

Polish experience in digital platform employment measurement. The need for international harmonisation

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Digital Platform Employment (DPE) - a new form of work

- Transformation of the world of work by the digital economy
- A new opportunity for job creation and more flexible organization of the work
- Digital labour platforms can be classified into two broad categories: online web-based and location-based platforms
- A strong need for statistics on DPE (collaborative/gig/crowd)



Examples of studies on DPE for Poland

- Flash Eurobarometer (2016) surveyed Poles about the use of 'collaborative platforms' (as clients or workers)
- One study reported the number of freelance, remote and portfolio-based work (work based on free choice of assignments) in a total number of job openings posted by major work intermediaries (Gumtree and DeLab, 2017)
- Poznań University of Economics and Business study based on mobile big data obtained from advertisement systems on smartphones (for 2018–2020)
- The European Trade Union Institute (ETUI) has realised the Internet and Platform Work Survey (IPWS) since 2018

Why did Statistics Poland decide to do the pilot measurement?

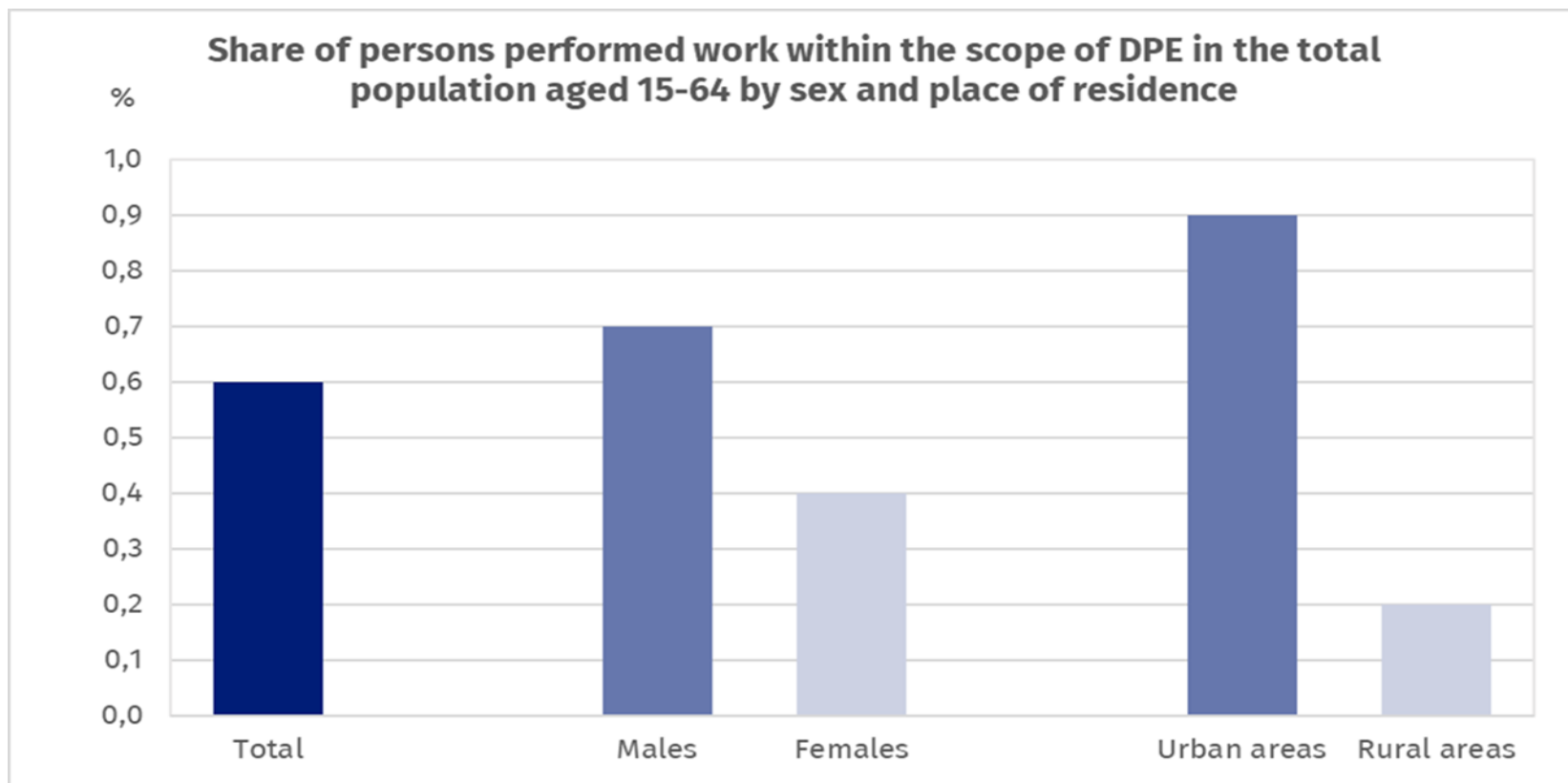
- To estimate the scale of the phenomenon in Poland and satisfy users
- To check a possibility to collect the data within LFS
- To use a few basic variables prepared by Eurostat and check how they work
- To get experience in DPE measurement and then use it for better preparation of the 2026 EU LFS ad hoc module

What was our approach?

- A part of the LFS sample (the last observation) in all quarters of 2022
- All persons aged 15 – 64 years
- DPE questions at the end of the core LFS questionnaire
- 5 questions used: 4 based on the EU pilot (1 complex one) with the introduction and 1 national question
- Eurostat guidelines used with some modifications (different reference period – last 12 months, some modified list of answers)

What was our approach?

- Introduction (as recommended by Eurostat) - explanation what it is about
- Questions on:
 - ✓ performance of any work generating income or pay via any online platform or mobile application for smartphones or tablets (13 types)
 - ✓ the character of the work (main, additional, mixed)
 - ✓ average hours worked per month within the last 12 months
 - ✓ the main type of work
 - ✓ employment status in digital platform work (national question)



Among the entire surveyed population (22850 thousand) of persons aged 15-64 years only **0.6% (130 thousand)** performed work within the scope of DPE in 2022

Recapitulation of the obtained results

- **87.7%** performed **only one kind of work** within the scope of DPE
- More often performed by **men (65.4%)** and **urban residents (86.2%)**
- The **most** represented age group (**33.8%**) is **40-49** years, but the **smallest** age group (**10.0%**) is the oldest one (**50-64 years**)
- The **most common type** of work was connected with **selling goods - 30.8%**
- An **additional/occasional** job for **44.6%**; for **24.6%** - the **main** job, **26.9%** with a **changed nature** (for the rest - impossible to determine the nature of this job)
- **63.8%** worked as a **self-employed person without employees**

Persons aged 15–64 years by the performance of work within the scope of DPE, sex and place of residence (in thousands)

Specification	Total surveyed persons	Persons who performed work within the scope of DPE		Persons who did not work within the scope of DPE
		total	of which persons who performed only one kind of work	
Total	22850	130	114	22719
Males	11431	85	73	11346
Females	11418	45	40	11373
Urban areas	13162	112	96	13050
Rural areas	9688	19	18	9669

Persons aged 15–64 years by the performance of work within the scope of DPE and age groups (in thousands)

Specification	Total surveyed persons	Persons who performed work within the scope of DPE					Persons who did not work within the scope of DPE
		Total	Males	Females	Urban areas	Rural areas	
Total	22850	130	85	45	112	19	22719
15 - 29 years	5441	40	30	10	36	4	5401
30 - 39 years	5251	34	22	12	29	5	5217
40 - 49 years	5477	44	28	16	38	6	5433
50 - 64 years	6681	13	6	7	9	4	6669

Values marked in red indicate unreliable data

Persons aged 15–64 years by the performance of work within the scope of DPE by the type of performed work (in thousands)

Specification	Total	Males	Females	Urban areas	Rural areas
Total	130	85	45	112	19
Taxi services	12	10	2	11	1
Delivery of food or any other goods	16	16	-	15	1
Renting out room, a house, or any accommodation	4	1	2	4	-
Selling any goods	40	21	19	30	10
Cleaning or handiwork, including plumbing, electrician works or similar	9	7	2	9	-
Care of children or elderly persons	3	1	2	2	1
Medical and health care services	-	-	-	-	-
Tutorials or teaching	8	3	5	8	-
Translations	1	-	1	-	1
IT services, such as programing, coding, web or graphic design	8	7	1	7	1
Online support or checks for the online contents	10	4	6	10	-
Creating contents, such as video or texts	7	5	2	6	1
Other services or work	13	9	4	11	2

Values marked in red indicate unreliable data

Persons aged 15–64 years performing work within the scope of DPE by the character of the performed work (in thousands)

Specification	Total	Males	Females	Urban areas	Rural areas
Total	130	85	45	112	19
<i>by the character of work performed within the scope of DPE:</i>					
For most or all the time of its performance, it was the main job	32	20	12	26	5
For most or all the time of its performance, it was an additional/occasional job	58	36	22	50	8
The character of this job often changed	35	24	11	31	5
Lack of answer	5	5	1	5	1
Values marked in red indicate unreliable data					

Persons aged 15–64 years performing work within the scope of DPE by employment status (in thousands)

Specification	Total	Males	Females	Urban areas	Rural areas
Total	130	85	45	112	19
<i>by employment status in the work performed within the scope of DPE:</i>					
Employee	41	29	12	36	4
Self-employed person without employees	83	53	29	71	12
Self-employed person with employees - employer	7	3	4	5	2

Values marked in red indicate unreliable data

Lessons learned

- The interviewers completed the feedback questionnaire
- DPE block at the end of the questionnaire in the last observation hindered obtaining complete and reliable answers
- Lack of any filter question (e.g. for persons not using the Internet)
- Too long and elaborated introduction
- Difficulties with understanding the notion of a digital platform
- Hard to collect via proxy interviews
- Examples of different platforms and activities necessary to be added

Work on the scope of variables to the DPE 2026

- Polish experience used in the TF work on the scope of DPE 2026 variables
- A reference period 'last 12 months' instead of a 'last calendar month'
- The average number of hours worked per month in the last 12 months instead of a number of hours worked in the last calendar month

These solutions will allow to get a better picture of the scale of the DPE – the information will be obtained for the entire population performing this kind of work, not just the part of people who worked only in the last month (which may differ from other months worked)

The need for a broader and harmonised approach

- OECD-ILO-EC Handbook on measuring the Digital Platform Employment and Work as the starting point
- The concept is operationalised differently across countries

Canada	Canada Internet Use survey	Provided platform-based peer-to-peer services or online freelancing
Denmark	Denmark's Labour Force Survey	Performed work through websites or apps (e.g. Uber)
EU Member states	Eurostat Community Survey on ICT Usage and e-commerce in Households and by Individuals	obtained paid work by using an intermediary website or apps
Finland	Finland's Labour Force Survey 2017	Earned income through capital or labour platforms
France	Ad Hoc module of the European LFS (6th wave sample)	Self-employed in main job that contact clients through a platform or a third party business
Switzerland	Swiss LFS	Provided taxi or other services via an internet platform or mobile application
United Kingdom	UK ONS	Used an online platform to find work

The need for a broader and harmonised approach

- The strong need for an effective definition of digital platform work and employment with clear boundaries
- A more thoroughly discussion is needed around the different components of the DPE framework considering the all needs for statistics
- More work is needed to recommend the policy relevant indicators to produce once data has been collected
- Recommendations for data collection built on the experiences already made

The need for a broader and harmonised approach

Discussed at the 21st ICLS, strong support to develop statistical guidelines on Digital platform work and employment

- Provide strengthened definitions and stronger recommendations for data collection. Support countries in producing policy relevant statistics in a more harmonized way
- Needs to be a flexible and an agile standard
- Presented and discussed at the 22'nd ICLS in 2028

Next step – ILO Working group will be established in 2024

- Countries from all regions, observers (organizations), employers and workers representatives
- ILO standard setting process 2025/2026
- Standard on Decent work and digital platform economy

Thank you!

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