban cyclist, I used to ride my bike to work when I was an accountant, [...] I started to ride my bike around Madrid everywhere if I went shopping or met my friends, I rode my bike. Then, when I was unemployed, and I saw that this was emerging... bike delivery was becoming popular... and I said: "Well, I really like the bike, I love it, it makes me happy to go around Madrid on a bike, so I am going to give it a try". (ES_2.2).

Also, ES_5.4, who worked as an English teacher and teleoperator, copes with unemployment by selling online handmade dolls that she previously made for pleasure or gifts. As in other cases, this activity unexpectedly became a source of income: *"I started doing little sewing projects, I started making gifts for my son's friends [...] and as a result of that and because I put it on Facebook, some people who saw the dolls that I made, some fairy tale dolls, some familiar people at first, they began to ask me if I sold them"* (ES_5.4). Moreover, a very similar case is that of ES_6.1. She also faces unemployment and the radical reduction in activity in the tourist company where it works as a second job selling handicraft dolls. She clearly expresses something that appears implicit in the speeches of most of the slash workers included in this category: *"I would love to be able to live from it but... time to time, I don't lose hope"* (ES_6.1). That is, the desire for a working future with only one activity, the one that currently plays a secondary role in their economy but that they find enjoyable and meaningful; the activity with which they feel identified.

MULTI-INTEREST

A second, less numerous profile, among the slash workers we have classified as "passionate", is that of those who prioritise diversity in job tasks. This category is composed of vocational slash workers with a predominantly expressive conception of work. Their working careers have always been marked by the permanent overlapping of several jobs in different fields. They do not just look for meaning and purpose in their work experience; they seek, besides, and above all, variety. Thus, they present their status as slash workers as a choice. According to their discourses, their main reasons are that they appreciate the variety, that is, the possibility of connecting to many realities and developing multiple interests and skills. Some of their arguments are: "*no day is the same as the other*" (IT_3.8); "*I like to do multiple stuff, discover new tools, learn and be able to do new stuff that way*" (FR_1.4), or "*I will never be happy doing just one thing*" (ES_3.4). In short, they feel happier dividing the time between two or more different jobs. In this category, highly qualified workers tend to be the most predominant.

The respondents BG_3.2 and ES_4.1 are good explanatory examples of this profile. BG_3.2 has always worked on many things simultaneously; he has never had a single job. He declares that he hates routine and that "*it's definitely not just a matter of money*" to do several things simultaneously. His main jobs are as a freelance journalist, music editor and bookbinder, and he has recently started to restore books. He explains that he does it because he is interested and because of each job's development opportunities. ES_4.1 owns a bicycle repair shop and also works as a freelance in theatrical and artistic assemblies (lights, sound, scenery). Although expressed differently, his arguments are very similar to those of BG_3.2:

"...those who are restless are more likely to enter into this dynamic, those who are not, or who are not interested in anything other than making it to the end of the week or the ends meet, or whatever, they will not look for alternatives other than what they have (...) However, if you are a little restless, you are restless about things, about... different areas, about anything, about activities, about working, about being active, well, it is easier for you to be that cannon fodder" (ES_41).

Indeed, these two cases have some features in common with other slash workers with this profile: they associate their status as slash workers with traits of their personality. They present themselves as restless people who like to be active, who show a wide range of concerns and diverse skills, using very close language to the rhetoric of entrepreneurship: diligence, creativity, curiosity, proactivity or ability to adapt. As can be seen in the following quotations, their justifications reproduce many of the characteristics of entrepreneurial subjectivity:

"My view of life is a little different - always something has to be done. Whether it will be construction, repairs, carpentry, real estate transactions, catering - these are already nuances. One should not sit and blunt" (BG_4.2).

"I know how to do many things, I don't have one way, but more points of view, I know how to move and manage in all situations, I am completely adaptable, I never get discouraged, I don't experience instability with stress, I have not lived with stress, not even the lockdown" (IT_3.7).

“I'm a very curious person, I like to learn many things, um... I'm not afraid to try new things, and that's in my personality, and I think you can see that in all the things I do” (ES_3.4).

“There are some things that led to my work situation, in part suffered in part sought. I don't like whining; it is unproductive. I define myself as autonomous, maybe not my own boss, but "subordinate to myself". (IT_3.11)

We will return to this topic in the specific section focused on the creative sector.

3.2. Slash workers and platform economy

As we have already indicated in the previous section, many of our interviewees have accessed their additional job through digital platforms. This fact confirms the relationship between platform economy and slash work widely suggested by the literature: platforms generate job opportunities that ease workers' diversifying their paid activities. However, as we will see next, our results show that approaching platform work from a different perspective -that of workers having multiple jobs- brings to light new aspects of this relationship that are often overlooked in studies on the subject.

We can take as a starting point the following excerpt from an interview with an Italian woman who takes advantage of the opportunity to combine several jobs (agent in the customer service of a multinational, chef for catering and food blogger) that the Prontopro platform provides. It well exemplifies the benefits that many of our interviewees attribute to platform work:

“...the alternative provided by the catering was really a liberation because I understood that I could thus reconcile my need and my passion for cooking for others and in any case to earn money with rhythms and schedules that were well reconciled with life as a full-time employee and with my family because in any case, I worked either on Saturdays and Sundays or during the holidays, so it didn't cause me any problems. Of course, I worked from Monday to Friday all day and Saturday and Sunday. Instead of resting, I was in the kitchen. Still, it's different tiredness because a) you do it for yourself and b) you do something you really like and always with the desire always to improve more” (IT_5.5).

In this case, the informant has resorted to a platform to develop the job she loves. Still, we have observed that the use of digital platforms to find an additional job or make several jobs compatible is transversal to the motivations behind becoming slash workers. Among our interviewees, some resort to platforms to find an additional job for financial reasons, either to come across small and flexible activities to top up their monthly income (for instance, FR_3.4, IT_2.1, IT_3.14, and IT_4.1) or to find a way out of unemployment (ES_1.1). For others, like DE_7, the platforms represent a helpful and fruitful channel to get known when they start up a business. Moreover, as many other cases show (DE_10, ES_51, or even the already mentioned IT_5.5), platforms are considered handy to carry out "occupational callings".

Regardless of the reasons underpinning workers' decision to resort to platforms, a majority positively values the autonomy and flexibility offered by this labour modality. Indeed, most of

our interviewees declare that, as in the case of IT_5.5, it has been the ability to self-manage time and work offered by platforms that have enabled them to make the second or third activity compatible with the primary one. As expressed by one of our informants: "*you can do other things during the day – not just one, you can be flexible*" (BG_5.4). In general, having more than one income source enables workers to be more selective about whom to accept as customers, the amount of time devoted to work, the schedules, and other working conditions. This inherent feature of slash workers' status allows them to benefit from platforms' autonomy and flexibility. However, independence and flexibility do not affect all workers equally; as in the conventional labour market, not everyone has the same control over when and how to work. Moreover, even in the best of cases, the flexibility offered by platforms is never without contradictions. A good part of the business model of platforms is based on their ability to manage the workforce flexibly (Schor et al. 2020) and, therefore, the flexibility that workers can benefit from ends where the flexibility imposed by the platform begins.

The ambivalent meaning of autonomy and flexibility when working on platforms is expressed with great eloquence in the following quotations from an interview conducted in Bulgaria with a graphic designer who also works online as a freelance illustrator. On the one hand, this informant highly values the freedom and flexibility to manage working time and the tasks that this type of work offers:

"The direct plus is the author's freedom. Also, the ability to choose your own working hours and workplace, which can be at home, in a shared office. You can be flexible as a geographical location - I can go home for longer with my parents in the countryside or stay with friends in the country. Another huge advantage is that it gives a wide variety of tasks. It is not like working for a specific employer, where at some point everything becomes routine, especially after the second year and is a precedent for stopping development, for depleting the potential. In freelancing, this thing can be modelled client to client and is a constantly dynamic process. And brings additional income" (BG_5.5).

However, in parallel, he shows his awareness of the negative consequences that all these advantages usually entail:

"On the other hand, all these pros are tied to the cons. For example, this flexibility of working hours may conflict with the time for the family, in purely personal time. Sometimes, overloading with tasks can lead to widespread burnout. Flexibility in geographical location is also a plus and a minus because this constant switching leads to a loss of focus, of purposefulness. And yes, it is an additional income, but it is unpredictable - it is not permanent, it is not secure. The most important thing is to be responsible, take good care of yourself, your time, your health - purely mentally, for your well-being. It is entirely up to you whether the pros will be pros and the cons - cons" (BG_5.5).

In general, the interviews' analysis shows that the ability of workers to benefit from autonomy and flexibility and, connected to it, the quality of their working conditions and their degree of

satisfaction with their work experience on platforms depend on two circumstances that overlap and interact with each other. These circumstances are a) the skills demanded by the platforms to carry out the tasks, which influence the conditions they offer to workers and the relationship they can establish with customers; and b) the degree of dependence on the income obtained from platforms, which will determine the autonomy of workers to choose tasks and avoid poor working conditions.

Regarding the first of these circumstances, our findings confirm a great diversity of platforms and that some are better than others to work with. A fundamental variable that distinguishes one from the other is the skills required to perform the tasks. Some platforms connect freelancers offering specialised services such as translation, graphic design, software programming, or journalism with clients who require these services at the more highly skilled end. Many of our interviewees who work on platforms belong to this category. According to their descriptions, those who work through these platforms have the highest degree of autonomy and flexibility: they can interact directly with clients, negotiate the rates, and feel free to accept or reject jobs. As stated, for example, by one of our informants, who offers computer application development services through the Workana platform:

"I will only charge for what I do; if the client demands more than that, I can choose to do it or not (...). I have all the freedom in the world. The day I don't want to work unless I have a previous commitment, I say: 'I'm going to do this job in a week'. Well, that week I get to the top, but the following week, if I don't want to, I don't have to look for anything" (ES_5.1).

As can be seen from ES_5.1's description, the flexibility and autonomy that these workers enjoy allow and facilitate the combination of several jobs and generate more satisfactory work experiences. However, even these workers are subject to ambiguities and contingencies inherent to the platform's operating logic, which means that their theoretical autonomy, flexibility and negotiating capacity become restricted in practice. Among our interviewees, a very repeated comment is that there is an unfair competition that forces prices to be set down (as reported by ES_5.1, ES_5.2, ES_5.3, ES_5.6, IT_3.2, IT_3.3). As an Italian translator puts it: *"prices are one of the other problems with this job because people tend to look for the lowest price. Full stop. So, many try to raise prices down to get the job..." (IT_3.2)*. Another frequent criticism concerns the deadlines: *"Usually, the orders have a term of execution of the type - for yesterday" (BG_1.3)*; *"...a complete lack of common sense because thinking that you can translate 100 pages in 2/3 days is something that no one should consider with common sense (IT_3.4)*. All in all, on the platforms, the relationships between the client and the worker turns to be controlled by the former, whose scorings play a determining role concerning working conditions and the ability of workers to negotiate them. In these situations, the dichotomy between apparent autonomy and control linked to the customer requirements and ratings becomes evident:

"Let's say I'm my boss, but once you agree, the boss is the client because the platform gives the client a lot of power, because a bad score there is harmful, it's very harmful. Then you are your boss until you take on a client, when you take on the client, the client is the boss until that job is finished" (ES_5.6).

On the other end, concerning the skills required to perform the tasks, are the platforms that offer online micro-tasks or those dedicated to food delivery at home. Virtually all of our interviewees that develop unskilled tasks are involved in these types of platforms. The interviews conducted with these workers show a picture in which the advantages described by highly skilled workers almost disappear, and the drawbacks are accentuated. For them, the possibility of negotiating directly with the client turns into total dependence on their opinions and scorings. Neither do the platforms establish any relationship with the workers. In the case of riders, the autonomy to accept or reject jobs and the flexibility to manage working time comes to be a requirement of absolute temporary availability by the company, which is not reimbursed for making matters worse. This situation makes it very difficult to combine several jobs; in fact, most of the riders we have interviewed have ended up working only as riders for one or more delivery platforms. According to the French report, they often describe their working conditions as "exploitation". As explained by one of the interviewed riders:

"They say that you can sign in [on the platform app] whenever you want, but if you want to make any money at all, there's obligatory time slots" (FR_4.1).

"Usually, I'm signed in about 75h per week, to earn 700€ [a week]. After that, I still have to pay for my working tools [scooter; fuel; bags]. But that's the online time. I'm not always doing deliveries, there's a lot of waiting time" (FR_4.1).

"We're always vulnerable. I got my account deactivated for 48h because I had too many "missed deliveries" warnings. I honestly think that the clients just cancel the order after I deliver them to get reimbursed. For the platform, the client is always right. I wish there were room for true dialogue with platform representatives. Right now, trying to speak to them is beyond useless" (FR_4.1)

"Given our status as auto-entrepreneurs, we should at the very least be able to know how much we are going to be paid before agreeing to a delivery. The app only tells you "afterwards" (FR_4.1).

Micro-workers are subjected to similar conditions. As stated in the French report, "Workers lose 'points' if their tasks are rejected by the clients, as the platform regards this as a proxy for low quality work. If they lose all of their points, their accounts get deactivated without any recourse available. Moreover, workers are expected to pass 'certifications', to gain specialised tasks (clerical or otherwise). On the micro-work platform we targeted, an online forum is offered to the workers. The forum seems to be very lightly moderated. Yet, workers rate the possibility of dialogue with the platform: from low to extremely low". Furthermore, to this should be added that these workers are further affected by unfair competition that pulls prices down, as shown by FR_3.2's (administrative secretary and micro-worker) reflection:

"Even the badly paid projects, which I actively avoid, will be done by someone else. Some pensioner, or an unemployed, who only does it to pass the time, even if it's paid terribly. The clients know that, and they profit from it. Sometimes, it really looks like exploitation. (...) We're an underpaid little workforce" (FR_3.2).

However, as is clear from the previous excerpt, it seems that in their case, the impact of these "exploitative" conditions is mitigated by the fact that for almost all of them, work on platforms

is aimed at earning supplemental income. None of the persons interviewed seems to be really performing the activity as a main permanent job, which allows them to be selective as FR_3.1's comment shows: "*Sometimes I do not go there [the platform] for months. It depends on the number of projects if they are interesting, and if they are relatively well paid or not, obviously, it is a primary factor*" (FR_3.1). Moreover, coinciding with the results of other research (Schor et al., 2020; Wood et al., 2019), our findings show that workers' evaluation of the experience of working with platforms depends mainly on their ability to filter out unwanted job offers. French and Italian reports show the cases of several of these workers, who tend to express a high level of satisfaction with their work situation. For example, IT_4.1 is registered on various platforms. Every evening before going to bed, she spends about half an hour checking if there are new surveys available online to fill in, both on the platforms where she is registered (opinion panel), as well as on dedicated Facebook groups. The vouchers she earns (corresponding to around €20-30 per month) allow her to purchase in e-commerce platforms. Her aspirations for the future confirm her satisfaction with the conditions of her tasks through the platforms: "*I would love to transform this activity into a mini job*" (IT_4.1).

These cases bring us to the second of the issues that, as we have argued above, influence autonomy and control over working conditions: the degree of dependence on platforms earnings. The country reports present many cases in which this relationship is confirmed (FR_3.2, IT_3.6, and IT_3.13). In particular, ES_5.6's assertion is good evidence of how the ability to choose when and how to work and control one's working conditions are conditioned by the urgent need for earnings. This informant, already mentioned in the previous section, works as a software programmer with a permanent contract for a large company, a salary that allows a good standard of living. Due to a specific financial need, he started to carry out translations through Upwork. Once the specific financial need ended, the income from his main job allowed him to regain control over his working conditions:

"...clients do not understand about schedules when you are a freelancer, the client can ... They have written to me on Sundays at eleven o'clock at night, saying: "Listen, I need you to... Would you like to do this job for me?" I now say: "We will talk tomorrow". Now I am not going even to bother to stop and look at it. At another time, I did look at it; I told him: "Wait for a second, because one of them has written to me, let us see what he has to offer" because I needed it more, right now I do not. (ES_5.6).

Therefore, according to these findings, having or not having social supports (in the sense that Robert Castel gives to this concept) makes the difference. Even within the same category of platforms, those that offer low-skilled tasks, the situation is very different for the workers who depend on the platform's earnings to make ends meet compared to those who use them to top up their monthly income. A sufficient and secure alternative source of income constitutes social support that allows workers to use the autonomy and flexibility offered by the platforms in the way that suits them best and, therefore, to achieve more satisfying experiences with platform work. In this regard, some research (Schor et al. 2020) suggests that platforms can be considered free-riders from conventional employers, who provide the job security and income sufficiency necessary to make platform work desirable. Along the same lines, one of the French and Italian reports' conclusions is that the primary job also ensures social protection (in case of

unemployment, retirement, etc.) that platforms do not provide. Thus, the outcomes of the SWIRL project seem to evidence a bidirectional relationship between platforms and slash work: on the one hand, platform work contributes to fostering the spread of slash work but, on the other hand, the extension of slash work helps to create the social conditions for the sustainability of the platform work model as it is currently operating.

3.3. Slash workers in the creative industries

All country reports suggest a notable presence of slash workers who perform at least one of their jobs in the arts, entertainment or culture industries, who fit the profile whose drivers we have called "passionate" justifications. Based on workers' viewpoint, our results show that the motivations, reasonings, and labour practices of these workers represent the "new mystique" attached to work (Taylor, 2015), affecting a growing number of workers in all sectors. The increasingly widespread idea that traditional careers are becoming a thing of the past makes people expect more from their work than financial rewards and promotions (Berg et al. 2010). This "new mystique" is connected to the extension of non-standard forms of employment and labour market uncertainty and, therefore, to the increase of slash workers. In this sense, as we have already pointed out, we believe that the analysis of slash workers in the arts, entertainment and culture industries – "creative industries", according to Taylor and Littleton (2012a)- has particular relevance because it allows us to delve into specific dimensions of this phenomenon. It will help us better understand not only this "alternative/creative entrepreneurial ideal of work" (Taylor, 2018) but also its broader implications; insofar it seems to be creating a model of labour discipline that workers are increasingly following in other sectors (Neff et al., 2005).

Let us start with the following three quotations from interviews with slash workers from occupations as diverse as a musician (ES_3.3), designer (BG_1.1) and journalist (IT_3.5) from different countries. They show different ways of assessing their status as slash workers in the artistic and cultural industries, ranging from very positive to reasonably negative:

"I feel very autonomous, totally autonomous. The issue of flexibility is a matter of the principle of reality. To adapt when you want to do things, any practice, you have to adapt to the context, unless you are in a cave or your house doing what you want is an unsustainable thing. There is always a professional level adaptation; there are many frames where you have to move, always there. But within that area, I feel fortunate... obviously, I work a lot, but I feel lucky. I feel lucky because I feel very fulfilled and do what I like ... but doing what you like has that counterpart that it is complicated to disconnect between leisure time and this for health is a problem. Not only for health but also one's head and one's artistic practice ... And notice that I would tell you that if I thought about the people I know who move in this musical, artistic field, everyone is hyper precarious. Obviously, if I were living solely from my musical activity, I would be at the same level" (ES_3.3).

"The positive thing is that you are free; you don't have a boss, as they say. On the other hand, it is much harder to satisfy every customer than to satisfy your boss. Because many people find it quite romantic - "but you stay at home and work", but they do not

realise that each new customer comes as a new boss in your head. This is both positive and negative. Positive, because you deal with countless new challenges every time, negative - because it is associated with many worries about implementing each individual order. Another negative is that you are constantly chasing a deadline, a deadline in which something must be handed over. And orders with a rather short lead time predominate. It's not like in a company, where the deadline is in a week or two. It's with me for tomorrow, the day after tomorrow. And some schedules are pursued... under an hour. This brings stress. So far, with the cons. Here are the advantages of design work. And they are many. It brings great satisfaction - you are an artist, you enjoy what comes out of your hands, out of your mind, you make yourself and people happy, you do something beautiful. You don't copy something; you create it. Communication with people is also fascinating because they allow them in their personal lives, in their photos, in their memories. Flexible working hours, free time are also big advantages, as well as income, of course" (BG_1.1).

"The passion for what I do has hindered my awareness concerning my situation. It is a job that I like very much. Still, I have now realised that there are no effective possibilities for building a "career" to create an economically stable and satisfactory position, and I underwent a crisis. I realise that I am exploited, that there are no perspectives of becoming economically stable. I work with the most important newspapers, but I am totally at the mercy of their unilateral decisions concerning my work commitment and income. On the 1st of December, my freelance colleagues and I were called by a major national newspaper to be informed that the newspaper would not buy any articles from us in that month. This episode brought me close to depression, undermining my motivation to write. I know that it is not easy to get different conditions as a journalist. If I claim "pay me more or I leave ", they would answer that there are at least other 30 people ready to replace me and that many of them would be willing to do it for free. The only possible solution is to try to work as a consultant for companies" (IT_3.15).

We have selected these quotations because we consider them representative of how most of our interviewees frame their relationship with creative work and their working and living conditions. Although they reflect varying degrees of satisfaction with their careers, all highlight their work activities' passion-driven nature. According to the Italian report, these industries "are associated with the idea of full and satisfying work, carried out for love for a job, for a profession, regardless of its economic profitability". Therefore, it is not surprising that their narratives reveal a tension between the satisfaction of pursuing a personal project or vocation and, at the same time, having to deal with highly demanding circumstances they do not seem to be able to control. By highlighting this tension, which appears to be inherent to their condition, these three narratives illustrate relevant common traits of the "creative" slash workers we have interviewed.

The first of these features is the high value they place on autonomy, independence and flexibility. The argument that their current status is the result of their choice or of their ability to define their work circumstances emerges very frequently in speeches: "*I refused 3 or 4 freelance stabilisation offers by choice because I love autonomy" (IT_3.12); "I define myself as*

autonomous, maybe not my own boss, but "subordinate to myself" (IT_3.11); "I know how to move and manage in all situations, I am completely adaptable, I never get discouraged, I do not experience instability with stress, I have not lived with stress, not even the lockdown" (IT_3.7); "So, I really have that freedom, to be able to choose what I work on and what I do not, which I love because I am also quite creative and I like to invent things" (ES_5.2); "Look, as a strong point I would say flexibility because it is also the way I structure my work and a little bit my life. The opportunity to set my own goals" (ES_5.2); "I have some capabilities that allow me... I have many adaptabilities" (ES_3.3); "It is another benefit of the job; you can choose when you want to work, and when you do not want to. You can choose the projects you focus on, and you can switch from a pro, paid jobs, to personal, unpaid jobs" (FR_1.1); "I can say no, to projects that I dislike. It is also a good and easy way to work with colleagues that you like" (FR_1.5); "The direct plus is the author's freedom. Also, the ability to choose your working hours and workplace" (BG_5.5); "The challenge is that with this way of working you have the time and the opportunity to develop, as long as you want" (BG_3.2). As these excerpts show, creative workers give meaning to their careers by presenting them as the result of individual decisions to make a biographical project of self-realisation viable. However, as we will show later, this perception of autonomy and freedom in discourses comes with many practice constraints.

Second, our outcomes confirm the interweaving between the entrepreneur's figures and the workers of the creative industries, previously observed by Neff et al. (2005) and Taylor (2018) in other investigations. Taylor (2018) considers the entrepreneur and the creative worker as two idealised and interlinked figures representing the emergence of a new working life model. Along the same lines, Gill (2019) considers them to be the forerunners of the future of work. Indeed, as seen from the previous excerpts, our interviewees frequently use language that reproduces the rhetoric of the entrepreneurial subjectivity when they express their relationship with creative activity. Thus, terms such as creativity, curiosity, work engagement, capacity to adapt, proactivity, or temperance are frequent when explaining their work situation, always based on personal traits.

Moreover, this way of representing themselves as free, independent and autonomous subjects, capable of self-managing their working lives and assuming the risks that this entails, leads them to articulate a discourse in which they present creative practice instead of "conventional" salaried work. Some even claim to have given up the income they could have earned if they had pursued a conventional career, marking sharp boundaries against the type of work they consider their anti-referent: a regular nine to five job. In their speeches, they equate the security and stability that this type of work offers with routine and constraints and contrast all this with the freedom, creativity and excitement that jobs in the arts and culture industries can provide:

"I appreciate the continuous stimuli of this way of working, the fact that I do not find myself in the routine which instead could more easily characterise a more structured work: one of the most important theatres in Tuscany offered me a permanent position in communication, but I refused it, for this reason" (IT_3.12).

"...I have always preferred to do things that I like to do at all times before getting down to doing a job that could perhaps give me more money or more stability" (ES_3.4).

"It is not like working for a specific employer, where at some point everything becomes routine, especially after the second year and is a precedent for stopping development, for depleting the potential" (BG_5.5).

"I always had difficulties with power and hierarchy. Working for a company, but only occasionally, doesn't bring the same constraints, the same relationship with management" (FR_1.2).

"...well, I tell you, it's a life decision, it's just that if my thoughts were more on the side of security, I would probably be pursuing an academic career, but I want to do what I like (...) I'm doing what I love as a precarious independent artist with all the risks that that entails" (ES_3.3).

This last quotation reveals an additional feature that emerged from the analysis of the interviews with creative workers: the internalisation of precariousness associated with their working life projects. As Staunton (2020) has observed, the "meaning" these workers attribute to their jobs leads them to be fatalistic about their poor working conditions. Many of our interviewees affirm that the possibility of developing their passion projects compensates them for the difficulties in making these projects economically sustainable. In general, they do not present earnings as a rationale for their option; in many cases, the symbolic reward is more important than financial gain. The cases of IT_5.2 and IT_5.3 exemplify this attitude well. Both cases reflect how social recognition and satisfaction from doing vocational work compensate for the low income that journalism provides:

"I like writing a lot, a lot! since I was little, and that's why I wanted to be a journalist. I really like writing in the newspaper. Then with the advent of online, I started writing online, and I had satisfaction anyway because I see them [the article she writes] when I browse the Facebook feed and maybe there is one of my post published, it comes out sponsored in the post, and this gives me satisfaction" (IT_5.2)

"So banally I write content for free, for the glory, as people say!" (IT_5.3)

The Italian report warns that this sort of "emotional salary" constitutes a dangerous mantra that creates the conditions for the acceptance of precariousness and exploitation. And also, for self-exploitation, according to our analysis. Their identification with their cultural or artistic activity leads them to an over-involvement in work, in which the boundary between working and living time becomes meaningless. ES_3.5 and FR_1.5's statements illustrate how, in the process of sense-making of their situation, recognising an emotionally satisfying activity as work is avoided: *"anyone who works at what they like, never works" (3.5); "It's a passion job, you never come home, telling yourself: alright, it's 7 pm, I don't owe anything to anyone anymore, fuck it" (FR_1.5).*

Furthermore, for our interviewees, the privilege of developing a satisfactory and meaningful activity, which is not even considered work, entails accepting the uncertainty typical of work in the cultural and artistic industries. Even taking into account that, as the Italian and Spanish country reports show, this uncertainty not only affects those who are starting, but it is pretty likely to continue throughout the entire career. It can be uncertainty related to work discontinuity, concerning the regularity of income, or the possibility of foreseeing and

organising the workload. Alternatively, it may be caused by a number of these situations, as the following quotations manifest:

"Dance is a difficult sector, in a crisis like theatre. As outlets, there are working in companies or working as a teacher. The third way is to create your own shows, get them financed and propose them to new circuits, but it is challenging to enter and make a living from that (...). The point is what dance means in Italy. In Italy, dance is always seen as a hobby and not a real job, so even we ourselves, who transform this passion in our job, don't really believe in it" (IT_3.5).

"We don't have a steady flow of activity [...] cultural management is like a river that has a high flow and a low flow, so we have very high peaks of activity, which normally coincide with the holiday periods and with the summer periods, then we have a medium, medium-low level of work, I would say, and then there are periods of the year when there is no cultural activity" (ES_3.5).

Only the French report shows a slightly different scenario. Many French creative workers declare experiencing precarity in one form or another but, at the same time, describe their revenues as primarily regular. This probably relates to the existence of a specific social protection system, such as the so-called *Intermittence*. This legal status, tailored for stage and show technicians, actors, prop makers, etc., guarantees them sufficient income during the periods of inactivity that characterise their professional careers. This is the case, for example, of FR_1.6, a musician that states: *"Usually, I earn more, but when I don't work, I make about 1500 euros per month"*. This protection does not exist in the rest of the countries involved in this study.

To sum up, workers in the arts and cultural sectors seem to constantly struggle to manage the tension between their aspirations for autonomy and self-fulfilment at work and the need to earn a living despite the precarious and uncertain conditions typical of these sectors. As we have pointed out before, the solution to this challenge is adopting a "double life" strategy. This has long been a common practice in artistic careers (Bamberry and Campbell, 2012; Taylor, 2015). As is evident in all the country reports, the second job can be very foreign to the artistic or cultural areas and is usually undertaken with the specific purpose of earning money. This is the case, for example, of IT_3.16, who works in a call centre, but also of IT_3.7 (tourist guide), IT_3.5 (clerical job), BG_4.1 (construction and repair works), ES_4.1 (bicycle mechanic), ES_3.3 (university lecturer), ES_3.5 (hotel manager) and FR_1.2 (machine operator). However, it can also be performed in another sector or another profession in the artistic or cultural field. An example would be DE3, who works as a freelance dancer and a choreographer and develops projects with other fellow artists. It would also be IT_3.9, dancer and dance teacher, IT_3.12, artistic director of music festivals and social media manager in the music field, and BG_5.5, who combines three creative jobs (illustrator, graphic designer and drawing teacher).

While posing challenges to developing a creative career, this diversification of work activity can also facilitate it, as suggested in the Italian country report. On the one hand, it seems complicated to reconcile the intensive and absorbing nature of creative work with the demands and time pressure of performing different work activities simultaneously. Nevertheless, on the other hand, the second job's economic stability allows creative work to be carried out with more

serenity and freedom. IT_3.16 and IT_3.9 describe well how this apparent contradiction is experienced:

"I did 20 years of puzzles, but from 6-7 years, I started to feel tired because I was working a lot and earning little money... I wanted a simple job in a call centre, without responsibilities, which does not make me think but gives me an economic basis. It responds to the need for something stable, and at the same time, it gave me great artistic freedom; it gave me the possibility to choose what to accept" (IT_3.16).

"The decision to accept an open-ended contract as a teacher had me a little worried, but it was a winning choice that allowed me to have the financial stability to dedicate myself serenely to other activities" (IT_3.9).

In any case, and as we will see in the next section, this conciliation's practical management is very demanding. Concerning this, Taylor and Littleton (2012) highlight how, paradoxically, artistic and creative practice entails both the requirement for overworking and the motivation to sustain it.

4. Life, work and employment conditions

In connection to previous sections, it is essential to understand the characteristics of the interviewed slash workers' life and working conditions concerning their household and family situation and their freedom to choose their jobs. This section analyses their employment contracts, previous and current labour history, income, flexibility (autonomy) versus discontinuities (lack of control), working hours and schedules, and household arrangement and work-life balance. Certain advantages but also several significant downsides of the slash work have emerged from the interviews.

4.1. Work and employment conditions

CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

All the country reports highlight, more or less explicitly, that as far as the working conditions are concerned, a first general distinction can be drawn according to the types of contract or employment status that the slash worker has. Country legal statuses (comprehensively summarised for French in the French report) have a significant impact. However, in general terms, the contractual arrangement pivot under three status (see tables 8, 9 and 10 in annex 3 for more details):

- Salaried employment/employees (fix or temporary; full time or part-time)
- Self-employment/freelances
- Activities in the informal economy.

This diversity is materialised in a complex and diversified network of contractual arrangements leading to a multifaceted scenario or "labour ecosystem" (as the Bulgarian report names it) regarding rights and access to social protection and labour related benefits. Some interviewees develop every job under one unique status while others (around half of the informants) may have more than one. For example, they may hold the primary job based on a permanent or fixed-term labour contract and combine it with self-employment and with activities not registered and declared. Others merge a situation of unemployment or leave or are temporarily laid off (social COVID-19 related measures) with one or more informal activities. In most cases, the contractual form held in the main job has a significant weight in shaping the informant's labour ecosystem.

As the Italian report states, analysing these dual job situations seems particularly interesting as it involves different social security frameworks and requires different tax and contribution treatments. That means that those slash workers who have several types of contracts/status must learn how to effectively manage the contract portfolio to minimise costs and maximise protection. This segmentation has a substantial cost, frequently giving access only to partial allowances, which do not replace the entire income. However, at this point, the differences

between countries make it difficult to compare this situation. For example, in France, most statuses are explicitly designed to somewhat account for regular short periods of inactivity, which is not the case in other countries such as Spain and Bulgaria.

The following paragraphs address some particularities of each status:

- Subordinated employment as the primary job

The country reports (see also tables in annexe) show that an essential part of the interviewees has a subordinated employment. For example, most Italian informants work as employees in offline activities, 14 out of 28. In general, being in the salaried workforce and in particular having a permanent contract implies, up to a certain point, job and income security and broader social protections than self-employment:

"Regarding retirement pension, complementary health insurance, etc., for now, I didn't really look into it [as I'm an employee]. In the future, my plan is to develop my freelance activity, and leave the salaried workforce, so I'll be forced to look into those things very soon. That much is clear. It's my goal" (FR_1.4).

The interviewees who work as employees with open-ended contracts as a primary activity can freelance or be self-employed for side activities without suffering from the lack of welfare protections. These slash workers not only enjoy the social protections ensured by the national welfare system to the subordinated workers but also have other strengths, for example, easier access to financial products such as mortgages (this is the case IT_5.2 who thanks to the open-ended contract in a company can also apply for a mortgage despite she is only 28 years old and she started working only four years ago). Acknowledging this, as the French report describes, low skill workers in a precarious situation aspire to find a job with a permanent contract as it guarantees more regular hours, pay and benefits. "I would rather have a permanent contract (CDI)" (FR_3.2). Meantime, fixed-term employments are associated with having to deal with longer or shorter periods of inactivity. Therefore, the slash workers who have this type of jobs must learn how to manage access to unemployment.

In parallel, it is crucial to recognise that subordinate employment is not necessarily linked with totally legal conditions. The Bulgarian and Spanish report explicitly mentions different forms of irregularities under this status. For example, in the catering sector, barpeople and waiters/waitress being contracted for fewer hours than they really worked (BG_4.2. ES_6.1). Another example is not registered cash payments, even for a formal job, such as in Bulgaria. However, these practices seem to be much less socially acceptable nowadays.

"All these jobs in the past were on permanent employment contract. Payments on it, however, have always been accompanied by cash. However, this money received by hand is not included in the full social security contributions. You take half of the salary in an envelope, against a receipt. And this is a practice in established, well-known companies in which I have worked. And if that was acceptable until 2005, then it started to become intolerable" (BG_1.3).

- Self-employment //Freelance work as the primary job

Workers operating as self-employed, particularly under a freelance model, seem by far to be more exposed to risk. Although there are some national specificities, they lack sick pay, unemployment benefit, and low pensions. In Bulgaria, most slash workers, working offline, are self-employed as individuals, except for a high skilled slash worker owning a family company (BG_3.3). However, there is some concern about the sustainability of this situation. The French report highlights that, outside of revenues, this status, and in particular the Auto-entrepreneurs, is the less favourably considered:

"Regarding health benefits and sick leave, I have nothing or almost nothing. I had a health issue last year, I was unable to work for 4 months, and I had only 400€ per month coming from the health insurance" (FR_3.3)

The Spanish report shows that there is a widespread grievance over the model of the self-employed regime in Spain (currently under review), which provides a low level of benefits and standard fees regardless of the level of turnover: *"I am self-employed and do everything I can [laugh] to pay the State what it charges me for working, above all [laugh]" (ES_3.1).*

It is precisely this insecurity that leads many slashers to maintain a job as an employee or not move on to become self-employed. As stated before, the situation is quite different for those who combine this status with a labour contract. In that case, they can have the best of the two worlds.

FORMAL/INFORMAL ECONOMY

Most reports comment on informal economy practices linked to unpaid social security contributions and taxes and without official registration, company or labour contract. However, they seem to be more extended in Spain and Bulgaria. There, according to multiple respondents, this is evaluated both positively and negatively by them. Not paying taxes is considered a 'positive' short-term effect, as it allows them to receive a higher direct income. Sometimes, these jobs are combined with another contractual model, which allows for partial protections:

"... but there is another way - through the company of a friend. He issues invoices, pays me, but withholds 10% income tax and 5% dividend tax, a total of 14.5%. I only insure myself for what they provide me for my other occupation. I used to be secured by an employer." (BG_1.2).

There are specific sectors that seem to be predominantly characterised by informality. Both Bulgarian and Spanish reports inform about the very feminised sector of Yoga trainers paid in cash, without legal self-employment statute or any other form of the employment relationship. BG_6.2 *"Then I became their personal trainer and since I didn't have a company, everything was like a donation to me. In the sense that they gave me as much as they would give for such a practice officially."* (BG_6.2). In Spain, ES_3.2 describe how the sector is, basically, based on informal jobs.

As previously said, the catering sector is also frequently characterised by informality. The German report describes the case of a DE_14, already mentioned, who started using the

platform Helping to find cleaning jobs and then supplemented this income with a job working as a kitchen assistant at a Spanish restaurant. The kitchen job was supposed to be regular employment with benefits, but then it became clear that she worked as a non-registered (black) employee.

In some cases, legal circumstances led from working on civil contracts to an informal situation. For example, one interviewee develops a freelance job as a mountain guide; he declares to have "*no contract, everything is based on oral agreement*" (BG_5.2). The pay is only in cash. This is because the Bulgarian authorities do not accept his international certificate as a mountain guide. Therefore, according to the law, he is not a certified mountain guide and cannot lead groups in the mountains.

Another example is BG_6.1, who performs platform work taking other worker's identities. She also justifies her situation on legal obstacles in this case related to the impossibility of working during maternity leave which provides insufficient income to cover the household expenses "*According to the State, I have no right - especially during maternity leave - to work for two employers. So I take these tasks (data entry) on the behalf of someone else. It is a completely absurd for a mother with BGN 400 (note: EUR 204.50) to live with her child and live at all*" (BG_6.1).

LABOUR HISTORIES -- JOB ECOSYSTEM

The Spanish report suggests that concerning labour histories, two basic profiles are not necessarily age-specific. On the one hand, those who have maintained a slash as a top condition throughout their working life, be it long or short (ES_3.1, ES_3.2, ES_4.2 or BG_5.5, for example). On the other, there are those workers who, after a series of periods in a specific sector or several sectors but not simultaneously, begin to combine different activities. Both the Bulgarian (BG_5.4) and the Spanish (ES_4.1) reports relate this with the 2008 crises that pushed respondents to switch into slash employment:

In addition to this, it is also interesting to consider the different points where the interviewees were situated concerning his/her slash status. Interviews were conducted with slash workers starting this status, with less than one year of experience (ES_5.5, ES_1.1, ES_3.7). Meanwhile, some have abandoned or were abandoning slash work due to burnout, but also because they have achieved (or recovered) greater economic stability (ES_3.4; ES_5.6).

Although the interviews' essential requirement was to combine at least two activities, combining three and even four activities (for example, ES_4.3 or BG_5.4, BG_5.5). The interviewees create their employment ecosystem using their educational, personal and professional backgrounds, interest and talents, that can be relatively far away from one another suppose the combination of different contractual forms:

“Right now, I work in [hypermarket's name], which I've been doing for the last ten years, let's say that's my steady job, and then I also work as a salesman for Thermomix, which I've been doing for six years (...) And then I also work as a... I don't know if it's been a year or two or so, I also sell cakes, I make cakes too, I'm a baker (...) I also have a small cottage in [seaside town] and we also rent it out, we've been at it for a

year now (...) so I also have to find time to fix up the cottage so that people can come in on Mondays to stay” (ES_4.3).

Another example of a slash worker with more than two jobs is BG_5.4, who develops a slash career around her primary university education (English philology) and her specialisation in Human Resources (HR). Currently, she has three different jobs: HR development – project manager, translator (also for movies' titles) and trainer for business communication (in English) for corporate clients. She has eight years of experience as an English language teacher and eight years of experience in an HR company. Then capitalising on this knowledge, she has created her own HR company for individual consulting. Similarly, IT_3.2, who combines a job (temporary as it was work maternity replacement) in the publishing house in this place in the morning, worked in a shop in the afternoon and after that worked from home as a translator.

In this process of balancing activities, the Spanish report suggests a tendency not to hide the status of slash worker. No informant describes having had problems because of this situation even if as ES_3.7 (working full time with a permanent contract and running a tepee party business as self-employed) have been warned that there could be some issues:

“...this is something I have not hidden because in my company we don't sign an exclusivity agreement and although we don't sign an exclusivity agreement, I really didn't feel like having to hide; my whole managerial chain knows what I do, I have told them directly. (...) people told me not to say anything because it could be seen as using time from work for that. But I think that if you explain things well, they are understood precisely the other way around” (ES_3.7).

It seems that in some cases, a coworker can benefit from this double status: ES_4.3 has sold Thermomix to many hypermarket colleagues or clients while his Thermomix buyers go and buy in the hypermarket. ES_3.2 combines a job in HR in an international company with a career as a yoga trainer. During the lockdown, the company proposed that its employees share experiences with their coworkers. This leads her to do online free yoga sessions with her coworkers at the international company where she works. She also recorded these classes and then sent the videos to her students at the yoga centre. Even more, the Italian report describes how, at least in a few good experiences, having multiple jobs is even positively seen as reflecting managerial capacities and entrepreneurship, by the colleagues and the supervisors, as in the case of IT_5.3:

“I remember that he (the head of the company) was impressed by my CV because I had in addition to the professional activity, with which you have to bring home some money, there was also this aspect that he defined almost managerial, professional, and he saw in me a person who aimed to grow professionally, but also in an individual, singular way, with other activities. So, having these collaborations is something that interested him and even just to get to the first interview was an extra point” (IT_5.3).

In any case, one primary requirement for slash work is that the different activities' schedules need to be compatible. Sometimes the jobs can be spread out over different seasons of the year, as in ES 3.1, working as a tourist guide, especially during the late spring and summer

period, and doing scientific activities for children at schools and private parties for the rest of the year. In other cases, they are developed at different times during the day as IT_3.2 and ES_3.2, who teaches yoga in the evenings after finishing her main job, or they are compatible due to their weekly layout; ones are on weekdays, others on weekends: ES_5.4 works as a hotel receptionist or ES 4.2 as a DJ, or IT_5.5, employee full-time in a multinational company from Monday to Friday and cook/food blogger on Saturday and Sunday. The compatibility may also be possible because of the flexibility of one or more jobs.

FLEXIBILITY -- AUTONOMY OVER ONES' WORK

As above said, in terms of schedules, the possibility to combine multiple working places generally is related to the fact that one or two of the activities performed are flexible and allow workers to manage their time. Therefore, this flexibility can be considered, up to a point, another precondition for Slash work. In some cases, when the main job has more strict conditions, it is the second one that allows greater flexibility: *"I cannot get tired of the work at [Hipermarket]. If one day, I do not feel like working with Thermomix, I can easily afford it because I do not have a fixed schedule; it is flexible (ES_4.3).* In others, both may be self-managed by the worker. This is the case of ES_3.6, trainer for an association who combines this activity with a job as a self-employed insurance salesperson, her previous job as a teacher would not allow this possibility:

"Having a more flexible time at work, not like when I was [working as a teacher] at school which had a working schedule in which I couldn't dedicate eight hours to anything else. I manage my time here, there are days when I may have to go somewhere or teach a class. But I insist that (...) there are short courses that... there are many conferences, talks, so I organise myself and then I have time for doing both" (ES_3.6).

"my availability must always be 100%. But it is always compatible because the insurance business is also something that I manage myself, I arrange my appointments with clients, even on the phone. So the two jobs are very, very compatible" (ES_3.6).

The combination of activities usually means that the second job must adapt to the main job requirements. However, in some cases, it can be partially incorporated into the working day as overlapping activities. This is, up to some point, the case of ES_3.7 who combines a full-time fixed contract in a telecommunication company with a self-employed activity of a children's party organisation (tepees). Although most of this work would be done before or after her main job working hours, she tries to "balance". During the day, she can check and work a little bit on her tepees project's social media (WhatsApp or Instagram) or have short phone conversations with clients. Similar ES 6.1 that combines hospitality – home rental activity with crochet craft also recognises this possible overlapping of activities.

"Well... Also, because in the end, I always end up leaving crochet in the second place, so, whenever there are things to do first, that's always the first thing, be it web management, or doing some kind of management from the application, or even contacting a person, a client who has to visit. It's just that there are times when [I am working] with my computer, not with my mobile phone, I can do both things at the

same time [laughs], even though... sometimes I miss a few stitches. The truth is that we combine it well" (ES_6.1).

Having a flexible job makes the second/third activity compatible with the primary one and means agency and work autonomy. This is connected to not having a boss ("I am my own master", stated BG_1.3) and with the possibility of choosing when to work ("As a work organisation, it is cool because you don't have a boss over your head, you don't have fixed working hours. Our appointment is to work at the office, but there is no limit. There must be online traffic and sales in the system. No boss, no working hours states BG_6.3) and whom to work with: *It is also a good and easy way to work with colleagues you like (FR_1.5); When I want, I work with other people, I make the team - I can demand more. Freedom to choose my team (BG_1.3).* Moreover, it offers freedom to develop the projects one likes (FR_1.5). It also implies a window for developing various tasks, personal project and implementing them in original and various ways and spaces.

However, Janu's face of this flexibility, task diversity and autonomy is the tiring set of activities and side roles related to actual work that heavily increases the workload, searching for customers, negotiating and bargaining payments or social media, among others.

"I'm tired, it's a continuous job trying to get new jobs, keep decent rates, leave customers who pay little to look for someone who pays more, in recent years I have raised the prices a bit, in general with success, but an editorial service company has reduced the amount of orders. Bargaining pays off, but it's tiring" (IT_3.10).

"I like the job a lot but in recent years it is becoming tiring, the strong downward play is demeaning and the roles are often confused [...] I appreciate being independent, not constrained, having management margins and independence, even in the use of timetables. I don't mind the autonomy condition, but the mental load is a bit heavy. I perceive myself as precarious. A little stability and fair recognition of work and competence would help to be more serene" (IT_3.14).

"I work a lot, practically all the time, also because you always have to imagine and design, write about social media, get promoted." (IT_3.9)

INCOME -- ECONOMIC SITUATION

As previous sections have shown, having different sources of income is an essential driver for slash work, at least for those who have financial reasons and combine jobs as a survival strategy or safety net. There are a (very) few cases in which the primary activity or the combination of activities provides a satisfactory and more than sufficient to live. Hence, the additional ones offer "pin money". However, in more cases, the discourses around income are related to not earning decent monthly take-home pay: underpaid jobs, difficulty covering expenses, and uncertainty and variability of income. This needs to be understood within the new tendencies in labour markets described in the introduction. These circumstances seem to be particularly widespread in Bulgaria, a country of low salaries compares with other European states. Talking about the translation market, BG_5.4 declares:

“Because in Bulgaria there is the so-called glass ceiling - in our translation work, for example, the difference between the prices in the subtitle work here and the work of my colleagues for the same work in France, Germany, Italy, for example, is at least five times. The salary is much higher in Europe than in Bulgaria. That's what I'm talking about. That this is known and when a new company enters Bulgaria, it also gives a little money for it” (BG_5.4)

According to the Bulgaria report, different cases of vulnerability underlie insufficient income as a reason for slash work; unemployment, job insecurity, age (late-career workers) or low education, lack of qualification and poverty. Moreover, in this country, the risk of informality and of being deceived and not paid is not infrequent. *“... you can work for a foreigner who is more serious. If there is anyone who does not pay, it is the Bulgarians” (BG_1.2).*

However, some statuses come with severe limitations, even in France, such as *auto-entrepreneurs* (riders) or the *MDA* status. Even among these workers, there also seem to be a considerable disparity in the amount of revenue earned. However, in general, they complain about the low minimum pay-per-hour threshold and having no access to other negotiated benefits available to the *intermittent*. *MDA* workers are among the most precarious, but still, many workers on the status use part of their earnings to finance non-remunerated side-activities (FR_1.6; FR_1.3; FR_1.2).

“Yes, it's catastrophic. Me, for instance, when I do a concert, or an exhibition, I am the least paid person on stage. I'm not even talking about the time it took to make the art piece, only about on-site, paid work time. And don't get me started about other advantages like the intermittents inter-contract pay” (FR_1.3).

It is interesting to analyse national discrepancies concerning low skilled-jobs such as food delivery and medium or high skilled platforms work. Some aspects taken for granted in certain countries may be considered jobs perks in others. The Bulgarian interviewees working in food delivery (who, contrary to other countries, are employed by the companies, not self-employed) or click work (As BG_2.1) highlight some positive aspects related to the trustworthiness of bank transfer payments. Their job satisfaction and income security seem to be much higher than their colleagues from other countries.

“I have never had any problems. They are very correct. Our salaries are paid by bank transfer. They also pay us for the fuel we use, and I receive tips from customers. My salary is above average” (BG_4.4).

“The work is paid by bank transfer. Once a month, as it has been accumulated. You have a certain deadline around the 15th, 16th in the month, depending on whether it is a day off and you are paid for what you have made. You send what you have done to the person who is responsible for the payment, and everything happens very quickly. That's exactly why I agreed. No need to go to XXX (another city) every time to get paid... There was no discrepancy. I think there was a delay only once, because the one who gave information about the payment was on leave and that's why the delay was 5-6 days” (BG_2.1).

It is essential to clarify that Bulgaria platforms (except for delivery platforms) are used by highly qualified respondents, using foreign languages and working with foreign clients. The platform facilitates access to foreign markets and higher prices (as also explained BG_5.4), both working off and online.

Conversely, in the other countries, both micro-workers and riders (constituting the entirety of the "low-skilled" sample in France) frequently describe their work as poorly paid and even as "exploitation" (FR_3.1; FR_3.2). In France and Spain, the interviewees doing micro-work or doing skilled work via platforms are mainly intended to provide a complementary income; most worker revenues come from the primary job, often traditional salaried work (see more details in Casilli et al. 2019). This fact may mitigate platform work exploitative nature; they seem to be working (as micro or platform workers) less regularly and earn widely variable income from the platform (ranging from 10-20€/month FR_3.2 o FR_3.4 to 1000€/month FR_3.1). In France, some platforms actively prevent workers from using them as a primary source of income, by not allowing them to withdraw more than 3000€ / year out of their accounts, as denounced FR_3.2 "My money is stuck on the platform, as I have already pulled out my 3000€ this year." However, the French report also declares that for cases of extreme precarity and impoverishment, which according to their 2019 data constitute 22% of the French micro-workers, this complementary income is necessary to make ends meet. For more details about platform work, see section 3.1.

UNCERTAINTY - INSTABILITY

Income variability seems to be another frequent pattern for slash workers. *Germany report highlights how almost a third of the respondents (6) have irregular earnings, which fluctuate by project, season, etc. and are found in all categories and all skill levels.* The Spanish report addresses how the model of the self-employed regime in Spain (currently under review) poses a complex scenario for workers, as the fluctuation in the volume of work also leads to significant fluctuations in the volume of income.

"...working in the private sector involves a lot of uncertainty (...) in one month you can earn 60,000 euros, but the next month you earn -40, so the sum is 20 in two months. 20,000 in two months is good, yes, but maybe the next month you have no income" (ES_3.5)

As we have previously stated, it is precisely this insecurity that leads many slashers to maintain a job as an employee and/or not move on to become self-employed.

"In a good week, it could reach 2,500 euros, so you get an idea. But of course, that was a month away and then I was up to my ears in work (...) And then another month would come and I would make two clients, and I would earn 300; that's the problem that I saw, that's why I never made the leap" (ES_5.3).

"What happens is that not every month is good, there are months that you can make more money and other months that perhaps will not even offset the self-employed fee, which will cost you money, because sales are not guaranteed every month" (ES_4.2).

Coming back to platform work, the riders working in delivery platforms in France and Spain

seem by far among those suffering the most from this uncertainty. A clear example is ES 2.2, who had an accident while working on delivery and spent some time on medical leave. This changes his labour conditions:

“I was making quite a lot of money when I was in the fleet, then suddenly, after the leave, I didn't make any more money because I was no longer... and then, in addition, the good weather immediately caused a drop in orders, so that in Glovo I hardly work at all until September (...). You see, it is so uncertain and changeable ... I mean, in January I earned 2,000, in February I was on leave, in March I earned 600, now I am earning even less and I hope that in September it will go back up to a thousand and some, I don't know, I don't know, it's just not.... There is no such thing as an average month for Glovers, it is all a huge uncertainty” (ES_2.2).

It is essential to highlight that slash work often requires additional costs to cover themselves for the self-employed. *“I buy every single tool I need in my work with my own money. I invest in tools so that I can practice this second job, with which I can earn additional income.”* (BG_4.1). For Spanish and French riders on a motorbike that includes the scooter, insurance, fuel, bags as ES_2.1 or FR_4.1 states. *My salary is above average.”* (BG_4.4). For deskwork, it will be an internet connection, computer and other electronic devices, which for designers such as BG_1.1 need to be high end and therefore expensive.

“I have expenses for the Internet, for a computer - it is necessary to change the equipment very often, which is not cheap at all. You can't buy some computer that is middle class, and you need a machine with serious parameters. So, this is a serious expense. In addition, I have costs related to the production of these printed materials - I hire a subcontractor, most often a printing house, which costs me 50% of the selling price.” (BG_1.1).

FLUCTUATION -- LACK OF CONTROL

It is necessary to highlight that instability relates to income and is an overarching issue that characterised slash work developed by non-permanent workers (having a labour contract or self-employed). A common feature is a fluctuation in the volume of work, whether weekly, monthly or seasonally. This is also associated with the type of contract or arrangement in which the activity is carried out and the economic sector. Again, the delivery platforms' workers are particularly vulnerable (all but the Bulgarian ones, who have more stable contracts), for example, in certain cities where demand falls sharply when the weather improves or during the summer, according to the Spanish report. The cultural sector, Art and entertainment have always been activities in which fluctuance and uncertainty are dominant; the project-based organisation reduces the chances of a sustainable career. The Italian report describes how specifically artistic professions have experimented with all types of flexible work and various management tools to mitigate occupational risk through individual diversification with multiple jobs, pooling collective resources for cooperative solidarity initiatives, and access to public support and seeking private sponsorship. One of the self-employed interviewees of this sector (ES_3.5 combines cultural activities with training and is opening a café-hotel) goes so far as to say that they are "seasonal workers".

“...we don't have a steady flow of activity [...] cultural management is like a river that has a high flow and a low flow, so we have very high peaks of activity, which normally coincide with the holiday periods and with the summer periods, then we have a medium, medium-low level of work, I would say, and then there are periods of the year when there is no cultural activity” (ES_3.5).

How this affects the workers also has to do with whether they depend on the job's income or if it is just an extra. Here is essential to acknowledge that even strengths highlighted in other sections could be transformed into weaknesses. The flexibility that many slash workers enjoy may also become a double-edged weapon. Out of their control, short terms are enunciated as a possible difficulty related to working time flexibility as express by B_1.3, an online high-qualified respondent:

"For example, I may have looked after my child all day and suddenly at 18:00 they called me and told me that something had to happen very quickly and urgently and I stayed to work until 2:00 - 3:00. a.m. But in most cases, things are under control." (BG_1.3). "The disadvantages are that I have to work quickly, in a short time. I can't say - I will do it in 10 days" (BG_1.3).

Similarly, the opportunity to cumulate activities during a specific time represents a way to reach the desired income threshold by compensating for the periods when the workers have less activity. However, this might quickly transform into unbearable peaks of works and heavy workloads to keep the clients once accepted. A clear example of this is narrated by IT_3.4, a freelance translator and interpreter, started this second profession when the demands for translation dramatically decreased. She realised the difficulty in having stable and regular commitments as a translator uniquely but also working as an interpreter leads to peaks of work concentrated often in very few days. Some respondents address the issue as a personal ability to control the work environment, although there seem to be essential factors that need to be addressed beyond the personal sphere.

This individualistic perspective on autonomy, flexibility and negotiating capacity, although widespread, is not the only possible approach and does not seem realistic for many workers (as the previous section on Slash workers and platform economy has shown). At this point, it is interesting to turn our attention back to platform work and specifically to the rider sector, which seems to be among the most precarious workers (in France *MDA, auto-entrepreneurs*), is also among the most vulnerable to coercion upon their work schedule or their working environment. Despite their status as “independent workers” or “self-employed.”¹ These workers have a high dependence on the application and very low control over working hours and conditions; as this Spanish rider declares: [the number of working hours], *“it's very changeable, besides, the conditions change unilaterally constantly” (ES_2.2)*. Beyond schedules, platform work also seems to have reduced workers agency even in high skilled jobs where many aspects of the work have become tailored and standardised as unskilled click

¹ As we were writing this report, the legislation has changed in Spain and riders and some other platform workers would need to be incorporated as employees by the companies.

work, approaching. This is pointed out by one German interviewee describing her regular job as a translator:

“Funny enough, my work as project coordinator is also highly automated and also there is a lot of clicking involved. As in many other companies, many processes have been automated to increase productivity, so that at the end it’s just clicking: to receive a submitted task, to accept it, to check it, to submit it... all this are clicks” (DE 11)

WORKING HOURS -- SCHEDULES

A common and almost inevitable experience for slash workers is the significant increase in their workloads and the number of hours worked per day or week. Again, this will vary according to their status and whether several part-time activities or a full-time main activity and secondary activities are combined. In general, the interviewees show long and very long working days. An exception on this is found in mothers of young children whose caring commitments and household arrangements do not allow them to work full time, be them living with their partners (ES_1.1 or ES_5.4, see below for more details) or single mothers (DE 15, freelance and self-employed as texter; typist; editing and also care worker for seniors, working 25-30 hours a week). Another exception, a particularity of these pandemic times, is temporarily unemployed due to the COVID-19 impact (BG_4.5, ES_5.5 and ES_6.1).

We find many interviewees adding an extra set of hours in other(s) occupation(s) to their regular full-time job timetables. IT_5.4, for instance, has a regular full-time job in the bank and then works an average of 20 hours per week as an English teacher. IT_3.5, a full-time employee in Helping, works evenings for around 10-12 hours a week as a dancing teacher. IT_5.7 works full-time as a marketing analyst in a company, while in the evening, from 8 pm to 11 pm, he works as a counsellor online. ES_3.4 worked from nine to five-thirty as a programmer in an organisation and then until nine-thirty in the evenings on her own projects. ES_3.7 works full time in a telecommunication company and devotes the early and late hours (until 11.30) to her own personal tepee's project. In some cases, they declare working almost all of the time except for the sleeping and eating times.

“well, with lunch breaks and all that, but you spend about twelve hours working, all your activity is work” (ES_3.4); maybe I do get out of the bad habit of eating because I eat pretty fast, and I always go out for sport, an hour a day (...) but you take away those hours and the rest is all work” (ES_3.7).

Some interviews sum up the total number of working hours per week and can reach more than 50 (as declares ES_5.3 who combines a full-time job in a department of quality processes in the automotive industry with a psychology work primarily performed through a specific platform for psychologist activities). Very long, but also irregularly productive, timetables are common among riders, according to the French and Spanish reports: *“Usually, I’m signed in about 75h per week (...) But that’s the online time. I’m not always doing deliveries, there’s a lot of waiting time.” (FR_4.1). “...last week, for example, it was 58 hours, but it’s very common to do 45 hours, 50 hours, 56 hours, or even 30 hours in a week if there’s less”.* (ES_2.2).

The number of interviews who declare not knowing exactly how many hours they dedicate to work (ES_3.7; FR_1.5) or not counting them (ES_5.2) is not anecdotic. Frequently these cases are connected with passion jobs, and the slash worker considered this to be "part of the job" (French report). As stated by FR_1.5, working in the field of performing arts Scenarist + production assistant:

"I have no idea how much time I spend working each week. The work isn't just when I write, even when I don't work, I work. When you choose this job, you basically choose to do homework for the rest of your life".

Specifically, those with Passionate profiles and self-employed status (in France, particularly those under MDA affiliates and Intermittents) frequently work on weekends and on "vacations". For these workers, the boundaries between work and other spheres of life become blurry. They feel the job is part of them; they love what they do and find it challenging to disengage.

"There are no holidays involved, no. The truth is that no, in fact, tomorrow we are leaving and I have already prepared the bag with the yarns, the needles and with everything in order to continue in the holidays because... in the end it is as if I am missing something, that's what I was saying before, that it remains a part of me" (ES_6.1).

"I haven't taken a holiday in about 15 years. That's why when you say: "¿As a worker, how do you feel?" Well, as a worker I feel that I don't disconnect. But at the same time, anyone who works at what they like never works because they are doing what they like." (ES_3.5).

In other cases, this sometimes relates to the absence of labour protection rights or self-employment-specific characteristics. There are, significative difficulties and downsides that emerge from the discourses around time pressures and doing the work at the expense of free and resting time:

"You need fast. A double-edged sword - you have to work in your free time. Whenever I go on vacation, some work comes out. I have the time, the accountability is in front of me and directly in front of the client" (BG_1.3).

"The combination between the two jobs is difficult because there is not enough time. My main job does not suffer from the second and I actually use my vacation to lead groups anyway - to stay up late in the evening to write routes, to think about new things, to look at my maps" (BG_5.2).

This creates stress; for IT_4.1 (aesthetician and full-time shop assistant in a laundry), *"it is stressful doing many things, in the end, you don't have a free moment!"*. Similarly, DE_15 (single mother) suffers from stress to finish projects on time. Managing this volume of work is not viable or worthy for everyone in the long run. It requires a lot of energy or passion. *"Passion weighs heavily because after 8 hours of work you need a lot of passion to teach 5 more hours" (IT_3.5)*, but the risk of burnout may accompany it. Indeed, as the next section shows, it is not easy to maintain a healthy balance with caregiving responsibilities and other

spheres of life responsibilities. Therefore, some informants that used to combine three or even more activities have gradually abandoned them.

“I had up to four, up to four activities that made me work around 65 or 70 hours a week. And the truth is that, well, this obviously depended a lot on my energy or my youth, which in this sense gave me the strength and allowed me to do everything. But, of course, there comes a time when it doesn't really pay off, or even if it does pay off financially, it's no longer worth it because you have to sacrifice other things” (ES_4.2).

“At that time, I didn't have any family, so it wasn't a problem for me, I didn't mind working seven days, and that was what I wanted, to work. Working in both places [hotel and English School], I got a job in a Spanish multinational, in [international Engineer company], and that was a full-time job. So it suited me very well, to be honest, because I felt more fulfilled [having three jobs] [...] After a month, I no longer... [laughs] my body couldn't take it” (ES_5.4).

4.2. Living conditions -- Work-life balance and co-responsibility

To have a complete picture of slash work realities, it is necessary to look at these workers' living conditions as far as work-life balance and co-responsibility are concerned. As the sociodemographic section showed, the interviews covered a diversity of family situations, although being a parent and having caring commitments was not a frequent one. Slash work is done at the expense of free time but also of other possible responsibilities. Therefore, the family may strongly condition work choices. This reveals the importance of analysing slash workers' household composition and division of labour from a gender perspective.

Spanish and Bulgaria reports describe respondents, both male and female, living with a partner report having (or at least aspiring) a relatively egalitarian distribution of care and domestic work. Specific gender differences are nevertheless evident: some feminised tasks such as cleaning while there are others, such as cooking or looking after children, are more evenly distributed. In any case, women seem to keep assuming more household responsibilities, which is sometimes attributed to their working hours/schedules.

“[Question: Regarding household matters, ¿do you share responsibilities?] Yes, yes, we try to... Well, I try... we share almost 50/50, she mostly does some of the work of cooking lunch, but because maybe her schedule allows her to finish a little earlier, but, apart from that, we share everything else 50/50 as best we can” (ES_5.6).

“We don't have any explicit distribution (of family responsibilities), but she is more responsible for education. ... Usually, I drive the children to classes, but this is not explicitly defined. ... I cook and tidy, but she also cleans. The distribution of family responsibilities is somehow evenly. However, basically, I'm the "cook" and the "driver" (BG_1.2).

Some families opt to hire someone (another woman) in order to avoid conflicts:

“Most of the time there is a basic division of labour, both [partner’s name] and I work and in fact.... Although I think yes (...) there is a bit of a gender division, that is, I think that... I, for example, I don't do the laundry, that is, there is like we split up some tasks. And lately we have also hired a woman to come and clean the house because it was something that was very difficult for both of us to manage, each of us had different expectations, and managing time and effort in the end was very difficult” (ES_3.3).

Another specific profile noted by the Bulgarian report is young single people living with their parents. They do not have the need or obligation to engage with housework fully. Even if some household's duties are distributed among the family members, the main time-consuming activities such as laundry, cooking, and cleaning are usually performed by the mother. This gives them great flexibility and makes them available for different kinds of jobs.

“I live with my parents right now. My whole family includes four people, and I have an older sister who no longer lives with us. She is married. My mother cooks and cleans, my father helps, I help her sometimes... I help by throwing garbage, sometimes with shopping- what to buy, with paying the bills, sometimes, and things like that- more ordinary, easy things” (BG_4.2).

“I live with my mother and father because I think it's cheaper. My father and I make money. My mother does more housework and household things. From time to time I do some household activities, but mostly I live like a princess” (BG_4.3).

Despite this, the frequent pattern of slash workers having long working hours poses challenges for work-life balance, which is "often unbalanced, in favour of the former" (Italian report). The Italian report shows how slash workers, especially those younger, report sacrificing their social life to devote extra hours to the second/third activity (for instance, ES_5.6, IT_5.2, IT_3.5, IT_5.3, IT_3.2). IT_5.3 narrated that *“you face many sacrifices because if you are writing at home at your laptop you cannot be elsewhere, on vacation with friends rather than having social life”* and IT_3.2, who has no partner or children, the overwork has been at the expense of their social life for many years. Meanwhile, ES_4.1, male single with no family responsibilities, connects the possibility of caring for someone with greater precariousness:

“In my case, I am alone and have no one in my charge, and I think that if I had someone in my charge alone as I am, I would not be able to manage, it would be impossible. (...) In other words, it could only be possible by plunging you even further into precariousness (...). All the time you spend on anything else is money that you are losing in the first place, or that you are not earning. But of course, you can't go on like that either” (ES_4.1)

In this sense, the circumstances of single mothers seem particularly difficult and unsatisfactory as BG_6.1 claims: *“This job does not give me the peace of mind to be a good parent. The last month of my work was 120 hours overtime.”* In fact, some respondents express a critical approach to work-life balance considering that it is a mere illusion: *“Work-life balance is non-existent, the basis for work-life balance do simply not exist, it is absurd, it has been sold to us but it is not true [laughs] because work-life balance is the most difficult puzzle in the world” (ES_3.1).*

Awareness of this circumstance seems widespread. Some interviewees claimed to have postponed the decision to have children due to precariousness, intermittence of income and uncertainty of the future and workloads: *“My partner has roughly my same path, so there is reciprocal understanding. Even with respect to the fact that we cannot face the decision to have a child now”* (IT_3.11). Others have even ruled it out, such as IT_3.7, who has never considered the idea of having children because *“it wouldn’t be feasible”*. Some respondents describe strong feelings about having to postpone parenthood due to the precariousness they are going through: *“it’s terrible”* (IT_3.1). They are conscious of the generational differences *“I am 39 years old, at my age, my dad already had me and he never made me miss anything”*. (IT_3.1).

Despite this, some slash workers do have children. This has a gendered impact on their living and working condition. Country reports show that having a child may bring essential changes to women's careers, either moving away from or towards slash work. On the one hand, the Spanish report analyses the case of two young mothers who had stopped combining activities or who expressed difficulties in finding jobs that were compatible with taking on a more significant share of care. We observed that they organise their paid work based on the care of their children and/or their partners' schedules which is especially difficult when he works in shifts. As ES_1.1 put it:

“My husband works in shifts, so some weeks he works in the morning, others in the afternoon, so when he is free, I work, and he stays with the child”.

This is also the case of ES_5.4, for her maternity *“has been a hiatus and a handicap”*. As her partner works shifts, it is tough for her to find a job; when she has been called for a job, it was also with shifts, which renders the situation impossible to handle. She states: *“I don’t know if there are people who do it, I haven’t found a way to organise myself in a way that I can make it compatible”*. (ES_5.4).

On the other hand, the Bulgarian report shows examples of how mothering expectations have motivated the respondents to start slash work. BG_1.1 declares that the obligations are shared equally between her and the child's father in terms of parenting, but it was her to change her career path. She worked in marketing and advertising for more than ten years; she was the director of advertising departments in construction companies. After having a child, she stayed at home and started working for herself to be able to respond to what she considered was her duty as a mother, which would have been incompatible with her previous work.

“If I had continued to work for a company, I don’t think I would have been able to be a good parent. My child would suffer from this. I would not be able to pick her up at 5:00 pm from kindergarten (because, for example, my working hours would be until 6:00 pm, but my employer would expect me to stay until 8:00 pm every day), nor would I help her with the lessons after she becomes a student. I just wouldn’t be able to be with her, in all the moments when she needs me.” (BG_1.1)

In one case or the other, it seems clear that the working mothers interviewed tend to prioritise freedom and flexible working hours that allow them to look after their children easier and with more comfort. For example, FR_3.5 (married, mother of two children) declares benefiting the

most from the freedom to choose when she works and how she deals with clients so that when one of her children is sick, she can tell them she is not coming, according to her if she had a boss, everything would be more complicated. Similarly, ES_3.2 (single mother working in HR and as yoga trainer) describes how she values working spaces and arrangements that allow her to accommodate her daughter: She chooses to work in a specific yoga centre because she likes the project and the group but above all because it is the closest to her home. It is run by a young woman who also has a daughter. Both girls can be together in the centre's hall, playing and doing their homework while the interviewee teaches her class. The time when children are young is seen as the most critical and challenging period, while as children grow up, going back to "normal" working hours could be an option. As BG_1.3 claims:

"As long as the child becomes an idea more independent, at least to go to first grade at school, I do not see under what conditions I can go to work with normal working hours. No one will hire me from 11:00 to 15:30. I imagine working from home until then. I'm not planning anything else. I see no other alternative for now at least." (BG_1.3)

This kind of work-family juggling has an additional side. As said before, it increases the overall working time of the respondents and reduces their sleeping hours. It brings the need to work at unusual times, late at night or in the early hours, when the rest of the family is sleeping, when the house is quiet. For example, ES_3.7 states:

"The nights are much more spent working... when everyone has already gone to bed (...) So from that moment on and until I am able to, I just hang on, (...) that's how I've worked up to now. That is, everyone would go to bed and I would be calm, so I would take out my tablet, my planner," and devote more time to her tepees business. (ES_3.7)

Even if the respondents do not narrate this as a negative thing, as a work-life balance solution, the risk of burnout is hanging over these workers in the long run. The case of BG_1.1 is paradigmatic.

"I'm at school from 7:00 to 15:00. I go back, drink a coffee and sit down to work on the designer orders. At 18:00, my husband and child come home, and I stop all other activity. I pay attention to them. They go to bed, and I also go to bed for 15 minutes to cheer up, drink another coffee - and continue with private orders. And I do so until the middle of the night. It does not bother me. It's all a matter of regime, organisation and concentration. Saturday and Sunday are mainly for the family. During the week I always set a day (not always the same) for my own design break. Otherwise, I risk to burn out." (BG_1.1).

In contrast, in the case of male interviewees, it is the children's hours that are adapted to the job, thanks to the flexibility that women assume. As BG_4.1 declares, *"Concerning childcare - the mother is mostly engaged, because I am at work most of the day"*. Meanwhile, ES_3.5 is separated, their two children live with their mother, and he declares that he only disconnects from work when he is with them. As have been said, he is self-employed and has very irregular working hours:

“This is thanks to the fact that their mother is very understanding and has a very stable job because she is a civil servant, it allows me to be very flexible in my involvement with the children, which I can already tell you is limited because she has custody and care of the children, in other words, I have a very flexible schedule with the children and this schedule is very adaptable to my work, which is very atypical” (ES_3.5).

These approaches to parenting may be associated with the fact that, for many men, work responsibilities are still associated with a traditional breadwinner model, still go first. For example, ES_1.2 claims:

“...let's see, the priority for me is work, logically, but if that is resolved, if my partner is working, the next priority is my child, the house (...). But the priority has to be more or less that, first work because you have to eat and then the menu will be chosen, and the second thing is the child, the priority is to feed the child but I also have to raise the child as a person, and the third thing is everything else” (ES_1.2).

In a similar line, FR_2.2, who just has a baby (and is the only father in the French sample), provides a contradictory view about how having small children may affect him as freelancers: he enjoys the possibility of enjoying time flexibility for caring but also worries about how this increases monetary needs, reducing his freedom:

"I'm glad to be freelancing, that way I can be there (...) because paternity leave is a joke. However, you can't really stop working entirely, when you have regular clients, you can't simply disappear for two months. (...) [Plus], I know that from now on, I'll be less free to choose my clients, the project I work on. Because [now that I have a baby], I need to be working" (FR_2.2).

In sum, having the possibility of working from home and/or having flexible working times influences the patterns of household division of labour. However, there seem to be essential gender differences. When the person who stays (or spends more time at) home is a woman, she clearly takes on more responsibility on family care and domestic work as both men and women acknowledge:

“Well, in general, everybody goes out to work except me, I work... I do activities outside but they are usually very specific, so most of my work is done at home, which means that I am the one who assumes the household responsibilities and [laughs] no one else around” (ES_3.1).

This is somewhat disturbing if we consider the extension of teleworking in recent months due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Research conducted during the pandemic crisis on the impact of these measures points to an apparent increase in gender inequalities (Feng and Savani 2020; Power 2020; Qian and Fuller 2020; Actis et al. forthcoming). Despite this, there is obviously an opportunity for reverting this tendency and promoting a stronger co-responsibility among men as some interviews reveal: *“Because my wife has a fixed working time and I have flexible working time, most of the activities with the children (two children aged 12 and 19) since the time they were smaller, but also now have been transferred to me.” (BG_5.1).*

The Italian reports report an interesting experience. IT_6.1 used to work full-time in a supermarket and as a food delivery rider in his free time. Considering his family situation as a divorced father living in Milan and with his son in Rome, he decided to leave the job in the supermarket, where he had an open-ended contract, and to work full-time as a rider. This choice supposed renouncing all the social protections and securities attached to the supermarket job for the greater flexibility that the online job as a rider could ensure. A flexibility that allows him to meet his son more frequently. The interviewed IT_6.1 reported, *"I want to remain autonomous because this represents a fundamental requirement for my life. If you make me work as subordinate you ruin my life, I can't see my son as I use to do"* (IT_6.1).

However, these seem still to be almost anecdotic cases. In parallel, as the Bulgarian report states, family and parenthood may be additional driver to slash work (Bulgarian Report). National reports point at single or separated mothers as paradigmatic examples of how having children or other family members to support could force the respondents to search for better financial options, particularly when they lack a family network. This is the case of BG_6.1, a single mother for whom slash work is driven by the responsibility to raise a small child and oriented to meet and secure family economic needs as not the first job, nor the second would be enough for a living. Another example is the case of IT_3.14, a self-employed single mother, her daughter's father died eight years before, and she has no parents or other family network. Therefore, she needs to care for and to provide for her child alone. Her passion work as a journalist does not pay enough to support them. Therefore, she completes it with work as a video game design teacher/ video game consultant. This family situation and a very intense work commitment put this slash worker in an even more vulnerable position as make it difficult for her to gather information and submit a request to access social protection measures: *"I found it so difficult to access benefits because it is not easy to get the information, the lack of family support makes these difficulties more serious. Due to my many work and family commitments, I don't have time to find the information I need"* (IT_3.14).

Meantime, the family may also play a different role, not obligating to be a slash worker but facilitating it as a choice. For example, when the partner or the family network financially and/or emotionally supports the household without too many privations, the interviewees develop a slash work career for their satisfaction or passion even when it does not guarantee adequate income and/or continuity. For example, IT_3.3, a freelance journalist and Pilates's instructor reports a sustainable financial situation at home thanks to the husband's full-time job and apartment rent. Additionally, in some cases, the household environment promotes slash work, for example, because the partner shares the same passionate relation with work (this is the absence of weekly rest or holidays and/or not being able to disengage): *"On weekends, I find it difficult [to disconnect] and since my partner, [boyfriend's name] is also very similar to me in that respect let's say that for many years there was no difference between Monday and Sunday"* (ES_3.4). In other cases, family support is not monetary but covers care needs. For instance, IT_5.5 can work full-time during the working week in the multinational company and during the weekend as chief thanks to the grandparents' help in the care of the two children. These realities can be fundamental in countries characterised by familiarist regimes (Moreno and Marí-Klose, 2016), such as Italy and Spain, where families and extended families act as a safety net and cover the insufficient development of public social protection.

As the Italian report claims, an additional downturn is an increasing exclusion from specific professions, such as the cultural sector, of those who need an income from work to live and do not have the prerogatives of coming from wealthy family backgrounds. This may lead to a cultural scene where the full diversity of voices, which the society has to offer, is cut down.

4.3. Perception of the impact of the COVID-19 crisis

The interview process started during the COVID-19 pandemic first wave's lockdown de-escalated, and, in some partners, it took until November 2020. Therefore, the conclusions need to be understood within this context and considering the different governments' social-economic measures.

The COVID-19 crisis triggered diversified repercussions on the slash workers' working conditions regarding income and social protection. According to country reports, several factors condition how the interviewees perceived and experienced the pandemic's impacts and the measures implemented to address it (lockdown and social distancing measures) on their work activity. On the one hand, these impacts were directly related to the nature of their work (online, offline, or both) and their sector or industry; on the other, they were connected to their contractual status, and the national standards of social protection developed to face the crises. Additionally, different family circumstances seem to have also led to different perceptions of this period.

Online and platform workers

In general, the reports coincided that those slash workers who carry out all their activities online perceived or suffered more petite, or at least only slightly, the negative consequences of the crisis. Many of them are used to the "home office way of working, so they do not feel inconvenient when "locked" at home" (Bulgarian report). The humorous reflection of one Spanish informant, who combines three jobs in remote work, represents the overwhelming position of this type of worker:

"So, no... it wasn't really a very big change. As we discussed with some translator friends, I just found out that my lifestyle is called lockdown, because we were living like this before and now, we are still living the same way, locked up at home working and that's it" (ES_1.2).

However, there seem to be diverse experiences within online slash workers concerning workloads and continuity of jobs, which have to do with sectors, country specificities, and skill levels. Regarding workloads, German interviewees who worked on various platforms noticed a great unpredictability in jobs: "at the moment, it is complicated. I don't know if it is because of Corona, but the offers somehow fluctuate a lot." (DE12). One generally very variable sector that was very active during the lockout periods and afterwards is the delivery/rider's sector. Those riders who were already registered and working on the platform before the pandemic perceived their activity increased (IT_6.1 reported working 10-12 hours per day during the lockdown). However, it was not a favourable period for new entrants or reactivated workers in the industry who could not work as many hours as desired. This is, for example, the case of

IT_1.1, trainer and communication expert, during the quarantine decided to return to Milan and begin working as a food delivery rider and of ES_2.1 rider for Amazon Flex and Glovo. After a medical leave, they reactivated his Glovo account during the lockdown, but he was not allocated as many time slots as before. Due to their working conditions and the companies' lack of adequate response, they also felt particularly exposed and vulnerable to the virus on the other side of the coin. As this French rider put it: "I had much work during the lockdown. It was a good time for us. Lots of deliveries to make. But we were working under the constant fear of catching the virus." (FR_4.1).

Other sectors, being somehow safer for their workers, have been even positively affected by the pandemic restrictions that, for example, offered a window of opportunities for online shops. The German report described the case of an interviewee who had a business selling products online that boomed during this period (DE_9). With this expansion of internet sales, also workers doing online marketing activities experienced a renewed interest and increment in their services:

"...the truth is that I do notice it too, that there is more movement on the Internet, a lot. I have noticed it a lot from marketing companies because everything ... especially the online shops that want to position themselves to make more sales on the Internet. Given that they cannot do it physically well, they are very interested in positioning themselves on the Internet. Yes, I have noticed that" (ES_1.1).

However, the turn to online marketing and advertising was not a lifeline possibility to all workers in this industry (the COVID-19 impact on some sectors, related to lockdowns – no events, no conferences, no need for printed advertisements, no services, etc.). Bulgarian online skilled workers seem to have experienced more difficulties than the unskilled, particularly those who offer marketing and advertising-related services. Some of them, such as BG_1.1, female Art's teacher/Photographer/ designer, and BG_1.2, male Media planner/Copywriter/Graphic designer, reported a total lack of orders during the lockdown and only a mild recovery in June. BG_1.2 states: *"I was participating in various projects, to edit and create copies. Everybody has stopped advertising. Promotional country tours have stopped, the advertising has stopped. Nobody contacted me via platforms."*

This last worker seems to have been additionally affected by tourism paralysation. Indeed, the Tourist sector is a paradigmatic example of an industry deeply affected by the pandemic. Airbnb and other short-term rental platforms underwent a drop in demand for services, which inevitably fell back into the workers. For instance, IT_2.1, student, gig worker and apartment manager for Airbnb interrupted this hospitality job during the lockdown.

Offline workers

On-premise, workers with only offline jobs may have been the most affected by the crisis. Especially, those whose activities were not considered "essential services" and requires direct face-to-face contact to customers or colleagues or involves grouping of people, have been significantly impacted as ES_3.1 (tourist guide and organiser of scientific events for children) who, despite being a slash worker, was not able to avoid the crisis impact:

"And all my activities have to do with a gathering of people, anything I do has to do

with a gathering of people, children or adults, or children and adults or whatever. This year is going to be lost” (ES_3.1).

Different reports give further examples of offline workers who saw their work interrupted or who suffers a reduction of workloads/working time in one or all jobs: such as hairdresser (BG_5.1), mountain guides (BG_5.2), waiter/tress (BG_4.1; BG4.5), kindergarten teachers (BG_1.2) or non-formal/after school teachers (IT_3,5; IT_3.7; 3.11; 3.15); photographer (IT_3.6). Other workers experienced their first difficulties with some delay because they initially continued to work on orders acquired before the crisis (such as IT_3.10 and IT_3.1). Remarkably, after the lockdown, as some activities reopened, the compliance with the new security measure imposed by COVID-19 protocols imposed an increase in the workload. This holds particularly true for sport and training activities. For IT_3.5, the dance school's reopening after the pandemic crisis has meant an unpaid increase in the work hours of his second job: he became responsible for sanitising and cleaning the rooms where he teaches without being paid additionally for the extra hours of work. Accordingly, IT_3.3, freelance journalist and Pilate's teacher, refused the offer to return to teach Pilates after the lockdown because of the new rules and conditions (she was asked to teach 3 hours per day paid and to spend two additional hours to sanitise the gym without any form of economic compensation).

Again, there were different impact levels related to the economic sector and the possibility to move to telework. The Bulgarian report highlights, *“The respondents who work mainly creative work belong to this segment [of workers paralysed by the pandemic]. The translators have not translated at all; the actors have not any acting during the crisis. The creatives have suffered the most.”* Within the music industries, both high and low skilled interviewees (BG_3.2; BG_4.1; ES_4_1; ES_4.2) recognise experiencing severe difficulties to continue doing their work, for example, because it requires direct contact teamwork (BG_4.1) but also because of the paralysation of events *“The virus is deadly for the jobs like DJ, musical journalist or musical designer” (BG_3.2 high skilled)*

On the other hand, the confinement and social distancing situation has led to an expansion of teleworking. The Spanish report highlights how most of the profiles (especially those with medium and highly qualified jobs) originally intended for local/offline activities. However, during the lockdown, they managed to continue to work from home. Therefore their work experiences were geared towards online/remote work. Some examples of this are found in IT_3.12, IT_3.2, IT_3.8 and IT_3.9 or ES_3.2; ES_3.3; ES_3.4; ES-ES_3.5; ES_3.6_ES_3.7. Frequently, this shift required an important and accelerated effort, particularly clear, as the Italian and Bulgarian report highlight, in the educational sector, to increase and update computer and digital skills and innovate distance learning solutions. Some workers even described it as a busy period, although this did not lead to income increase:

“During the COVID crisis, I worked a lot for distance learning in Professional Training, even if the number of paid hours remained the same as in the previous period (...). I was very busy, especially with the school; I don't know how much the income has dropped” (IT_3.8).

“During the COVID crisis, I was fortunate because I did not reduce my income: I held all the private lessons on zoom (...) I transformed my work at school into distance learning activities, inventing new things. My business was also of mutual support between me and the trainees in the lockdown” (IT_3.9)

ONLINE AND OFFLINE WORKERS

Those interviewees who combined online with offline work seemed to be less impacted by the pandemic. Although some interviews intensely suffered a substantial reduction or even a total loss of online and offline job (BG_6 who had to live from saving), in most cases, although one of the jobs, usually the offline one, was negatively hit (many saw their local work activity reduced or paralysed), the situation was somehow equilibrated due to the relative immunity provided by online work. As ES_52 (Skating trainer /Sports psychologist / Online Psychologist through Psonrie Platforms) put it: *“So, look, because I have two jobs, uh... for one it has been an opportunity, and for the other one it has been an ordeal” (ES_5.2).*

Focusing specifically on slash workers who work for a platform as a side job offers an exciting perspective. Except for those workers whose platform jobs are directly connected with the tourist sector (via Booking or Airbnb, such as ES_6.1), most of those interviewees declares that the restrictions allowed them to focus their work on the platform or, at least devote more time to it. This seems to be valid both for high-skilled and low-skilled jobs (micro-workers). Within the fully feminised French group of unskilled micro workers, two (FR_3.2 and FR_3.5) expressed having increased their projects and income during the pandemic. For FR_3.2, "It was more out of boredom.", while for FR_3.2, not having other missions allowed her to spend more time signed in:

“I didn't have any interim missions during the lockdown, so I only worked on the platform (...). I crunched the numbers; I'm not far from reaching 1000€ a month since the start of the year” (FR_3.2)

Concerning high-skilled platform workers, the Spanish report describes two psychologists working through a platform for psychological services who did not perceive difficulties in continuing their online work and even observed increased demand. This increased demand may be associated with the intensification of psychological issues during this pandemic (something also noticed by BG_5.3 creative director/ Airbnb host/Writing therapist) and their wider availability, given that their other offline/local job was temporarily suspended.

“...being a psychologist, I can do my job from home with a computer and good online connections because I have not had any problems in [continuing these activities the lock down] ... it's not that I haven't had problems, it's that I've even worked more than usual” (ES_5.2).

The above pages have shown how the corona crisis had diverse effects on the different worker profiles according to the nature of their work and their sector. An additional issue that strongly impacts the pandemic workers' experience has been the labour/contract status. Overall, a large share of respondents regularly kept on working from home during the lockdown, both in the case of employees and self-employed workers. However, in general terms, the most substantial

negative impacts were faced by self-employed and temporary workers. At the same time, salaried employees with open-ended contracts did not go through such troublesome moments. Obviously, given the diversity level of social and labour protection that the different countries showed, these experiences are not homogeneous. Country reports' more detailed account of the specific social protection schemes put into practice to safeguard the productive structure during the crisis would have helped clarify these points.

Several reports describe cases of employees whose income were secure by the possibility of teleworking or receiving temporary unemployment benefits when that was not possible (when companies had closed or whose production or demand went down because of lockout or crisis). The experience of IT_3.2 illustrates the second case since the retail activity closed; she received the temporary unemployment benefits relating to her first job as a salaried shop assistant, meantime she kept on working remotely for a publishing company. Other examples are ES_5.2 or ES_5.5. Additionally, D2 has a regular full-time employment contract at a machine-building company and combined it with a taxi business. “With COVID, the taxi business was not doing well, and his employees left to find jobs elsewhere, but his regular job continued to pay a salary and he hopes the taxi business will recover at some point. He enjoys driving to meet people and also enjoys the other job as a quality assurance technician” (Meil 2020, 11).

On the opposite side, employees in precarious/informal jobs in sectors particularly hit by the shutdown measures, such as work in restaurants and bars, tourism were among the most affected because of their vulnerability and lack of social protection coverture. That is the case of DE1, an interviewee from Argentina “who worked for Helping and a Spanish restaurant was impacted the worst because she was charged for training by the Helping platform on "how to protect yourself during corona", but many of the jobs dried up because of restrictions on mobility and fear of having strangers in your home. The restaurant, of course, had to close, and she was not eligible for benefits.” DE13 experience illustrates the case of another precarious worker with several jobs as barkeeper, construction assistant and working at a home for the elderly who lost most of the income during the crisis due to shutdowns.

Concerning the self-employed and freelancers, there is a certain degree of agreement around the notion that they were less covered by the COVID-19 related protection responses than salaried employees. This means that those whose activities involved face-to-face interaction drastically diminish their activity and, therefore, their earnings. This may lead to critical situations like the one exposed by this highly skilled French (Artist / Sound engineer / Teacher MDA (artist, member of the Maison Des Artistes) / vacataire -adjunct faculty) who was not eligible for unemployment benefits.

“In fact, you get hit by the sudden realisation that your job, where you harshly battle to make 1000€ a month barely, is hanging by a single thread. (...) Some situations are desperate. Me, for instance, I'm getting evicted from my apartment, and... well... how am I supposed to find another one?” (FR_1.3).

This interviewee complains that while in France some cultural workers, the intermittent, could access significant negotiated benefits (basic remuneration, profession-specific unemployment benefits), many workers were not accessible to many workers (such as him) under another legal status. While this kind of benefits was neither available in Italy, Bulgaria or Spain, German freelance artists have also been able to take advantage of the benefits offered uniquely to artists which have a long tradition in Germany due to effective collective actions from the past:

Collective systems facilitated the crisis: for instance, being a member of Smart DE or being in the Kunstlerkasse (artist health collective). The German and French reports point at Unions and the association's role during the pandemic. Some workers used them to access information about their right and status specificities (FR_2.2; FR_3.3).

"During the COVID crisis, I got closer to auto-entrepreneurs collectives, mainly on Facebook, to be able to follow the administrative procedures, to know what I should do" (FR_3.3)

This reveals the importance of considering the various level of social and labour protection that the different countries offered (even before the pandemic) to the different working status. As previously said, multi-status, having different types of contracts, employee and self-employed, (either at the same time or consecutively) has been typically adopted by slash workers as a strategy to alleviate precarity and obtain social benefits, and most importantly, unemployment benefits. As the Italian report highlights, slash workers must learn how to effectively manage the contract portfolio to minimise costs and maximise protection. However, it has an essential impact during the COVID-19 pandemic. Italy has hindered access to bonuses (having an employee job prevented access to bonuses for self-employed). In France, those who failed to secure benefits reported higher levels of work-related insecurity and the highest impact of COVID-19 on their prospective and earnings; traditional inequalities seemed to be exacerbated during this period. The German State had many programs for the regular workforce (short term work) or small and large businesses (financial aid and loans). However, it was more difficult for freelancers, particularly those working on the labour market's fringes. Although there was support for self-employed in the first wave of the pandemic, and some interviewees declared having received the payment and considered the process was simple, other informants "fell through the cracks and were not eligible for the 9000€ payment" (Mail 2020, 14).

When the State action does not suffice, the protecting role of the family becomes more evident. One crucial general sustainability condition for slash workers is having a family situation in which other income earners could balance the adverse effects of possible job loss or fluctuating contracts. During the pandemic crisis, this became even more evident, as a Bulgarian high skilled female respondent, who works both on and offline put it:

"My husband works full time. He has a secure job, although not very well paid, because he is in public institution, but still secure. Even at this critical moment (COVID-19 pandemic), he kept his job and received his salary. And it was good that has this job." (BG_5.4).

Concerning the pandemic's impact on work-life balance, some interviewees pointed having dedicated more time to the family or the people they live with as a positive effect of total lockdown during spring 2020. The Bulgarian report highlights how offline/local workers, either skilled or unskilled, valued having spent this period with their families, dedicated time to supervising children's online studying, and being able to keep them and themselves safe. BG_4.5 (freelance gardener, construction worker, and mail sorter in a courier company) claims the currier company laid him off because of the COVID-19 crisis. He felt relief because he needed some rest and lived with his 80+ years old mother. He also perceived the crisis as a calm period. Some other workers shared this positive approach ("*One should always look at the*

whole part of the glass, and to adapt to the situation, BG_3.3), the pandemic allowed them to address pending matters and enjoy resting time they would not be able to find otherwise (BG_3.3).

“It worked for me very well. This coronavirus could be an invention of mine. The rest I have now is great – I have more spare time and can go out in the open.” (BG_4.3)

In any case, teleworking conditions were not always easy. For example, BG_5.2 found working from home difficult because of the lack of specific tools and devices. Despite this, he expressed his preferences for working from home to improve efficiency and avoid commuting. Therefore, he opened the possibility of adapting his home working space in the future:

“In the office I have two screens, which sometimes are not enough, and I install a third one. At home, I have to work on a small laptop. That is an obstacle; otherwise, it is much better to stay home and to work. If it was going to be forever, I might arrange a working space with all necessary aids – to work at home more efficiently than in the office because of time saved from commuting” BG_5.2.

Moreover, not all the workers share this idealised view of teleworking. The COVID-19 pandemic has implied a shift, lasting several months, of both educational and work activities (where possible) to the home. This situation has led to a marked increase in domestic and care work, especially in households with school-age children (Actis et al. forthcoming). In this sense, some interviewees (especially women) mentioned work-life balance issues when schools were closed, and parents of young children had to telework and care for them simultaneously. Women expressed very graphically how they experienced this situation as an added challenge to the tricky balance in time management that slash work entails for them, as ES_5.4 voices it:

“When we were locked up like this, and I had the children for 24 hours, it was tough for me (...) of course, you get on and off... with small children, my daughter is still very young, she requires a lot from me, she does not play as much alone as her brother, so yes, I must get on and off, get on and off” (ES_5.4).

This is in line with recent studies that have revealed a general deterioration in work-life balance that has affected women more negatively than men (ILO 2020; Eurofound 2020b, Actis et al. forthcoming).

In general terms, having a second (or even a third) jobs, in general, enabled workers to diversify the risk of unemployment and/or salary reduction during the lockdown (Italian report); in other words, slash worker “presented a range of options” which in many cases, represented a sort of safety net ES_4.2 *Electrician: full time (season differences) / DJ Weekend evenings*). Our interviewees express this idea very clearly: *“If it hadn't been for that [being a slash worker], it would have been terrible, terrible*. According to the German report, most self-employed interviewees became a bit more cautious and tried to cut costs expecting some drops in income due to the crisis. Interestingly, some interviewees reported the decision to start another additional activity precisely during the lockdown. The financial need drove some to top-up the income (i.e., IT_3.16, deeply affected by the suspension of live shows, accepted a babysitting job, and started developing new services). In contrast, others, by the aspiration to spend some of the then-available time, this was the case of IT_3.3, freelance journalist and Pilates teacher,

during the peak of the COVID-19 crisis, experienced a marked decrease in her activities. Accordingly, she decided to develop her passion for horse riding and begin a not paid activity as a horses' trainer, which was allowed during the lockdown.

In some cases, the attenuating effect of remote work regarding COVID-19's labour consequences led some workers to redirect some of their activities towards the online mode intentionally. Specifically, as previously said, several respondents who used to offer training in person moved on to remotely training, teaching online. In some cases, this reconversion is perceived as an advance at a professional level:

"...I don't know if it's wrong to say so, but for me the pandemic has been an opportunity because it has made me devise training and things that are not limited to the people here in Seville, but I have even had students from Peru, from... from all over the world" (ES_5.2).

According to the Bulgarian report, the multi-status workers, who combine an employment contract with self-employment, were particularly nimble and resolute for solving work problems because of their flexibility and experience. For example, it describes how some workers (G_5.3 and G_5.4) started doing pro bono work during the crisis (no other worker profile has done that). The reasons and narratives around that were diversified. G5.4 (Freelance translator/ Lecturer/ Consultant BG_5.4) express doing so for material (economic) and practical (not getting their skills rusted) needs.

"I have not done any paid job for three months. I can't afford not to work, that's why I volunteered. I have to maintain my translating shape – the translating speed, the vocabulary, the software. My mind should always be trained to work, to find the right words for everything, because films translating is a specific thing, has nothing in common with the translation of documents. So currently, I translate films pro bono for a YouTube group connected to healthy nutrition and healthy way of life. The films are published on YouTube to be seen by other people" (BG_5.4).

Regardless, the level of income loss and even for those interviewees whose earnings were not impacted by much, the pandemic cause anxiety about the future, either because of pre-existing sectoral problems or because there is a fear of a drastic worsening due to the crisis triggered by the pandemic. Several informants point at particularly intense problems within the communication industries:

"There will be a boomerang effect in 1 to two years, mostly because the advertisement sector is crashing down, and without advertisement, there is no TV production". (FR_16.)

The COVID crisis will occur next year when there will be no money to pay for our communications activities, which I fear will be considered secondary and therefore expendable (IT_3.13).

This concern about the future may have even led to reconsidering their working profile and giving more value to security. As IT_3.12 puts it: *"I refused 3 or 4 freelance stabilisation offers by choice because I love the autonomy. Pre-COVID I was very proud of my choice, now a little*

less” (IT_3.12). FR_1.3, who had been struck particularly hard by the COVID-19 crisis, plans to apply for a PhD fellowship, granting him salaried status and the related benefits: *“It would allow me to do a more “research-based” job, and to get some time, not to be always chasing the next gig”*. Adopting a far-sighted perspective, the young IT_5.2 (28 years old despite having an open-ended contract) conveyed that a second job represents a necessary plan B (or C) in a nowadays always labour market that renders recommendable a necessary plan diversification of the risk. *In my opinion, it is too risky to know how to do just one thing; you need to know how to do more than one* (IT_5.2).

5. Aspirations and experiences of protection and representation

Since the slash worker status pulls together widely different people, with vastly different jobs in diverse sectors and distinct professional experiences, their protection and representation needs are highly varied. However, the first thing that stands out about this issue is that, interestingly, none of our interviewees has expressed specific social protection or collective representation requirements as slash workers. Their answers suggest that they do not consider their multiple activities as a general work condition. Instead, they tend to dissociate their different work activities and think of them as watertight compartments with their own dynamics and requirements. Based on this view, the protection gaps expressed -where appropriate- and the types of organisations they feel represented by are related to the specific situations or conditions of each of their work activities or employment situations.

1.2. 5.1. Social protection needs and gaps

Concerning protection against social risks, we have observed that being a slash worker reduces the perception of insecurity. This observation may be conditioned, however, by the socio-occupational profile of our interviewees. In all the countries involved in the study, the selected sample includes a high proportion of highly qualified informants with open-ended contracts in their primary activity (see section 3 on socio-demographic and employment profiles). These slash workers, who can enjoy all the protections ensured by the welfare system to the salaried employees at least for their primary job, do not complain or are unconcerned about the lack of welfare protection covering all their labour activity. For example, IT_5.1, working as a salaried secretary in her main job and as a freelance digital image editing expert in her second job, states: *"I have no idea, and I don't even want to know, because I'm not interested in this. I know that if I decide to be interested, I know that I would be disappointed by this search for information!"*. In the same vein, ES_3.3, a musician and part-time lecturer at the university, expresses: *"...the issue of job security in the event of sick leave, um... that's clearly a weakness, I don't have... I don't think about it much, actually, maybe it's a mistake, plus I'm at a point in my life where the further you go, the more you think about it"*. As in the specific case of platform workers (see section 3.2), salaried employment functions as social support (Castel and Haroche, 2003), ensuring workers access to social benefits and allowing them to shirk this concern.

Conversely, social protection is a prominent issue among those who have temporary contracts, for those who are self-employed or freelancers and, especially in Bulgaria, for those who work in the informal economy. Although this specific feature of the Bulgarian labour market clarifies that each country's institutional context must necessarily make a difference, our results suggest that this is a situation that occurs everywhere. The main concerns expressed by temporary and independent workers in all countries refer to the lack of access to social and health benefits and retirement allowances. However, we must point out that, in general, the concerns about social protection among slash workers refer more to their status as precarious or independent workers than to their condition as multiple jobholders.

Access to retirement allowances and, especially, the amount of the pension they expect to receive seems to be a widespread concern among the self-employed and temporary workers. Many consider themselves to be at a disadvantage compared to salaried workers with open-ended contracts. IT_5.8's distress about his future pension reflects well the assessment that these workers make of their situation:

“They are [pension allowances] far worse than those for employees. To get an idea, we are talking about a minimum of what you are going to declare, the minimum, therefore, what the INPS contemplates, we are around €4000 per year in a social security position, for a single person, to have a pension, becomes elderly that does not differ much, unfortunately, from a social one. This is something that a trader, a craftsman, will discover in a few years. [...] When my father retired, he was really disappointed, also because he poured some money!” (IT_5.8).

Similarly, IT_3.3, who as a freelance journalist is enrolled in the professional register for her profession, reports a vital concern for the pension allowance she will get:

“I am in the separate management pension fund, INPGI2, and it is a huge problem because I calculated that if I had earned like two years ago, that I was earning an average salary, or a few years ago when I was earning really well when I reached 65 years of age I would have €500 of pension per month: it is a huge problem! Here I am in all this, by sticking my head in the sand, I try not to think, but I'm not in a good position, both on the health side and on the contributions side I'm not in a good situation, I have no protection in any way” (IT_3.3).

This last quotation also reveals another of these workers' common concerns: the lack of a sufficient safety net in case of health issues. Our interviewees' complaints suggest that although there are benefits that cover these situations, they do not always suit their needs. Perhaps the most extreme case is that of the riders; due to the undetermined employment relationship they usually have with the platforms, they have difficulties accessing social protection in the event of a work-related accident. *“There are people who hurt themselves, who can't work, and therefore go without revenues for weeks or months”,* complains FR_4.2.

Workers in the creative and cultural sector are also affected, as denounced by BG_1.2: *“I can't use paid leave; the only thing I get is 30% of expenses recognised”*. Also, ES_1.2, a freelance journalist, YouTuber and translator, expresses dissatisfaction with this situation:

“I think that these are the basic problems we have as self-employed people, that we cannot ask ourselves a series of questions that for an employee is the most normal thing in the world: 'I got sick, I'm not working for a few weeks, and I'm guaranteed an income'. I have no guarantee... the insurance companies give you a couple of euros, but they don't cover the income you have (ES_1.2).

It is also interesting, in this regard, FR_1.6's reflection. As already mentioned, France is, among the countries analysed, the only one in which there is a benefit specifically designed to meet the needs of the stage and show technicians, actors, etc., who usually alternate periods of activity with others of inactivity (*Intermittent* legal status). Still, many workers feel that it does not wholly address their specific professional issues:

"I'm thinking of sick leaves, for instance. When you're intermittent, and you fall sick, [if you can't work enough hours to gain access to between-contracts benefits], you don't earn much. The situation can very quickly become very unstable. The same can be said for maternity leaves. Technically you have a right to pay for continuity [assured by the health care system], but actually, your paycheck often is delayed by several months. You better be very, very organised if you intend to get pregnant." (FR_1.6).

In any case, all these complaints, problems and concerns related to social protection generally affect most precarious workers, self-employed and freelancers, whether or not they are slash workers. Except in the cases in which all the jobs are carried out under these work situations, our results do not suggest specific problems related to social protection rights inherent to slash worker status. However, we have observed that being a slash worker can lead to difficulties in accessing these rights. As the Italian Country report has shown, when a worker has more than one job, access to social benefits become complicated. On the one hand, slash workers tend to combine several different work situations: they can often be salaried and self-employed simultaneously, forcing them to learn to effectively manage the contract portfolio to minimise costs and maximise protection.

Additionally, this job segmentation can have a high cost because, in many cases, it only allows partial allowances, which do not replace the entire income. Also, as the cases of IT_5.6 and IT_5.6 show, fiscal and administrative issues related to VAT number management can penalise those self-employed who do not reach the required income threshold due to having several jobs. Moreover, on the other hand, those who have an intense work commitment, such as many slash workers, do not have the time to gather information and submit a request, which ends up limiting their access to many social benefits. This is the case of IT_3.14:

"I found it so difficult to access benefits because it is not easy to get the information; the lack of family support makes these difficulties more serious. Due to my many work and family commitments, I don't have time to find the information I need".

5.2. Attitudes towards collective representation by unions

The interviewed slash workers' involvement in organisations of collective representation or in labour or professional mobilisations is somewhat limited in all countries. And, in the few cases in which this involvement has occurred, it is related exclusively to a single job, which is usually the primary one. Those whose main activity is salaried employment in a large company are more familiar with traditional trade unions and normally value their role as knowledgeable organisations about workers' rights. The reflection made by ES_5.3 and BG_5.3, whose main jobs are in the automotive and advertisement sectors, illustrate well the general feeling of the workers with this profile:

"Yes, yes. I've had with... I mean, I'm telling you that you need to engage with unions, whether you're a member or... I belong to one, it's necessary, the power that a union can exercise with the company is greater than what you can do individually. That is necessary, otherwise the company... [laughs] that" (ES_5.3).

"Absolutely, definitely we need professional protection! Advertising agency workers have no union representation. In general, in the advertising industry as well as in the whole private business. There are trade unions only in large industrial enterprises. Concerning workers' rights and in cases where ownership is transformed, no one knows what will happen. For such moments, trade unions are important because they can provide adequate legal, social support. Not everyone can manage on his/her own. During the crisis, agencies cut 50% of their staff." (BG_5.3)

Other cases of union involvement are those of IT_5.2 and BG_4.1. IT_5.2 is an e-commerce analyst in a big company, who after being approached by a trade union representative at the workplace, is considering the opportunity to enrol in a union, to benefit from the services offered by these organisations to their members (fiscal and taxation services, consultancy, online assistance). As for BG_4.1, he is a member of a trade union federation (Union of Bulgarian Music and Dance) in his primary job as a bagpiper. In the past, he was also chairman of a section. The country reports from Germany and France also describe similar cases, such as DE_2, DE_13 and FR_1.6.

However, beyond these specific cases, our informants' general pattern is still low involvement in unions' activities and mobilisations. Many turn to unions only in case of violation of their labour rights or when they need information, such as BG_3.1: *"at school - in case of problems and violations of rights, they consult the trade union organisation"*. Also, ES_43 and IT_3.14 view unions as an essential reference:

...if you don't know, for example, what is yours, you ask a steward, or the times, for instance, as we were saying before, "Look, I've been told to come on such a day, but I don't want to, can I refuse? Any doubts you may have at work can be solved by a steward. Whether you are a member or not" (ES_4.3).

It is not my favourite environment, but it is a point of reference to help get the information to deal with bureaucracy. I had access to unemployment with the unions when I did not was self-employed, but I had fixed-term or co.co.co contracts. (IT_3.14)

It is relevant to observe that, whatever the degree of involvement or appreciation of trade unions' role among salaried workers in large companies, the recognition of their usefulness applies only to the main job. At no point do they refer to the needs for protection or representation relating to the secondary employment, which is, in many cases, freelance. This omission may be due to a widespread idea that trade union representation focuses mainly on salaried workers and leaves out the self-employed. Apparently, as reflected in BG_3.2's comment, this has led workers to consider that unions have not been able to adapt to the new conditions of the labour market and, therefore, they are very alien to the labour reality of freelancers or self-employed workers: *"You're not a man to produce 10,000 nails a month"* (BG_3.2). The same idea is expressed by IT_3.13, although in another way: *"I don't seek contact with the unions, I find them a little out of the world, out of time. They are not prepared to talk about self-employed"* (IT_3.13).

Therefore, it is not surprising that workers who carry out all their work activities as freelancers or self-employed, and especially those who fit the profile we have called "creative workers", mainly adhere to this idea of the lack of connection between trade unions and their particular

work situations. Still, some, like IT_3.14, perceive the need to have a union that defends their interests: *"We need an order of journalists who can do its job, that claims decent wages, that is aware of the situation"*. Also, many identify situations of abuse by their employers and recognise their need to be protected. For example, IT_3.5, a self-employed dance teacher, reports that many of his colleagues feel obliged to teach, even if sick, to avoid being replaced. BG_2.1 describes a similar case:

"Many workers are forced to go to work, even when they are sick, with a fever, with a broken leg, arm. They literally make them go to work because they will be fired... I needed protection in the bakery because I was sick, and they made me go, and I couldn't talk, and I work with food. It was wrong for me to walk, to cough on the bread, but they made me go again." (BG_2.1)

Despite this, they hardly identify themselves with collective representation forms and feel very distant from the trade union world. The response of ES_3.4, who has developed different works in the field of arts and culture, is highly illustrative of this position: *"...I have a minimal union culture, I just don't know right now if a union is formed for a certain type of work or if it is formed um...I don't know, really"*. Generally, and according to the interviews carried out, this lack of union involvement seems to be inherent in independent workers in all countries. However, the interviewees' different social and work profiles lead them to justify their disconnection with unions bringing up several specific reasons. In some cases, the lack of exposure to and knowledge of unions is due to extreme precariousness, as is the case already mentioned of DE_14 (kitchen helper and cleaner from Argentina). When asked whether she had heard of unions, her response was: *"Never, ever. The only thing closer to a political and union issue was once I read on Facebook that they were organising to march to where the training was being held or staging a protest against the big commissions that are being charged, but it also came to nothing"*. In other cases, they claim that they do not feel the need to be represented by unions or have confidence in their ability to change something. However, underlying this reasoning, there seems to be more lack of awareness of the role of unions than an evident anti-union attitude:

"I've never really asked myself the problem. I've never felt the need to feel represented" (IT_3.8)

"...I am a basic self-employed and independent person, not... that I am not proud of it, I just don't know what it could help me with uh... I don't know; I don't know how it could make my life easier; honestly, I don't think there is much" (ES_4.1).

The Bulgarian report indicates two other reasons that explain the lack of exposure of some workers to unions: the non-existence of trade unions in some sectors or activities and the extension of informal employment in the second job, which could be an obstacle to search for actual official representation and protection. An example of the first reason listed would be that of BG_5.5:

"In the visual arts, there is still the problem that we do not have clear unions, unlike the way things happen, for example, with lawyers, architects, etc. There may be organisations, but apparently, they are not yet ripe enough to know and hear about"

them. But I'm for it! I have noticed that in the Western world, such associations are very good at lobbying for the industry's interests. We also need support in this regard." (BG_5.5)

There is, however, a third position that suggests a certain anti-union attitude. Some slash workers whose jobs are carried out entirely as freelancers or self-employed show an individualistic approach to labour relations that goes together with a high degree of confidence in their ability to solve their own labour problems. The tendency of these workers to seek individual answers has been argued in the Italian country report: "Slash workers proved to be often people with great personal adaptability (adapting to cohabitation, travelling, working on weekends and in the evening), and in the tasks/activities performed. They have often experienced very varied work paths, without disdaining jobs definitely below their education, accumulating professional skills and acquiring important horizontal skills. Only some of them were able to access the various bonuses paid by the government; more frequently they tried to find individual answers, where there was a chance". This attitude has also been related in other investigations with exposure to entrepreneurial rhetoric (Vallas, 2019) and, in the specific case of creative workers, the exceptionalism and individualism that predominate in this field (Staunton, 2020). The speeches of some of our interviewees reveal this preference for individualising the resolution of labour problems:

"Nothing. I am not very much into anything that forces me to obey what the collective decides, I am very dissolute, so belonging to a collective..." (ES_3.1).

"And then, well, I don't know, I'm going to get a little... a little bit mad, but the people who are complaining all day long I can't stand it. I mean, that's the easy part, saying, "No, it is just that the conditions..." Well, hell, you find a way to get another job or... or to create your own business ideas or whatever. I wouldn't go into a job to join a union and be... no" (ES_5.2).

"I do not believe that someone could defend my interests better than me. We (note on int .: both my wife and I) are among the people who rely only on themselves. I don't need another type of protection" (BG_4.2).

"To be honest, I don't know what the unions are doing and whether they are doing anything. I imagine them as chanting at demonstrations. Maybe I had nothing to be protected about" (BG_6.1)

In this vein, as stated in the Italian country report, the case of IT_6.1 represents an attractive, specific point of view. He works primarily as a food delivery rider, and after some years of experience, he decided to participate in the collective representation of the category actively. He opted to become a member of an autonomous trade union, given his dissatisfaction with the main confederal unions, which betrayed his expectations. In his view, the confederal unions impose their conditions, bypassing the workers' actual requests: *"because they do not ask us what we want, and this makes me mad"* (IT_6.1).

However, it should be noted that there are some exceptions among those who are always self-employed, who are not in this majority position. These are slash workers who carry out some or all of their work activities through platforms, who consider the conditions imposed on them to be abusive and think that their best option for reversing this situation is to ally themselves with the unions and benefit from their experience:

“...the way to negotiate with the companies is through the trade unions, everything else is unrealistic, we cannot negotiate any...with the company, you cannot negotiate” (ES_2.2).

“...if you have the trade union structure, if you have union power, which, as we said, is enormous, to waste, it seems absurd to me, to waste it seems to me like going to war with slingshots because you don't like the gun, it's absurd, you go with a gun, with the best one you can find. In this sense, I believe that a union is already a tool (...) although the circumstances are different, unions already know how to negotiate and reinventing it in the world of digital platforms seems to be a huge waste of time” (ES_1.2).

"I'm not opposed to the idea [of joining a union]. I heard about a SUD branch in Lyon that cater specifically to couriers. (...) Actually, I should join a union, because... this job, it's really exploitation. The situation is awful" (FR_4.1).

Overall, except for those working in large companies and some platform workers, most of our informants show a certain degree of non-awareness, dissatisfaction and lack of trust about collective representation by unions. Besides, when they talk about their representation needs or experiences, they usually do so in reference to only one of their jobs, usually the main one. Indeed, when multiple jobs are concerned, the interviewees have not reported ad hoc experiences of collective representation. The only clear case reported is the one of IT_3.2 who, carrying multiple jobs, decided to enrol in a trade union to receive support in the fiscal and administrative issues concerning her specific situation as a slash worker:

I signed up two years ago to protect myself from a bureaucratic point of view because I do two jobs together. I am not so good on the bureaucratic side and therefore to understand if everything is always in order ... every now and then, I asked for some advice, and then I signed up, but then I use it ... very little! (IT_3.2).

In any case, the unions' internal organisation's sectoral base suggested by all country reports can constitute an obstacle for the organisation of workers who, like slash workers, operate in different fields. Also, in the case of Bulgaria, if the job is carried out without an official certificate, as is frequent in slash workers' second job, there are barriers to accessing full membership in the unions. BG_3.2's case is representative of this circumstance: "A respondent (BG_3.2) had not previously been a member of a trade union or similar organisation because there was none in his field of activity. Currently, the Association of Restorers in Bulgaria (ARB) performs a somewhat union function - it protects the interests of its members, but he is not yet able to take full advantage because it is an associate member. He will become a full member after completing his educational degree in the field. The Association of Restorers in Bulgaria supports its members by recognising their status, recommending and encouraging members of

the association's employment. Once being a member, it is assumed that the particular restorer meets the professional standards and criteria for the activity" (Bulgarian country report).

5.3. Aspirations and experiences of collective representation by other kinds of organisations

When asked to imagine the most suitable form of representation for their labour interests as slash workers, very few specific proposals come up, but all of them have in common the idea of changing the focus of the usual representation structure of workers. IT_3.1, for instance, who carries out different jobs as an independent worker, favours a form of representation focused on the condition of being a self-employed worker rather than on a specific profession or economic sector of work. From a broader perspective, one of our informants in Germany (DE13) recommends that *“unions should be more local, more like a solidarity network for workers and for workers who work in precarious jobs. And unions shouldn't just focus on people in their workplace but see the whole person who's beside that, and not just see the person who pays them union dues. And I think unions should be more approachable to people and should work more on the local sphere”*.

However, although no concrete proposals are made, the interviews' analysis shows an apparent demand for forms of representation that fit the specific needs of slash workers. On the one hand, they definitely have an interest in having protection about matters such as labour law compliance, disagreement and conflicts with the employer, job security issues, working hours arrangements, or labour conflicts. On the other hand, as expressed by IT_3.13, they demand alternative organisations that allow them to have contacts with colleagues, training, and help with fiscal and administrative issues: *“Being freelance makes you feel alone, it is important to be part of networks of colleagues just to share complaints. I would be interested in a representation of communicators; my only experience is the “Rete al femminile” [female network], but mainly for networking”* (IT_3.13).

Beyond these wishes and demands, the country reports provide examples of interviewees who are part of organisations or associations that, in some way, fulfil some of these functions. For example, the Italian report accounts for two interviewees who are members of Acta. Two of the respondents interviewed by Acta are its members, being workers with VAT registered number. Not only they adhere to the association and believe in representation, but they are an active part in the construction of representation (IT_3.6, in addition to being involved in Acta, would like to create a specific section dedicated to photography). For these, the associations have also proved to be an important place to develop relationships with colleagues, overcoming the territorial scope:

“I am one of the animators of Redacta; I felt the lack of representation. When it comes to publishing, we are talking about publishers, booksellers, authors, and translators, not editors, although they are the majority. I think Redacta is very useful, especially for raising awareness; many editors thought that theirs was a personal problem (I am too slow and therefore I am underpaid), but when we met, they understood that we are all

in this situation. I don't know if it will be possible to resolve and improve the situation, but it is an important first step” (IT_3.10).

I belong to AWI, a community of artists and workers in modern art, which was formed on the web during the lockdown, involving in a short period about a thousand people all over Italy. A very participatory community distributed throughout the territory. With AWI, I have met many people who do not have the same profession and are distributed throughout Italy. (IT_3.11)

Additionally, IT_3.3 is a member of the professional register for journalists, but she complains about the unhelpfulness of the association's role. She also recognises the vital role of the trade union for journalists but only represents subordinated workers. IT_5.2 is a member of the professional register for freelance journalists. IT_5.7 is considering registering to the national association of counsellor to get more legitimacy and credibility in the market in his second job. Likewise, IT_5.3 is contemplating the opportunity to enrol on the register for freelance journalists.

Many highly skilled professionals belong to professional associations such as the Bavarian Business Club (DE7), the German software as a service group (DE9) or other clubs or groups in Germany. Others seek out Facebook groups to connect with colleagues in their profession or others who share similar work situations. Three of the interviewees in this sample (DE3, DE4, DE6) belonged to Smart DE because they saw the benefits of being part of a collective that promoted their interests as freelancers. Conversely, the Bulgarian report describes cases such as that of BG_1.2, who used to be a member of the Bulgarian Public Relations Association (BAVO) but now he sees no point in continuing paying the membership fee:

"I did not see any benefit. They give out some prizes and do seminars, but lately, there has been nothing significant and meaningful. Membership in such an organisation does not bring me more clients. Most clients bring me word of mouth or clients I have worked with before. ... Compared to other customers, those across platforms are units. I attribute it to the fact that Bulgaria is a province, and there is not much interest from abroad. I found a job through LinkedIn" (BG_1.2).

Finally, in Spain, one interviewee relates her own experience of creating an association of mutual support for women programmers (ES_3.4); another, his participation in the Association of Cultural Managers of Andalusia (ES_3.5).

6. General conclusions

- Between June and November 2020, 101 interviews were conducted in five European countries: Bulgaria, France, Germany, Italy and Spain. The respondents were selected for being slash workers and based on the level of skills required by the (main) job; and the nature of their two (or more) work activities (both online, both of line and one online and other offline). The research team developed the fieldwork within a pandemic context. Most interviewees responded to medium-highly qualified job profiles doubling the number of low-qualified profiles, and more than half of them developed offline work. Respondents generally possess multiple qualifications. Their diplomas or certifications cover a wide range of disciplines, not always related to their primary occupation. This diversity seems to facilitate the slash conditions allowing the respondents to develop different jobs.
- Although the interviews' essential requirement was to combine at least two activities, it is not uncommon to handle three and even four activities. Some respondents declare that the 2008 crises pushed them to slash work. In the pre-COVID-19 period, some had or were abandoning this status due to burnout and achieved more economic stability.
- Even though holding more than one job simultaneously is not a new phenomenon, the current labour market trends place this phenomenon in a renewed context. In particular, two recent developments justify approaching the upsurge of slash workers from a differentiated analytical perspective: the rise of the gig economy and the spread of new values and expectations attached to work.
- According to the country reports and broadly speaking, we can distinguish two main types of the reasoning behind the decision to become slash workers: financial motivations and "passionate" justifications. This distinction evidences the differences in meanings and implications for workers of labour market flexibility and fragmentation.
- The financial reasons stress the importance of economic factors as the main driver behind engaging in different paid activities. This category includes slash workers with very diverse circumstances and motivations. They could be positioned on a continuum from the strict need to combine jobs to survive to the desire to obtain extra income to spend on hobbies or unpredictable expenses, placing those for whom the additional paid employment constitutes a safety net in case of possible adverse circumstances in the main activity in an intermediate position. For most interviewees who argue financial reasons for engaging in an extra job, becoming a slash worker has not been a choice; it is more of a survival strategy. Two types of circumstances lead to this strategy: extreme precariousness and a specific and temporary need to increase income.

- For those who claim “passionate” reasons, their primary motivation is not financial but to enrich their work experience by developing their creative nature, artistic concerns or vocational activity. Still, the economic reason is always present. The most widespread profile among them is those trying to find the balance between self-fulfilment at work and economic sustainability by adopting a “double life”. A second, less numerous profile is that of those who prioritise diversity in job tasks. They do not just look for meaning and purpose in their work experience; they seek, besides, and above all, variety.
- Within the “passionate” driver, all country reports suggest a notable presence of slash workers who perform at least one of their jobs in the arts, entertainment or culture industries. These workers' motivations, reasonings, and labour practices represent the “new mystique” attached to work, affecting a growing number of workers in all sectors.
- Many of our interviewees have accessed their additional job through digital platforms. The outcomes of the SWIRL project seem to evidence a bidirectional relationship between platforms and slash work. On the one hand, platforms generate job opportunities that ease workers to diversify their paid activities, thus fostering the spread of slash workers. On the other hand, the extension of slash workers helps create the social conditions for the platform work model's sustainability as it is currently operating. A second job in the "conventional" market provides the job security and income sufficiency necessary to make digital work desirable.
- Country reports describe a complex and diversified network of contractual arrangements leading to a multifaceted scenario or "labour ecosystem" regarding rights and access to social protection and labour related benefits. The interviewees create this employment ecosystem using their educational, personal and professional backgrounds, interest and talents. Some have maintained a slash status throughout their working life. Others, after a series of periods in specific or several sectors, begin to combine different activities.
- None of our interviewees has expressed specific requirements for social protection or collective representation as slash workers. The protection gaps described and the types of organisations they feel represented by are related to the particular situations or conditions of each of their work activities or employment situations.
- Being a slash worker reduces the perception of insecurity concerning protection against social risks. This observation may be conditioned because, in all the countries involved in the study, the selected sample includes a high proportion of informants with open-ended contracts in their primary activity. However, social protection is a prominent issue among those who have temporary contracts, for those who are self-employed or freelancers and, especially in Bulgaria, for those who work in the informal economy. In general, except in the cases where all the jobs are carried out under these work

situations, our results do not suggest specific problems related to social protection rights inherent to slash worker status.

- Regarding schedules, a common and almost inevitable experience for slash workers is heavy workloads and very long working days or weeks, varying according to their status and whether they combined various part-time activities or a full-time main activity with secondary activities. One primary requirement for slash work is that the different jobs need to be compatible. Usually, this relates to the flexible or seasonal nature of one or two of the activities performed, which allow workers to manage their time. Actually, flexibility, together with skills and task diversity and autonomy, can be considered almost one precondition for slash work. Janu's face of this is the tiring set of activities and side roles related to the different jobs that heavily increases their workload.
- Concerning income, there are a (very) few cases in which the primary activity or the combination of activities provides a satisfactory and more than sufficient to live. However, in many others, the discourses around income point at underpayments, difficulties in covering expenses, uncertainty, and variability. This instability relates to income and an overarching issue that characterises slash work, particularly for non-permanent workers and self-employed.
- Slash work is done at the expense of free time and other possible responsibilities; therefore, the family may intensely conditions work choices. It does not seem easy for many interviewees to maintain a healthy balance between work and other spheres of life, particularly caregiving obligations. Given persisting gender inequalities in care and unpaid work distribution, this situates women in a challenging situation.
- Slash workers' involvement in collective representation or labour or professional mobilisations is somewhat limited in all countries. The few cases in which this involvement has occurred are related exclusively to a single job, usually the primary one. Unions' internal organisation's sectoral base suggested by all country reports can constitute an obstacle for the organisation of workers who, like slash workers, operate in different fields.
- Still, there is an apparent demand for forms of representation that fit slash workers' specific needs. On the one hand, they are interested in protecting matters such as labour law compliance, disagreement and conflicts with the employer, job security issues, working hours arrangements, or labour conflicts. On the other hand, they demand alternative organisations that allow them to have contacts with colleagues, training, and help with fiscal and administrative issues.
- The corona crisis has had adverse effects on at least one of almost all the interviewees' jobs. Even many of those who did not see their earnings deeply affected suffer mild anxiety about the future. The online workers might have been the least affected by the

COVID-19 crisis. The offline workers, not developing on essential services, were, in general, more heavily impacted by the situation, although many of the high skills ones could turn to telework. Within the online and offline workers, one of their jobs was usually hit by the crisis, frequently the offline job if it required face-to-face interaction with other people.

- In general terms, self-employed and temporary workers have experienced particularly detrimental impacts due to the pandemic situation. Conversely, salaried employees with open-ended contracts did not undergo particularly disruptive effects, given the possibility of teleworking or being eligible for the specific socio-economic anti-crisis measures. In any case, it seems that, for many of the interviewees, the slash status has been like a lifesaver.
- Concerning family and household relations, having other income earners who balance the COVID-19's crisis harmful effects of job loss or fluctuation is mentioned as a protecting circumstance. Additionally, we have observed substantial gender inequalities in how this crisis is experienced; female respondents declare that extra family responsibilities derived from school closure were additional stress factors, particularly in telework.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX I. Guidelines for the interviews

Open-ended qualitative interviews should be conducted with the following guidelines:

A. SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL PROFILES AND LABOUR SITUATIONS

1. Worker's socio-professional profile

1.1. Sex, age, nationality, level of education /qualification

1.2. Household economic situation, composition and responsibilities; any care commitments for children, the elderly or the disabled; are these responsibilities shared or is worker the sole provider?

1.3. Previous work experience, city where he/she works, sectors, standard terms of work/employment in the sector where SW works (i.e. fixed term/long term/self-employed, etc.). How long has s/he done more than one job? Languages spoken/used for work.

2. Reasons that explain his/her status as slash-worker (SW) (option / necessity, to generate additional income to his/her main job, a way to make money until he/she finds a more stable alternative, to gain experience- skills' recognition – visibility, to meet new business partners, etc.).

3. SW labour situation: average number of total working hours per week/month; are there considerable monthly fluctuations in income (for example seasonal work)? income generated (expenses if self-employed); type of contract/s (if employed); legal traps in type of contract (problems in receiving social benefits); social security benefits (pensions, holidays, sick leaves, parental leaves).

4. Companies/platform(s) where the SW works:

4.1. Period working in each company/platform, way the SW got to know the company/platform.

4.2. General characteristics of the company/ digital platform.

4.3. Characteristics of employer/ contractor, workers and clients.

4.4. Working methods, processes and procedures (including: organizational structure, recruiting and selection process, workers' skills, qualification and specific requirements, training sessions, type of contract / terms and conditions of the employer/ contractor-employee/worker agreement or alternatively terms of service, tasks' description and assignment, **online/offline tasks**, fixed/variable working hours, ability to choose time slots, form of payment, **registration fee** for clients and/or workers, reporting system to grade SWs' performance, penalizations, **public/private profile of the SW**, etc.). (ITEMS HIGHLIGHTED IN BOLD SHOULD ONLY BE ASKED TO PLATFORM WORKERS)

4.5. Relations with colleagues/coworkers, membership to professional communities/associations etc

4.6. Availability and accessibility of the worker to the employer, customer or client; flexibility; security; autonomy and control; self-management and motivation; regular/irregular working hours; conflicts -if any-, etc.).

B. WORKERS' SELF-PERCEPTION AND ASSESSMENT OF THEIR SITUATION

5. Results and consequences of being a slash worker.

5.1. Perception about strengths and weaknesses of company's/platforms' working conditions.

- 5.2. Perception about strengths and weaknesses of being a SW (advantages and disadvantages, challenges, perception of performance as compared to other workers;
- 5.3. How do they perceive themselves? As being their own bosses? Managers of their knowledge and skills? As precarious workers? Both? How do they make sense or face their situation, with its ambivalences and contradictions (autonomy, freedom, entrepreneurs of themselves / availability requirement, extreme flexibility, intermittent/sporadic/unforeseeable income?
- 5.4. Perception of the need / difficulty of work-life balance. How is it managed?
- 5.5. During COVID-19 crisis: Is this kind of work perceived as a protection or risk factor during the emergency? Has platform-mediated work increased or decreased as a result? How does he/she envision future scenarios (continuity as a SW)?

C. PROTECTION AND REPRESENTATION NEEDS, ASPIRATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

- 7. Protection needs and aspirations and representation needs and aspirations (legal framework: subject to any collective agreement, rights to social security benefits, etc.)
- 8. Collective resistances.
 - 8.1. Workers' experiences of activation and mobilization regarding protection and representation needs.
 - 8.2. Relations with actors such as trade unions, associations and other relevant organizations (role of trade unions- outreaching workers, efforts to organize or self-organize, legal strategies, collective representation, negotiations and conflicts -if applicable).
 - 8.3. General feelings towards trade unions, past experiences, if any.
 - 8.4. Individual resistance, if any.

ANNEX II. TABLES - Fieldwork specifications: date, time, type of contact and duration

Table 3. BULGARIAN INTERVIEWS

On line	High or medium-skilled jobs (missions and projects);				Unskilled jobs (tasks);			
	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration
	BG_1.1	2.06.2020	Phone call	65 m	BG_2.1	20.06.2020	Video conversation	52 m
	BG_1.2	1.06.2020	Video conversation	60 m				
	BG_1.3	21.07.2020	Phone call	53 m				
Off line	High or medium-skilled jobs (missions and projects);				Unskilled jobs (tasks);			
	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration
	BG_3.1	4.06.2020	Video conversation	30 m	BG_4.1	3.06.2020	Phone call	35 m
	BG_3.2	9.06.2020	Video conversation	60 m	BG_4.2	23.06.2020	Phone call	45 m
	BG_3.3	3.06.2020	Phone call	32 m	BG_4.3	17.07.2020	Video conversation	54 m
					BG_4.4	24.07.2020	Video conversation	35 m
					BG_4.5	27.07.2020	Video conversation	50 m
On line + Off line	High or medium-skilled jobs (missions and projects);				Unskilled jobs (tasks);			
	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration
	BG_5.1	2.06.2020	Phone call	40 m	BG_6.1	4.06.2020	Phone call	52 m
	BG_5.2	18.06.2020	Video conversation	57 m	BG_6.2	1.06.2020	Phone call	43 m
	BG_5.3	23.07.2020	Video conversation	44 m	BG_6.3	4.06.2020	Face-2-face interview	75 m
	BG_5.4	21.07.2020	Phone call	49 m				
	BG_5.5	28.07.2020	Phone call	42 m				

Table 4. FRENCH INTERVIEWS

On line	High or medium-skilled jobs				Unskilled jobs			
	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration
	FR_2.2	09.07.2020	Video conversation	0h 54m	FR_3.3	28.07.2020	Video conversation	0h 25m
FR_2.4	10.07.2020	Phone call	0h 38m					
Off line	High or medium-skilled jobs				Unskilled jobs			
	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration
	FR_1.1	12.06.2020	Video conversation	1h 26m	FR_4.1	16.10.2020	Phone call	0h 31m
	FR_1.2	02.07.2020	Video conversation	1h 10m	FR_4.2	21.10.2020	Phone call	0h 53m
	FR_1.3	13.07.2020	Video conversation	1h 14m				
	FR_1.5	14.09.2020	In person	1h 30m				
	FR_1.6	03.10.2020	Phone call	0h 47m				
On line + Off line	High or medium-skilled jobs				Unskilled jobs			
	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration
	FR_2.1	08.07.2020	Phone call	1h 05m	FR_3.1	23.07.2020	Video conversation	0h 42m
	FR_2.3	06.07.2020	Phone call	0h 34m	FR_3.2	27.07.2020	Video conversation	0h 40m
	FR_1.4	17.07.2020	Video conversation	0h 24m	FR_3.4	04.08.2020	Video conversation	0h 40m
				FR_3.5	05.08.2020	Video conversation	0h 36m	

Table 5. GERMAN INTERVIEWS

On line	High or medium skilled jobs				Unskilled jobs (tasks)			
	Code	Date of interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of interview	Type of contact	Duration
	DE_1	7.9.2020	Skype interview - Upwork	37m				
	High skilled or medium jobs				Unskilled jobs (tasks)			
Off line	Code	Date of interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of interview	Type of contact	Duration
	DE_2	30.7.2020	Face-to-face (personal contact)	1h03 m	DE_13	25.09.20	Via zoom (Facebook contact)	45m
	DE_3	18.6.2020	Skype interview – Smart DE newsletter	38m				
	DE_4	11.8.2020	Teams interview – Smart DE newsletter	54m				
	DE_5	1.8.2020	Face-to-face	58 m				
	High skilled or medium jobs				Unskilled jobs (tasks)			
On line + Off line	Code	Date of interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of interview	Type of contact	Duration
	DE_6	19.8.2020	Skype – Smart DE newsletter	55m	DE_14	14.10.20	Via zoom - Helping platform	65m
	DE_7	2.9.2020	Teams - Upwork	1h06 m	DE_15	1.10.20	Phone call (Mach du das)	45m
	DE_8	14.9.2020	Via Zoom Grazie app	42m				

Table 6. ITALIAN INTERVIEWS

On line	High or medium-skilled jobs				Unskilled jobs			
	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration
	IT_1.1	23.07.2020	Phone call	1h 14m	IT_2.1	17.07.2020	Phone call	1h 12 m
Off line	HIGH OR MEDIUM-SKILLED JOBS				UNSKILLED JOBS			
	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration
	IT_3.1	06.07.2020	Phone call	1h 8m	IT_4.1	30.07.2020	Phone call	28 m
	IT_3.2	06.07.2020	Phone call	40 m				
	IT_3.3	14.07.2020	Phone call	60 m				
	IT_3.4	09.07.2020	Phone call	1h 4 m				
	IT_3.5	17/07/2020	Phone call	39 m				
	IT_3.6	23/06/2020	Phone call	1h.10 m				
	IT_3.7	5/06/2020	Phone call	1h.30m				
	IT_3.8	23/06/2020	Phone call	1h.5 m				
	IT_3.9	30/06/2020	Phone call	1h.6m				
	IT_3.10	23/06/2020	Phone call	45m				
	IT_3.11	04/06/2020	Phone call	1h.20m				
	IT_3.12	10/06/2020	Phone call	1h.3m				
	IT_3.13	24/06/2020	Phone call	40m				
	IT_3.14	24/06/2020	Phone call	1h.15m				
	IT_3.15	19/07/2020	Phone call	50m				
IT_3.16	16/07/2020	Phone call	55m					
Online + offline	High or medium-skilled jobs				Unskilled jobs			
	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration
	IT_5.1	17.07.2020	Phone call	47 m	IT_6.1	17.07.2020	Phone call	1h 7m
	IT_5.2	17.07.2020	Video conversation	1h 8m				
	IT_5.3	08.07.2020	Video conversation	1h 10m				
	IT_5.4	01.09.2020	Phone call	1h 35m				
	IT_5.5	02.09.2020	Phone call	1h 22m				
	IT_5.6	02.09.2020	Phone call	36 m				
	IT_5.7	02.09.2020	Phone call	1h 9m				
IT_5.8	17.07.2020	Phone call	1h 16m					

Table 7. SPANISH INTERVIEWS

On line	High or medium-skilled jobs				Unskilled jobs			
	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration
	ES_1.1	03.08.2020	Video conversation	22m55s	ES_2.1	24.06.2020	Video conversation	01h12m52s
ES_1.2	27.07.2020	Video conversation	01h11m12s	ES_2.2	13.07.2020	Video conversation	01h21m20s	
Off line	HIGH OR MEDIUM-SKILLED JOBS				UNSKILLED JOBS			
	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration
	ES_3.1	10.06.2020	In person	42m51s	ES_4.1	16.06.2020	In person	1h12m50s
	ES_3.2	18.06.2020	In person	53m41s	ES_4.2	07.07.2020	Video conversation	44m33s
	ES_3.3	03.07.2020	Video conversation	1h20m:05s	ES_4.3	20.07.2020	Video conversation	01h03m38s
	ES_3.4	14.06.2020	Video conversation	1h13m52s				
	ES_3.5	10.06.2020	Video conversation	1h59.10				
	ES_3.6	15.06.2020	Video conversation	33m.44s				
	ES_3.7	17.06.20	Video conversation	42m30s				
	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration	Code	Date of the interview	Type of contact	Duration
	ES_5.1	29.07.2020	Video conversation	41m50s	ES_6.1	23.06.2020	In person	48m58s
	ES_5.2	10.07.2020	Video conversation	29m26s				
	ES_5.3	10.07.2020	Video conversation	30m44s				
	ES_5.4	21.06.2020	In person	33m25s				
	ES_5.5	03.07.2020	In person	44m27s				
	ES_5.6	18.06.2020	Video conversation	1h05m49				

ANNEX III. TABLES - Interviewees' working and employment conditions

Table 8 – Online slash workers

	High or medium-skilled jobs (missions and projects);							Unskilled jobs (tasks);								
	Code	Gender	Age	Marital status	Educational level	Field of education	Professions	Main job status	Code	Gender	Age	Marital status	Educational level	Field of education	Professions	Main job status
Remote - Online	BG_1.1	Female	42	Living with partner, one child aged 9	Master degree	History of Art; Teacher of fine arts	Art teacher / Photographer / Designer	Permanent employee	BG_2.1	Female	21	Single	Student	Sociology	Cashier in a bakery / Click worker	Fixed-term employee
	BG_1.2	Male	50	Living with partner, two children	PhD candidate	Economy	Media planner / Copywriter / Graphic designer	Permanent employee	FR_3.3	Female	27	Living with a partner, 2 children	Technical degree	Clerical work	Administrative secretary / Micro-worker	Self-employed
	BG_1.3	Female	39	Living with partner, one child aged 2,5	Master degree	Marketing; IT	Product manager / Designer	Permanent employee	IT_2.1	Female	27	Single	Secondary education + University student	Hospitality	University student / Management of Airbnb apartments / Survey online	Self-employed
	FR_2.2	Male	30-35	Living with partner + 1 young child	Master degree	History + Graphical design	Freelance graphic designer	MDA - self-employed	ES_2.1	Male	37	Living with a partner	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Physics Education	Food delivery rider / Amazon Flex	Self-employed
	FR_2.4	Male	25-30	Single	Master degree	Political sciences	Journalist	Pigiste - Self-employed	ES_2.2	Male	41	Separated	Secondary education	Dropped out Bachelor degrees in Biology and Business	Food delivery rider / Uber-eats)	Self-employed
	IT_1.1	Male	53	Partner (non-cohabiting)	Secondary	Communities development	Communication / Food delivery rider	Self-employed								
	DE_1 nationality: Japanese	Female	33	Single	B.A.	Tourism	Translator / Customer support/Travel planning	Self-employed (freelance) / Fixed term employee								
	ES_1.1	Female	34	Living with a partner, one child, aged 14 months old	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Psychology	Copywriter / Social Media (Platform)	Self-employed								
	ES_1.2	Male	65	Living with a partner, one child aged 11	Secondary education	Dropped out Bachelor degrees in Psychology and Anthropology	Journalist / Youtuber / Translator	Self-employed								

Table 9 – Offline worker (I)

Code	Gender	Age	Marital status	High or medium-skilled jobs (missions and projects);				Unskilled jobs (tasks);								
				Educational level	Field of education	Professions	Main job status	Code	Gender	Age	Marital status	Educational level	Field of education	Professions	Main job status / secondary	
BG_3.1	Male	61	Single	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Pedagogy	Teacher / DJ	Permanent employee	BG_4.1	Male	45	Living with a partner, two children aged 4 and 7	Bachelor degree	Leadership and conducting of folk ensembles	Musician (Bagpiper)/Bartender/cook / Construction and repair works	Fixed-term contract / Permanent labour contract as a musician	
BG_3.2	Male	48	living with a partner, two children aged 6 and 9	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Law	Sound engineer / DJ / Book restorer	Permanent employee	BG_4.2	Male	23	Single	University student	Electronics	Home food delivery /Work in car-washing centre	Part-time employee	
BG_3.3	Male	42	living with a partner, two children aged 9 and 13	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Electronic engineer; Software development	IT/Repairs/Real estate	Permanent employee	BG_4.3	Female	29	Single	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Art	Decorator at social service organisation / Stylist	Fix-term employee	
FR_1.1	Male	40-45	Single	Bachelor degree + professional qualification	Art + Sound engineering	Artist / Sound engineer	Intermittent (freelance) / vacataire - fixed term employee	BG_4.4	Female	21	Single	Secondary education	Vocal school	Beautician / Food delivery rider	Informal job / Employee	
FR_1.2	Female	40-45	Single	Master degree	Art	Artist / Stage manager / Stagehand	MDA - Self employed	BG_4.5	Male	50	Single	Secondary education	Typography	Constructions / Gardening / Other unskilled jobs	Informal job	
FR_1.3	Male	40-45	Single	Master degree + professional qualification	Art + Sound engineering	Artist / Sound engineer	MDA / vacataire - fixed term employee	FR_4.1. Nationality: Algerian	Male	25-30	Single	Technical degree	Electrical engineering	Food delivery rider	Self-employed	
FR_1.5	Male	25-30	Single	Master degree + Professional certification	Law + Journalism + Creative Writing for the film industry	Scenarist / Production assistant	MDA - Self employed	FR_4.2	Male	30-35	Single	Master degree	Management of humanitarian projects	Food delivery rider / Union coordinator	Permanent employee / Part time fixed-term employee	
FR_1.6	Female	30-35	Single	Master degree	Sociology + Publishing	Association director / Production Assistant	Intermittent	IT_4.1	Female	45	Living with a partner, 2 children	Secondary education	Aesthetician	Aesthetician / Shop assistant	Employee /Informal job	
IT_3.1	Male	39	partner (no cohabiting)	Master degree	Political science	Project manager / Translator	Employee / Self-employed	DE 13 Nationality: DE	Male	28	Living with a partner	Bachelor	Social Sciences	Bar keeper / Construction work assistant / Seminars in political education / Animator at an elderly people's home	Part-time employee / Freelance	

Local - Offline (I)	IT_3.2	Female	42	partner (no cohabiting)	Master degree	Language and translation	Retail (shop assistant) / publishing industry / traslation	Employee / Employee	ES_4.1	Male	36	Single	Secondary education	Self-taught mechanics	Bicycle mechanic / Theatrical and artistic assemblies	Self-employed / Fixed-term Employee / Informal job
	IT_3.3	Female	47	Living with a partner	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Physical science and sport management	Journalist / Pilates teacher	Self-employed / Collaboration	ES_4.2	Male	55	Separated (two children live with the mother)	Secondary education	Self-taught electricity - sound technician	Electrician / DJ	Fixed-term Employee / Informal job
	IT_3.4	Female	60	living with a partner, 2 children	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Language and translation	Translator / interpreter	Self-employed	ES_4.3	Male	38	Living with friends - flatmates	Secondary education	Dropped out of university degree in Philosophy	Hypermarket worker / Thermomix salesperson / Pastry cook	Permanent Full time employee / Informal job
	IT_3.5	Male	30	partner (no cohabiting)	Secondary education + dancing academy's diploma	Dance+ retail (Helping)	Dance teacher/ customers' assistance and helpdesk	Part time Employee / Self-employed								
	IT_3.6	Female	35	Living with a partner, one child	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Economics of cultural heritage	Photographer / social media manger	Self-employed								
	IT_3.7	Female	35	Partner (no cohabiting)	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Arts + master	Shop assistance at Venice Biennale / performer / educator	Fixed-term employee / Occasional collaboration								
	IT_3.8	Female	52	Single	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Psychology	Teacher/therapist/court consultant/psychological counsellor in kindergarten and drug rehab	Self-employed								
	IT_3.9	Female	47	Single	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Foreign languages	Theatre and dance teacher in secondary school/body mind centring teacher/dancer and actress	Permanent employee / Fixed-term employee								
	IT_3.10	Female	32	Partner (no cohabiting)	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Literature	Blogger / translator / proofreader	Self-employed / Transfer of copyright								
	IT_3.11	Male	36	Partner (no cohabiting)	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Art History	soccer coach/university researcher/workers at Venice Biennale	Self-employed (COCOCO) / Fixed-term contracts								

Local - Offline (11)	IT_3.12	Male	42	Partner (no cohabiting)	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Literature	artistic director for a music and dance festival /social media manager in musical filed	Self-employed (COCOCO) /Self-employed
	IT_3.13	Female	31	Partner (no cohabiting)	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Literature + journalism	social media manager/Journalist	Self-employed / Fixed-term employee
	IT_3.14	Female	37	Single parent, one child	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Law	Journalist/ TV author/video game design teacher/ video game consultant	Self-employed
	IT_3.15	Male	39	Partner (no cohabiting)	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Journalism	Call centre operator/actress/ watercolour teacher	Self-employed
	IT_3.16	Female	48	Divorced with two children	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Literature	Artist (live theatre) / call centre / training	Fixed-term employee / Permanent employee
	DE 2 Nationality: DE/GR	Male	30	Living with a partner	Vocational dual training; technician degree	Machine building	Technician (regular unlimited work contract)/taxi owner-driver	Permanent full time employee / Self-employed
	DE 3 Nationality: US	Male	30	Single	H.S. (GED) S.F. Ballet academy	Dance and general education	Dancer/choreographer	Self-employed (freelance)
	DE 4 Nationality: US/UK	Female	50	Living with a partner	Masters	Social Sciences; Commerce	Manager/Freelance start-up consultant	Self-employed (freelance)
	DE 5 Nationality: DE	Male	32	Living with a partner	B.A.	IT; computer aided design	CAD Engineer/surfboard design and sales	Permanent full time employee / Self-employed (family enterprise)
ES_3.1	Female	51	Living with a partner, two children aged 18 and 14 from a previous marriage, stepdaughter, grandmother	Master degree	Tourism	Tourist guide / Scientific events for kids	Self-employed	

Local - Offline (IV)	ES_3.2	Female	29	Separated, one child aged 8	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Advertising and Public Relations	Fleet management (Glovo) // Yoga instructor. Covid period teleworking	Full time Employee / Informal job
	ES_3.3	Male	44	Living with a partner	PhD	Architecture / Master in Social Research	Artist-Musician / Educational workshops /Part-time university lecturer. Covid period teleworking	Self-employed
	ES_3.4	Female	43	Living with a partner	Master degree	Architecture / Master in Social Research/ Self-taught programming	Programmer at European Commission / Artistic practices. Covid period teleworking	Self-employed
	ES_3.5	Male	44	separated, 2 children aged 8 and 6	Master degree	Humanities, Advertising and Public Relations Master in Economics	Cultural management company/ hotel manager/ trainer. Covid period teleworking	Self-employed
	ES_3.6	Female	47	living with a partner, 2 adult children living on their own	Master degree	Primary School Teaching in primary. Master in Family, Expert in Positive Psychology and Mindfulness	Trainer / Insurance salesperson. Covid period teleworking	Part-time contract /self employed
	ES_3.7	Female	46	living with a partner, 3 children (2 from previous marriage, youngest one aged 10)	Degree	Tourism	Telecommunication company (Telefonica) Covid period teleworking /Thematic events for kids	Full time employee/ Self-employed

Table 10. Online + Offline slash workers

High or medium-skilled jobs (missions and projects);								Unskilled jobs (tasks);							
Code	Gender	Age	Marital status	Educational level	Field of education	Professions	Main job status	Code	Gender	Age	Marital status	Educational level	Field of education	Professions	Main job status / secondary
BG_5.1	Male	49	living with a partner, two children aged 12 and 19	Master degree	Economy	Hairdresser / IT	Permanent employee / Fixed-term employee	BG_6.1	Female	43	Single parent, one child below 5 years of age	Master degree	National Academy of Theatre and Film Arts	Assistant director/data entry	Permanent employee / Fixed-term employee
BG_5.2	Male	48	living with a partner, one child aged 9	Master degree	Financing and accounting	Financial analyst / Mountain guide	Permanent employee / informal job	BG_6.2	Female	37	Single	Master degree	Marketing	Financier / Yoga instructor / Representative of essential oils	Permanent employee / informal job
BG_5.3	Female	50	living with a partner, two children aged 28 and 19	Master degree	Journalism	creative director / Airbnb host / Writing therapist	Permanent employee / Self-employed	BG_6.3	Female	31	Single parent, two children aged 5 and 10	Secondary	Secondary Education	Domestic cleaning / Trade representative	Permanent employee / informal job
BG_5.4	Female	51	living with a partner	Master degree	English Philology	Freelance translator / Lecturer / Consultant	Fixed-term employee / Self-employed	FR_3.1	Female	30-35	Living with a partner	PhD	Neurobiology	Researcher / Micro-worker	Fixed-term employee
BG_5.5	Male	30	living with a partner, no child (pregnant spouse)	Master degree	Graphic design	Graphic designer / Lecturer / Illustrator	Employee / Fixed-term employee	FR_3.2	Female	40-45	Single	Technical degree	Sales and clerical work	Administrative secretary / Micro-worker	Fixed-term employee
FR_2.1	Female	40-45	Single	PhD	Spanish + Political sciences	Author / Head hunter / Freelance researcher	EURL Self-employed (freelance)	FR_3.4	Female	55-60	Living with a partner	Technical degree	Sales and clerical work	Administrative secretary / Micro-worker	Fixed-term part time employee
FR_2.3	Female	20-25	Single	Technical degree	Graphic design	Freelance / part time employed graphic designer	Self-employed (freelance) / Fixed-term employee	FR_3.5	Female	40-45	Living with a partner, 2 children	Technical Degree	Paediatric nurse	Paediatric nurse / Micro-worker	Permanent employee
FR_1.4	Male	25-30	Single	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Software engineering + Communication and event planning	Communication consultant: Freelance / Employed	Permanent employee / Self-employed (freelance)	IT_6.1	Male	40	Separate with a child	High school degree	Technician	In the past: Retail in supermarket / food delivery rider (various platforms)	Employee / Self-employed
IT_5.1	Female	40	Partner (no cohabiting)	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Languages	Secretary / gig work in Upwork	Employee / Self-employed	DE 14 Nationality: Argentinian	Female	27	Living with a partner	BA	Theater education	Cleaner (via Helping.de) / kitchen assistant	Informal jobs

Remote and local (both online and offline)

Online + Offline	IT_5.2	Female	28	Partner (no cohabiting)	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Marketing + e-commerce	E-commerce / journalist /copyrighter	Permanent employee / Collaboration	DE 15 Nationality: DE	Female	46	Single parent, one child	Vocational training as foreign language secretary/assistant	Secretarial/ Translation	companion for elderly people (freelance, unskilled) Freelance foreign language secretary/	Fixed-term part time contracts
	IT_5.3	Female	28	Single	Master degree	Language and communication	Communication agency /journalist	Employee / Self-employed	ES_6.1	Female	29	Living with a partner, one child aged 4	Vocational training/ Professional qualification	Caraterización. Animación sociocultural	Shop assistant and make-up (in shifts) / Tourist apartments / Crochet	Fixed-term part time employee / Informal job
	IT_5.4	Male	40	Living with a partner, two children	Master degree	Economics	Finance analyst / English teacher	Employee / Self-employed								
	IT_5.5	Female	41	Living with a partner, two children	Secondary education	Social services	Retail/customer service / food/cooking	Employee / Collaboration								
	IT_5.6	Female	34	Single	PhD	Chemistry	Legal / retail	Employee / Collaboration								
	IT_5.7	Male	38	Partner (no cohabiting)	Master degree	Physics	Marketing analyst / counsellor	Employee / Collaboration								
	IT_5.8	Male	38	Single	High school degree	Electronic technician	Retail/logistic / survey online	Self-employed / Collaboration								
	DE 6 Nationality: IRE	Male	49	Single	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Theoretical Physics/Applied math	Teacher/IT Data Analyst	Fixed-term employee / Self-employed (freelance)								
	DE 7 Nationality: ICE/DE	Male	41	Single	Bank vocational training/B.A.	International Econ. and Management	Furniture Store Owner and Manager/Systems analyst	Permanent full time employee / Self-employed (freelance)								
	DE 8 Nationality: DE/TR	Male	28	Living with a partner	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	Hotel Management; International business	Military; Online electronics shop; café owner	Permanent Full time employee / Self-employed								
DE 9 Nationality: DE/PL	Male	33	Living with a partner	Bachelor degree (or equivalent)	IT, software develop.	Software installation and maintenance/ Amazon cosmetic products online store	Self-employed (freelance)									
DE 10 Nationality: DE	Female	53	Living with a partner, 2 children	PhD	Biology	Part-time teacher (sustainability and natural sciences)/illustrator (online)	Informal job									

