



# Hybrid(solo)self employment and upskilling?

Is online platform work a path to  
entrepreneurship?

Session 2: Crowdlearn-based research

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# Motivation and background

## COVID-19: ACCELERATOR OF **DIGITAL TRANSITION**

flexible / remote working and learning

### GROWTH IN NON-STANDARD, **'HYBRID'** EMPLOYMENT

a.k.a multiple job-holding  
or job portfolios

### GROWTH IN **(DIGITAL) SOLO SELF-EMPLOYMENT**

### GROWTH IN **ICT-BASED WORK,** particularly **online platform work / gig work /crowdwork**

**5-35%**

of US working population  
moonlights

**11%**

earn some part of  
income through platforms

**4-14%**

of EU+ adult workforce  
moonlights

**2%**

platform work as main  
income source

**17%**

of working age adults  
are internet workers

**4%**

are platform workers



# Focus and hypotheses

To what extent is crowdwork...?

- **proto-entrepreneurship** (*Bogenhold and Klinglmair, 2017*) or masked 'dependent' employment (*Williams and Horodnic, 2018*)?
- driven by **pull or push** factors e.g. skills-based labour market transitions (*Paxson and Sicherman, 1996; Panos et al., 2015; Barnes et al, 2015; Cedefop, 2020, 2021*)?
- **career ladder** or dead end (*Pouliakas, 2017*)?

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Does digital **hybrid entrepreneurship** (*Folta et al., 2010; Bogenhold, 2019*) spur learning and skill formation?

**What skills** are mostly developed in digital hybrid entrepreneurship?

What moderates this relationship e.g. **entrepreneurial aptitude**?

Can proto-entrepreneurship be a stepping stone to **full self-employment**?

# Data and **descriptive statistics**

## **Cedefop's Crowdlearn**

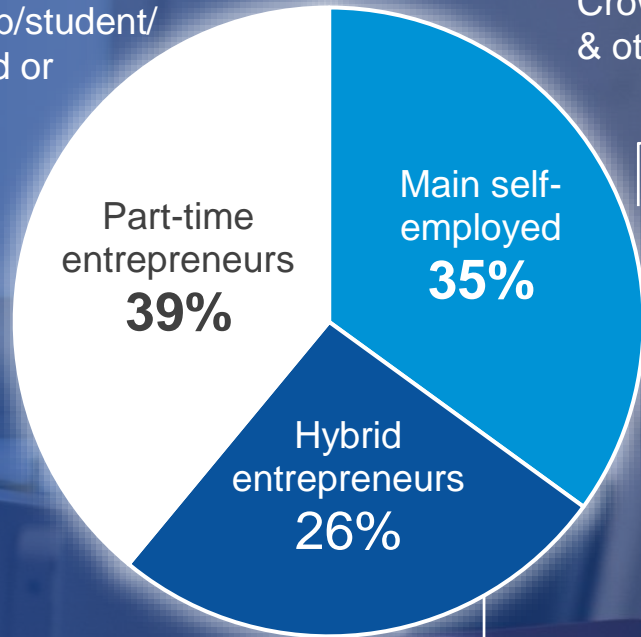
- Robust international dataset of digital platform workers
- Collected in two waves 2019-20
- 2 005 crowdworkers (online freelancers & microworkers)
- 6 EU countries (FI, FR, DE, IT, RO, ES) & UK
- Working in four major labour platforms (Upwork, PPH, Fiver, AMT)

## **Extensive information on:**

- Main employment status & hybridity
- Self-employment/entrepreneurship attitude
- Motives for crowdwork e.g. own boss, income, skills
- Workplace learning (*Margaryan, 2022*) & skill development (10 skill types)
- Platform work satisfaction
- Individual features (gender, age, immigrant, education, experience)
- Platform work characteristics (tasks, hours, income share)

# Data and **descriptive statistics**

Self-employed & part-time job/student/unemployed or inactive



Crowdwork & other self-employed

Self-employed & full-time, regular, job

## Hybrids

- Males (HE) vs. females (PTE)
- Natives (HE)
- Younger & older (>54) (PTE)
- ↓ human capital (PTE)
- ↓ complex tasks
- ↓ crowdwork engagement
- Constraints (PTE), skills & intrinsic motives (HE)
- ↓ self-employed aptitude

➔ **Lower skill development**

Source: Cedefop's [Crowdlearn dataset](#)

# Empirical evidence and main insights

	Skills development	Skills development (entrepreneurship interaction)	Skills development (type of hybrid work)	Platform work satisfaction
hybrid digital self-employment	0.18**			0.09**
hybrid x entrepreneurship [yes]		0.30***		0.19***
hybrid x entrepreneurship [no]		0.02		0.22***
(base: no hybrid)				
hybrid entrepreneurship			0.30***	0.18***
part-time entrepreneurship			0.09	0.02
<b>Other control variables</b>				
entrepreneur	0.25***	-	0.26***	
want to be self-employed	0.19***	0.20***	0.20***	
female	0.21***	0.21***	0.23***	0.25***
high skill tasks	1.13***	1.15***	1.15***	0.44***
micro-worker	-0.25***	-0.25***	-0.27***	-0.02
age, education, immigrant, experience, hours, income share	x	x	x	x
Country dummies	x	x	x	x
Observations	1,997	1,997	1,997	1,997

Source: Cedefop's [Crowdlearn dataset](#)

# Main conclusions and policy relevance

## MAIN FINDINGS

By 'testing waters', hybrid crowdwork can spur additional and varied skill development

- Build-up of digital, technical and entrepreneurial skills (obtaining platform work)
- Low-risk staged entry & stability – key determinants of skill formation

Mediated by:

- individuals' aptitude towards entrepreneurship
- entry motives

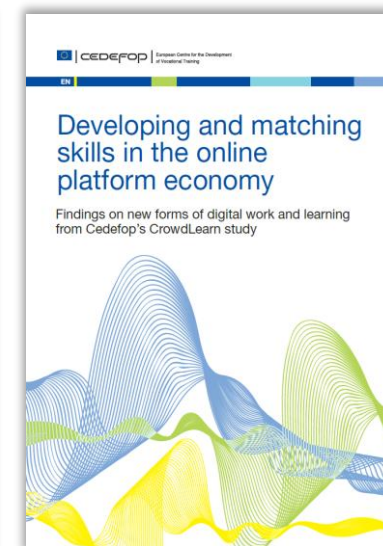
Lower effect on **part-time hybrids**, driven by necessity or lacking resources/stability

## POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- Importance of **stimulating entrepreneurial drive** via early education and training
- **Supporting (part-time) hybrids** (e.g. training subsidies, micro-internships, VET provision, access to finance, tax regulations, information provision, reduced entry barriers, start-up support)

# Thank you

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