



2030 on the horizon

skills in the online platform economy

30 June 2022
Virtual event

#CrowdLearn

POLICY INSIGHTS FROM CEDEFOP'S CROWDLEARN STUDIES

WEBINAR CONTEXT

Digitalisation, accentuated by the coronavirus pandemic, is blurring the boundaries between traditional and 'atypical' work, as is visible in the rise of online platform work, also known as crowdwork or gig work. Some experts highlight that the increasing use of online labour platforms as job market matchmakers can enable socially excluded individuals to overcome labour market barriers, increase earnings, improve work-life balance, and develop new skills to build or expand their career. Others view crowdwork more as an extreme form of digital solo-entrepreneurship that masks precarious or 'dependent' employment. They see it as 'virtual Tayloristic work', and emphasise challenges linked to remote work provision, work hybridisation, task fragmentation and solitary work organisation.

While discussions on the platform economy have paid a lot of attention to gig workers' social insurance insecurity and ambiguous employment classification, policy and research have been relatively silent on skills development and matching processes in platform work. Many questions about skill needs in crowdwork have been left unanswered. Is it effectively a digital sweatshop, entailing a race-to-the-bottom in terms of skill needs? Or can it serve as an environment conducive to skills development due to global talent competition and its task enrichment potential?

To provide insights into skills and learning in the online platform economy, Cedefop implemented its 'CrowdLearn' project during 2017-20. Using a mixed-method research approach focused on EU platform workers, the project draws information from five online labour platforms (UpWork, PeoplePerHour, Fiverr, Twago, and Amazon Mechanical Turk). The two CrowdLearn surveys – the first focused on online freelancers and the second on microworkers – are the first systematic approaches towards examining how EU platform workers develop their skills, and how they are matched to clients. The resulting data set contains rich evidence on crowdworkers' work preferences, nature of job tasks, workplace learning and skills development practices, along with other socio-demographic and job characteristics.

EVENT AIMS

Cedefop's webinar **2030 on the horizon: skills in the online platform economy** aims to present recent research and analysis findings based on Cedefop's unique CrowdLearn project, and reflect on their implications for European skills and education policy. In the context of the growth, sustainability and resilience ambitions of the **European Skills Agenda** and the **European Digital Strategy**, Cedefop's CrowdLearn findings aim to inform evidence-based policies on the **future of work**.

The webinar will:

- showcase the main results of Cedefop's **CrowdLearn studies** to policy analysts, researchers, platform economy stakeholders and social partners;
- present recent research and analysis using the CrowdLearn data set(s), focused on the determinants of workplace learning among platform workers, factors determining who is successful in remote platform work and why, relationship of platform work with self-employment and entrepreneurship potential, and inter-generational barriers to learning;
- feature a panel discussion with policy-makers and social partners to explore how to improve skills development and matching policies for platform work;
- disseminate the **CrowdLearn data set** and stimulate further research and analysis.

WEBINAR DETAILS

- Venue: virtual event on ZOOM platform
- Date/duration: 30 June 2022 – half-day event
- Format: presentations and policy panel session
- Working language: English



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Programme

THURSDAY 30 JUNE 2022
(all times are CET)

9.45-10.00

Welcome

Antonio Ranieri, Head of department for VET and skills, Cedefop

10.00-10.20

Session 1. Main findings of Cedefop's CrowdLearn project

Developing and matching skills in online platform work

Konstantinos Pouliakas, Cedefop

10.20-12.00

Session 2. CrowdLearn-based research

10.20-10.40

Crowdwork platforms as restrictive-expansive learning sites

Anoush Margaryan, Copenhagen Business School

10.40-11.00

Can labour market digitalisation increase social mobility?

Nicholas Martindale, Nuffield college, University of Oxford

Vili Lehdonvirta, Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford

..... **20-minute break**

11.20-11.40

Platform-certified: on the role of badges in online labour markets

Julian Albert, St Antony's college, University of Oxford

11.40-12.00

Hybrid (solo)self-employment and upskilling: is online platform work a path towards entrepreneurship?

Konstantinos Pouliakas and Antonio Ranieri, Cedefop

..... **10-minute Q&A session**

12.10-13.25

Session 3. Policy panel – Skills in online platform work

What skills policies for quality platform work?

- Annarosa Pesole, Italian Ministry of Labour and European Commission
- Jelena Sapic, Reshaping Work
- Iwona Ganko, ETF
- Thanos Moysiadis, Uber

13.25-13.30

Concluding remarks

Konstantinos Pouliakas, Cedefop

..... **End of webinar**