



Precarity and agency in youthspaces of work: the case of food delivery platform workers in Athens, Greece.

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Precarity and agency in youthspaces of work: the case of food delivery platform workers in Athens, Greece

Abstract. The growth of digital platforms is spawning new, if often precarious, forms of work. One such type of work that has particularly grown in recent years, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, is that of digital platform-facilitated on-demand food delivery services. Such deliveries are often undertaken by younger workers. Given this, here we explore the following research questions: i) what forms of labour precarity are found and reproduced in the physical and digital space that young food delivery platform (FDP) workers create and inhabit?; and ii) what types of agency do FDP workers develop within these spaces in order to navigate – and sometimes resist – precarity? Drawing upon concepts from critical Youth Studies, Geographical Political Economy, and Labour Geography, the article develops the concept of *precarious youthspaces of work* to investigate the connections between youths' everyday lives and the production of space. To do so we present a qualitative study conducted in Athens, Greece, that sought to capture the multifaceted working arrangements of FDP workers, both offline and online. Our analysis reveals that FDP workers suffer various forms of labour precarity which they must navigate. But such workers are not just accommodating to precarity. They have also generated forms of collective oppositional agency that is reshaping local labour markets. However, whilst their agency has sometimes generated solidarity and robust collective movements it has also led to divisions that have limited cooperation amongst FDP workers.

Keywords: Digital Platform-induced Sharing Economy, spatiality of youth, techno-spatial fixes, Labour Geography, Greece

1. Introduction

The successive crises and technological advancements of recent decades have led to significant changes in labour markets. In this context, the emergence of digital platforms has facilitated the spread of the so-called Sharing Economy, which is profoundly associated with the rise of the 'gig economy' (Büscher, 2022). There are two main types of firms that belong to this Digital Platform-induced Sharing Economy (DPSE): 'transactional' and 'transformational' ones (Gibson-Graham and Dombroski, 2020). Of these, the former are largely profit-seeking. Examples of such firms include Airbnb, Uber, Wolt, and TaskRabbit. Transformational DPSE firms, on the other hand, are often small social enterprises with few or no employees which focus upon building social capital within communities through a range of alternative market and non-market transactions that include sharing, swapping, 'commoning', and gifting of tangible and intangible assets (Gibson-Graham and Dombroski, 2020).¹ After two decades or so of intense growth, the transactional part of the DPSE has been drifting away from the concept of sharing and giving rise to what is commonly referred to as 'platform capitalism' (Chicchi, 2020; Büscher, 2022; Langley and Leyshon, 2017). Significantly, many voices, mostly neoliberal ones, claim that as platform firms are becoming ever more an integral component of modern economies they show promise for providing new employment opportunities, especially for young workers. This claim is important to explore, though, because there is ample evidence that such profit-driven DPSE firms are closely associated with an increasing precarity of labour markets and the further undermining of workers' rights (Altenried et al., 2020). This is especially important in a country like post-crisis Greece, where younger workers have limited employment opportunities and already face challenges in the labour market (by definition their age means they have little work experience, for instance). Presenting platform work as a solution to youth unemployment, then, raises further questions about how young workers will be able to sustain themselves economically in the future and what this might mean for the development of policies aimed at better integrating them into labour markets.

¹ For more on the concept of 'commoning' see Linebaugh (2009).

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Given the enthusiasm with which platforms have been presented by some as a way to reduce youth unemployment, in this paper we focus upon the labour conditions of a number of young workers employed via platforms in Athens, Greece, and how these workers navigate the labour market precarity they face. In doing so, we argue here that it is necessary to adopt a conceptual framework that cross-fertilises concepts from critical Youth Studies, Geographical Political Economy, and Labour Geography. This fusion is needed, we contend, because platforms are fundamentally transforming the spatiality of work and how it is accessed, which is having momentous implications for workers (Altenried et al., 2020). Hence, some labour markets have become truly global (such as those associated with platforms like Amazon's Mechanical Turk, through which businesses can hire workers located across the planet to perform tasks like data entry or content analysis of documents) whilst work secured via others (like Uber or TaskRabbit) remains resolutely local – someone in London is not going to use a plumber from New York – even as the geographical relationships between worker and customer are changing thanks to the hiring process being conducted via a phone app. However, a shortcoming of much Youth Studies scholarship is that it typically draws upon abstract, depoliticised understandings of space which view it as a fixed stage upon which social life plays out, rather than as a dynamic social product, one that can be moulded in particular ways to secure certain economic and political outcomes (Rodriguez, 2017; Farrugia, 2021; Avagianou et al., 2022). We suggest that understanding better the socio-spatial contexts within which young workers are entering the labour market requires a different view of space, one that sees the economic landscape's spatial form and how it is made as being central to how capitalism functions (Harvey, 1982). Such a view is provided by the Marxist-inspired scholarship found in Geographical Political Economy (MacKinnon et al., 2009; Sheppard, 2011). To this end, we argue that the concept of the 'techno-spatial fix', which draws upon and expands Harvey's 'spatial fix' (1978), is helpful in the context of youth studies. At the same time, though, Geographical Political Economy has frequently underplayed the importance of labour's socio-spatial praxis in shaping the geography of capitalism. Consequently, we turn also to Labour Geography and draw upon concerns which lie at its core specifically, questions of worker agency and how space plays a role in enabling and constraining this agency.

Through drawing upon these three literatures we develop an approach to understanding young platform workers' lives that extends the basic conceptual framework of what Farrugia (2018) has called 'Spaces of Youth'. This concept was developed as a critique of the mainstream approaches that have long dominated in contemporary Youth Studies, which are focused on chronological concerns linked to youth (such as when adolescence ends and how young people's social development is measured against various temporal markers). By way of contrast, through his concept of Spaces of Youth (or 'youthspaces') youth is understood as a spatially-heterogeneous group of social actors rather than as a somewhat homogeneous group defined simply by a common life stage. In operationalising our analysis, though, we attempt to expand Farrugia's approach by arguing for adoption of what we call a '*precarious youthspaces of work*' framework which, we aver, offers a better conceptualisation of the following: (i) understanding how young workers are enmeshed within the various *techno-spatial fixes* that capital creates to overcome its crises of overaccumulation; and (ii) distinguishing what forms of agency these young people develop within these fixes. In this latter regard, we find inspiration particularly from Katz's (2004) three-fold typology of agency, which may involve *resistance* to extant social relations, *reworking* of those social relations, and/or simply *resilience* in the face of them. In this way, we respond to calls within Labour Geography for empirical studies that enhance our understanding of the efficiency of diverse forms of agency developed by commonly-neglected groups, such as young workers (Castree, 2007: 858).

To develop an empirically-grounded understanding of how, when, and where youthspaces of work turn precarious, together with how some young workers are responding to this, we take a close look at food-delivery platforms (FDPs), a sub-sector of the DPSE that is flourishing across the advanced capitalist world. Specifically, we explore the following questions: i) what forms of labour precarity are found and reproduced in the physical and digital youthspaces of FDP

work?; and ii) what types of agency do FDP workers develop within such youthspaces in order to navigate – and sometimes resist – precarity? To address these questions, we conducted an integrated qualitative study with young workers aged 19-34 living in Athens, Greece (July 2021-July 2023). We focus upon Athens because the city has seen a dramatic expansion of DPSE employment amidst growing youth disengagement from more standard forms of work in the wake of the Greek fiscal crisis that exploded in 2010 (Gialis and Leontidou, 2016). Moreover, Athens has also witnessed relatively large-scale demonstrations and strikes by FDP workers. This warrants further investigation to gain a deeper understanding of the broader dynamics that affect labour agency there but also in other urban youth labour markets.

The paper is structured as follows. First, drawing upon a comprehensive review of literature concerning the connections between the expansion of digital platforms and techno-spatial restructurings, as well as different types of labour agency, we present the basics of the *precarious youthspaces of work* conceptual framework. We then introduce the methodology and research design employed in this study. Third, we present our findings, focusing upon the precarity experienced within the youthspaces of DPSE work and the struggles we observed in this context. Finally, we discuss the broader implications of our findings, including the limitations of the study, and propose directions for future research.

Precarious youthspaces of work and the DPSE: a conceptual framework

The *Youthspaces* framework encapsulates the reciprocal relationship between young people and the production of space – both physical and digital – in the context of capitalism (Farrugia, 2018). This approach examines how different spaces shape both the opportunities and the constraints that young people face, as well as the capacities for agency that they can develop – that is, how they interact with, make sense of, and shape different spaces. In so doing it recognises that youth is born into and grows within social and cultural frameworks, educational systems, labour markets, and transnational dynamics that are all spatially grounded and geographically differentiated. It is thus shaped by both local factors and global trends (Farrugia, 2018; Katz, 2004; Merriman et al., 2012).

We use the concept of *Youthspaces of work* as a valuable epistemological tool to explore how economic and labour market transformations are influencing the development and well-being of young people and the agencies they are developing in response in different places (Farrugia, 2018; Katz, 2004; Avagianou et al., 2022). This concept allows us to examine the role of various ‘spatial fixes’ in the (re)production of work precarity and the collective and individual agencies that young people develop across space. As described by David Harvey (1978, 1982; see also Gourzis and Gialis, 2019), spatial fixing reflects both capital’s tendency to resolve overaccumulation through the production of new profitable spaces and the embedding of capital in particular places through the production of immobile commodities like buildings. Technological innovations in transport and communication during the past few decades have generated dramatic and rapid spatial restructurings, creating what Wang et al. (2022) describe as ‘techno-spatial fixes’. Within these new economic landscapes, digitally-mediated economic transactions and work are becoming increasingly common and new youthspaces of work are being formed. However, these youthspaces are not equally strong, profitable, or resilient (Smith, 2010), as they result from different techno-spatial fixes. This uneven distribution of economic, social, and technological advancements leads to disparities in opportunities, resources, and overall quality of life, such that young people living in less-developed areas often encounter limited access to quality education and healthcare and frequently face inadequate infrastructure and more precarious employment (Farrugia, 2021). We term these spaces *precarious youthspaces of work* (Avagianou et al., 2024). Their enlargement has been a particular problem in southern European Union (EU) countries.

In the case of Greece, the economy has been especially moribund for several decades. Greek labour markets have been extensively liberalised since the 2010 crisis through measures aimed

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3 at creating a ‘less rigid’ regulatory framework. Whilst the declared aim of this liberalisation
4 was to enhance ‘flexibility with security’, combining flexibility for employers with security for
5 workers, research shows that these measures’ main effect has been to increase job insecurity
6 (Gialis and Leontidou, 2016). High (youth) unemployment rates have been progressively
7 coupled with exploitative, short-term, low-paid, and/or atypical employment opportunities and
8 a ‘low road’ to ‘post-Fordist flexibilisation’. This is deepening wage inequality and social
9 polarisation (Gialis and Taylor, 2016; Hadjimichalis, 2011). As a result, precarity has become
10 a central characteristic of youth labour markets in the country (Gourzis and Gialis, 2019). It is
11 in this context that the DPSE has thrived in Greece and many other countries. The deteriorating
12 social conditions brought on by thirty years of global neoliberal policies, successive economic
13 recessions, and the consequent re-/ de-regulation of forms of employment have encouraged
14 many young workers in particular to turn to DPSE employment (Chicchi, 2020; Tirapani and
15 Willmott, 2023).
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17 The growing flexibilisation of work has significantly benefitted the growth of digital platforms.
18 This is because platforms rely heavily upon the provision of temporary and part-time
19 positions, which are often filled by ‘independent contractors’ and freelancers rather than by
20 full-time, permanent, waged employees (De Ruyter and Brown, 2019). This shift of young
21 workers from traditional full-time employment arrangements to flexible, short-term, freelance
22 ‘gig’ work is seen by many as part of wider individualisation and cosmopolitanisation trends
23 that have accelerated in the digital age (Beck, 2002). According to this argument, many young
24 people have turned to gig work out of desires for personal autonomy and exposure to global
25 cultural trends that are encouraging the development of diverse, fluid, and adaptable identities.
26 The idea of the ‘company man’ who works for the same employer for three or four decades
27 seems less appealing to many young people than it perhaps was to their grandparents, who
28 supposedly preferred job stability over ‘interesting work’ – one recent survey in the USA, for
29 instance, noted that 91% of Millennials expected to stay at a job for less than three years
30 (Meister, 2012). Similarly, according to the latest Workmonitor survey, almost a third of young
31 people surveyed in Greece (28.4% of Gen Z and 28% of Millennials) are actively looking for
32 their next career move. In fact, the idea of being part of a global workforce that is digitally
33 engaged and accessible from anywhere, often referred to as a ‘planetary workforce’ (Johnston,
34 2020), is argued by some commentators to hold a particular appeal to young individuals who
35 see themselves as ‘digital natives’ (Farrell et al., 2018). Other commentators, though, see the
36 frequent changes in employment by high proportions of young workers as less the result of a
37 desire on the part of young workers to ‘keep work interesting’ and more as a reflection of how
38 contemporary labour markets function, allowing few workers to be kept on for an entire career.
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41 In 2022, more than 28 million individuals in the EU engaged in employment through digital
42 platforms. This figure is anticipated to rise to 43 million by 2025 (European Council). These
43 trends, though, raise questions concerning the quality of platform labour across different places
44 and platform workers’ bargaining power, questions which are increasingly being addressed in
45 various literatures (Graham et al., 2017). In the case of FDPs, besides blurring the distinctions
46 between employment, independent contracting, and entrepreneurship, the digital platforms
47 through which they secure work exert varying degrees of control over task allocation and
48 performance to ensure speedy delivery (Burawoy, 1983; Cherry, 2016; Rosenblat, 2019; Barratt
49 et al., 2020). With a lack of strong regulatory frameworks, precarity for food delivery and other
50 platform workers has flourished (Lin et al., 2020), with consequences for both product and
51 labour markets (Barratt et al., 2020; Graham et al., 2017). In response, in 2023 the EU
52 implemented a Platform Workers’ Directive aimed at achieving three primary policy goals: 1)
53 instituting a rebuttable presumption of employment status; 2) offering basic protections for
54 platform workers; and 3) ensuring transparency and fairness, particularly in situations involving
55 algorithmic management. This effort followed the 2021 introduction in Spain of the ‘Riders’
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3 Law', which focused upon regulating employment through digital delivery platforms.²
4 However, both EU policies and the majority of relevant studies have frequently ignored the
5 geographical situations of those individuals who compose the youth labour force and the labour
6 dynamics that are generated by platform employment (Farrugia, 2021, 43). This is problematic,
7 for young people in the global economy are not just reflexive and individualised actors (Beck,
8 2000) who are increasingly deterritorialised in a 'placeless cyberspace' (Bauman, 2002). On
9 the contrary, they interact with physical and digital environments in a variety of ways as part
10 of their work and social lives. Through so doing, young people develop different types of
11 agency at different geographical scales (local, trans-local/national, and international), in the
12 process contributing to the restructuring and/or reaffirmation of social, systemic, and
13 geographical divisions within certain labour forces (Farrugia, 2021).

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15 In an effort to better understand how such workers go about constructing new geographies of
16 their own existence, in what follows we use Katz's (2004) typology of agency to provide a
17 nuanced understanding of FDP workers' praxis in their struggles against precarity. In Katz's
18 view, 'resistance' is a conscious form of agency vis-à-vis employers and the state, usually
19 expressed through collective practices of protest, demand, and solidarity. 'Reworking', on the
20 other hand, is an intermediate form that does not challenge the hegemonic power of the state,
21 capital, and other oppressive actors but does seek to assert workers' interests through
22 confrontation, negotiation, and (collective or individual, formal or informal) bargaining. Last,
23 'resilience' is a rather more individualistic form of activity that involves more or less conscious
24 acts of compromise that directly or indirectly support employers' strategies (e.g., by workers
25 focusing upon maximising their personal interests and ignoring or even opposing any form of
26 collective organisation and activation) (Katz, 2004). We are interested in how young workers
27 construct their own spatialities because although much analysis of platform labour has explored
28 the variegated measures that workers develop to exercise agency (Sun and Chen, 2021; De
29 Stefano and Taes, 2023; Johnston and Land-Kazlauskas, 2018), such analyses have largely
30 disregarded space and how young workers in particular are embedded in it and seek to
31 overcome such embeddedness. It also has tended to ignore how workers strive to remake the
32 geographical scales at which they sometimes come together to challenge their working
33 conditions. Such issues of spatial praxis and building new scales of political organisation lie at
34 the heart of Labour Geography. Through our empirical research, then, we investigate how
35 young workers are engaging with, and sometimes remaking, the new spatialities of work that
36 platforms generate.

37 38 39 40 **2. Methodology and data**

41 In order to capture the diverse offline and online working conditions of young FDP workers
42 and to try to understand the motivations for their actions, we draw upon several qualitative data
43 sources, including in-depth, semi-structured interviews, field observations, and document
44 analysis (see Table 1).

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47 *Insert Table 1 here.*

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49 In the first part of the research (July 2021-September 2021), the first author approached FDP
50 workers in four of Athens's main squares (Syntagma Square, Mavili Square, Pagrati Square,
51 and Merkouri Square), where workers stop between deliveries. She used an extensive
52 snowballing process to identify and engage with FDP workers who were willing to be
53 interviewed. This process was based on a relationship of trust and rapport between the
54 researcher and the participants. Referrals from existing contacts provided credibility and
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58 ² The adoption of the law led to a significant increase in the number of wage-dependent, full-time workers in the
59 sector who gained access to social security schemes, including sick leave, protection against accidents at work,
60 unemployment benefits, pensions, and maternity leave (see, for example, www.theglobaldeal.com/good-practises/riders-law-spain/).

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3 increased the likelihood of securing interviews, given the precarious and transient nature of the
4 sector. Ultimately, she conducted thirteen (13) semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 1 for
5 interviewee profiles) exploring such workers' labour market precarity, by which we mean the
6 insecurity they experience due to the employment relationships in which they find themselves.
7 This includes part-time contracts, low-paid long hours without security, and the physical risks
8 they face in their work when exposed to dangerous driving and poor weather conditions whilst
9 riding motorbikes. The interviewees worked for one of the two largest and oldest FDP
10 companies in Athens, Wolt and Efood.³ In terms of ethical considerations, all interviewees were
11 assured anonymity and confidentiality and were asked whether or not they would consent to a
12 digital recording of the interview. The interviews lasted an average of one hour and were
13 conducted in Greek (interviews with migrants were conducted in English) before being digitally
14 transcribed and translated into English.
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17 As part of the field observations, we examined two text message conversations via a popular
18 chat app (Viber) in which FDP employees chatted for two years (July 2021 - July 2023). These
19 observations contributed to a more nuanced understanding of the digital aspects of workers'
20 communication. Cyber research, also referred to as 'chatnography' (Käihkö, 2018), poses some
21 challenges to traditional ethical guidelines for research, which we have carefully articulated
22 (Allan, 1996). The two Viber chats we tracked involved approximately one hundred and fifty
23 (150) and two hundred (200) participants, respectively. Thus, the chats were public rather than
24 private conversations (they served as a kind of forum). As the first author who participated in
25 these conversations was invited by an FDP worker and trade unionist and the anonymity of the
26 participants was guaranteed, a relationship of trust soon developed between the researcher and
27 the members of these groups. The researcher observed these conversations on a daily basis and
28 took notes with the aim of shedding light on labour agreements and forms of solidarity and
29 promoting the interests of the group as a whole.
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32 In the third part of the research, we conducted a document analysis by following the Greek
33 press coverage of workers' collective actions and related legislation. We focused on compiling
34 the actions related to the collective representation of FDP workers, the strategies of the
35 platforms and the shaping of public policies by the state. To this end, we analysed the Greek
36 press and the website of the trade union responsible for food delivery workers, namely the 'Bike
37 Drivers' Workers' Base Assembly' (SVEOD).⁴ In this way, we sought to verify and extend the
38 knowledge gained through the interviews. In particular, we gained insight into the extent of
39 public awareness, attention, and discussion of issues affecting FDP workers. This method also
40 facilitated the creation of a chronological overview and sequence of protest activities, the
41 response of platform operators, and changes in policies and guidelines. In this way, we were
42 able to trace the dynamic evolution of labour relations in the FDPs and contextualise the types
43 of agency that FDP workers developed in terms of Katz's taxonomy. By comparing FDP
44 workers' dialogues in their chats with the corresponding information in the wider public sphere,
45 we were able to draw meaningful comparisons between the two domains of representation. We
46 then analysed the qualitative data to identify the different forms of precarity faced by young
47 FDP workers and the types of agency they develop in response. All three parts of the research
48 were conducted simultaneously, though the interviews were completed before the other two
49 steps.
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57 ³ At the time of the study, these two companies employed several thousand people. A more precise estimate of the
58 number of FDP workers in Athens proved to be quite difficult to generate, due to the lack of relevant data sources.

59 ⁴ This is the main inter-professional association for couriers, delivery, and field workers, founded in Athens in 2007
60 to address the unification and safeguarding, promotion, and defence of the labour, economic, insurance, and social
rights demands and interests of all workers with a motorbike.

3. Precarious youthspaces of work and agency

Precarity in FDP youthspaces

A common experience of most interviewees was the stressful and dangerous working environment. As many drivers noted, delivery workers were exposed to all outdoor conditions and street hazards and there were no sheltered areas in the city where they could rest between deliveries or even go to the toilet (D6_E, D8_E). This situation deteriorated during the pandemic, when most workers felt more exposed to the virus (D2_W, D6_E, D8_E, D12_E, D13_W) – a feeling clearly expressed by one of the interviewees: ‘*I wondered why the delivery workers should die because other people couldn’t find time to cook*’ (D3_W). Indeed, several interviewees said that the only protective equipment available to them during the pandemic consisted of a mask and plastic gloves that were impossible to wear when driving (D1_E). Although Law 4611/2019 obliged the platforms to provide protective equipment, according to the interviewees they only provided jet helmets, which are by no means recommended by safety technicians to protect the rider during intensive work with the motorbike.⁵ The rest of the clothing and equipment provided is not protective but only promotional (D6_E).

In this unfavourable environment, platform workers faced significant pressures to meet multiple requirements and to follow different types of rules (e.g., to not be late, to wear a helmet and a vest, to always be polite or to accept all deliveries, to follow the suggested route) imposed by the companies through their monitoring and support systems (D3_W). As clearly stated on the FDPs’ websites, the main purpose of these systems was to facilitate the efficient and timely delivery of products and to provide support services to drivers.⁶ This was attempted through online chats with ‘captains’ (platform workers who mediated between the company and the drivers). This practice generated large amounts of personal data that ultimately belonged to the company. As one of the interviewees described, ‘everything we write and say to workers at the support service is recorded. The company knows everything about you, how you speak, how you react to certain situations’ (D7_W). Yet, as the number of workers increased, the support service proved unable to provide adequate and direct support, which resulted in costly delays and unworkable solutions (D7_W, D11_W, D9_W, D8_E). One of the interviewees emphasised: ‘For someone who has a desk job, it is hard to understand the working conditions on the road, particularly whilst driving; there are many reasons why a delivery worker is late, such as traffic, a flat tyre or the store being late’ (D11_W). In this context, many delivery workers found the platforms’ monitoring and rating systems not only inconvenient but, frequently, also dangerous, leading to several accidents (D1_E, D6_E). Such incidents were frequently discussed in the Viber chats, where workers often expressed their solidarity with their colleagues and strongly criticised the platform’s lack of understanding and inadequate responses.

Enhanced control was also part of a broader worker evaluation system developed on the basis of customer feedback and the total number of working hours and orders (D8_E, D3_W, D4_W). In this context, quick delivery was a prerequisite for achieving ‘high productivity’, which was rewarded by the company in various ways (such as by granting bonuses or the right to set one’s own work schedule). As there was no upper limit on working hours per day, freelancers who wanted to move up rapidly within the rating system had to work very long hours (often more than 12 hours per day) and drive at high speed (D8_E, D1_E). As some emphasised, ‘*we are always stressed and in a bad mood because we try to get as many orders as possible to earn*

⁵The law required employers to take all necessary measures for the health and safety of workers, such as providing suitable protective equipment like a protective helmet, a jacket to protect the driver, waterproof equipment, gloves, and a reflective vest. The platforms were also required to pay an additional monthly allowance for the use and maintenance of the delivery workers’ vehicles of at least fifteen percent (15%) of the statutory monthly minimum wage or a pro-rata amount in the case of part-time employment.

⁶Wolt advertises on its official website that its support system ‘is there when drivers need help’ and ‘makes it easy to find your way around the city to minimise the miles and time spent driving [...] and ensure that all orders are delivered within the estimated delivery time’ (Wolt, Algorithmic Transparency Report, 2022).

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3 *money*’ (D9_W, D13_W) and *‘we try to get a high rating whilst riding a motorbike all over*
4 *Athens and looking at the GPS at the same time*’ (D3_W). Most importantly, however, all of
5 these monitoring and evaluation practises were underpinned by ambiguous and highly-
6 flexibilised temporary employment arrangements (which both platforms promoted), which
7 contributed to the reproduction of precarity (D8_E, D3_W). Thus, FDPs largely hired workers
8 under two types of arrangement – a 3-month contract (workers in this condition are hereafter
9 referred to as ‘employees’) or as independent contractors (hereafter ‘freelancers’), although
10 recently Law 4808/2021 (Ar. 69) has given platforms the ability to classify all their workers as
11 freelancers rather than employees, a move welcomed and widely adopted by both platforms.⁷
12 In addition, the law introduced greater flexibility in subcontracting, as companies are allowed
13 to subcontract part of their services to so-called ‘fleet managers’. Fleet managers are actually
14 freelancers (1st-level subcontractors) who are allowed to hire other freelancers (2nd-level
15 subcontractors, hereafter simply referred to as ‘subcontractors’) to take over the ‘last mile’
16 delivery service. As it turned out, this hierarchical subcontracting has several informal aspects:
17 i) it is often done without the FDPs recording the transactions with the Tax Office, and ii) the
18 fleet managers often secure high revenues by subcontracting deliveries to ghost workers using
19 the manager’s official platform worker account – this was particularly the case with Wolt. This
20 practice provides ‘last-mile’ workers who are unwilling or unable to register as independent
21 contractors with the opportunity to work.⁸ However, due to the opaque legal framework, and
22 with the connivance of the platforms, cases of atypical employment have also been concealed
23 when subcontracting. Through this practice, the platforms evade legal responsibility for several
24 of the last-mile workers and do not interfere in the labour agreements with the fleet managers.
25 From the interviews and the relevant articles in the Greek press, it appears that various groups
26 of disadvantaged workers, such as migrants, work as subcontractors for fleet managers in this
27 way, often under informal labour contracts and without adequate protection and insurance. The
28 result is that they are now officially invisible to the platform companies and usually remain
29 without adequate labour rights protections (D3_W, D9_W, D10_E).

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32 This employment strategy was supported by the platforms’ narrative of ‘partnership between
33 entrepreneurs’, creating a supposedly co-operative and inclusive environment. However,
34 despite this flexible employment strategy, all drivers (most of whom are freelancers) are
35 directly and indirectly controlled and *‘end up having a boss*’ (D2_W) as if they were employees
36 (D4_W, D3_W). This stressful working environment, though, does not translate into high levels
37 of compensation. On the contrary, the frequently changing and complex calculation methods
38 for fees, bonuses or gasoline compensation, which were perceived by some as *‘platforms’*
39 *deliberate strategies to confuse workers*’ (D8_E, D3_W), ultimately led to inadequate
40 earnings.⁹ For instance, in April 2022 the minimum fee per order was reduced.¹⁰ This resulted
41 in a large part of freelancers’ earnings being spent on taxes, social security contributions, and
42 costs related to the maintenance and use of their vehicles, as well as on safety clothing (D11_W,
43 D13_W).

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48 ⁷Independent contractors are those who either: i) are registered as self-employed and are obliged to record
49 transactions with the Tax Office or ii) offer their services only occasionally and are not obliged to analytically record
50 transactions with the Tax Office although the income they gain – which should not exceed €10,000 per year – is
51 subjected to official taxation.

52 ⁸For example, those who do not want to or cannot register as self-employed because they cannot pay social security
53 contributions, and/or those who want to exceed the income limit of €10,000 per year, and/or those who want to
54 exceed the platforms’ limitations in terms of a given schedule.

55 ⁹ The 2019 law obliged the platforms to pay compensation for the gasoline and repair costs for FDP workers’
56 motorbikes. However, the platforms often changed how they calculated the payment to riders (including this
57 compensation and some bonuses if they reached certain targets) and riders could not always understand this complex
58 algorithm. They therefore could not verify or predict what amount they would actually receive.

59 ¹⁰From €2.10 to €1.75 per order. The platforms argue that the implementation of this model is fairer as it depends
60 upon a number of factors, such as weather conditions, difficult accessibility, and lack of supply from other
distributors and that this change will motivate workers to accept all deliveries.

Overall, the research revealed that the platforms' organisational and technological strategies represent a further psychological burden for drivers and have led to a growing precarisation of labour, which manifests itself in different ways (see Table 2). The establishment of these strategies is gradually reshaping the local labour market, whilst the (re)production of such precarity in the physical and digital youthspaces of FDP work has an impact on the development of FDP workers' agency.

Insert Table 2 here.

FDP workers' struggles

In the first phase of their expansion, the platforms encountered no significant obstacles, either from the authorities or from the workers. This can be attributed to three main factors: i) a regulatory vacuum allowed platforms to implement organisational strategies that promoted their own interests; ii) the promise of high earnings kept workers satisfied, at least in the short term; and iii) the heterogeneity of FDP workers and their divergent interests prevented the development of strong collective representation against exploitative platforms and institutional failures.¹¹ This fragmentation was linked to a sense of individuality, that, as one interviewee emphasised, often turned into competitiveness between freelancers seeking to build a career and other, more occasional, workers (D8_E, D2_W). Various forms of discrimination, including racist behaviour, also occurred in this context. Indeed, migrant workers who made up a large part of the FDP workforce – mainly as subcontractors – were often exposed to racist comments, both online and offline (D3_W). As one of the migrant workers interviewed said: *'There are many people who are not friendly to foreigners, here [in Wolt] you can meet all kinds of people, you never know who you are dealing with'* (D13_W). Overall, these individualistic forms of agency developed by several freelancers reflect the resilience (as per Katz, 2004) of workers to the platforms' strategies. As a result, there was a *'general feeling of frustration or defeatism among many workers, linked to a wider political apathy'* (D3_W). This resulted in only a weak collective response to the organisational changes of the platforms.

However, despite these challenges, actions of resistance and reworking gradually emerged in both the physical and digital youthspaces of FDP work. Although most of the interviewees preferred not to socialise with co-workers (D10_E), it was quite common for them to cross paths in certain starting points or squares, especially when they did not have a heavy workload (D1_E, D3_W). Two of the interviewees vividly described how the city's spatiality contributed to the development of solidarity and trade unionism:

We see each other on the streets, in cafés, at gas stations or at traffic lights, in different shady places. There is a kind of immediacy among the workers who wear the same uniforms. We understand each other within five minutes. You can talk about the conditions in a company over a cigarette. We are not isolated (D8_E).

When 30 people gather, waiting in spots and squares without work, that's when the irritation and grumbling starts. And so they start talking about what to do, how to unite and organise (D3_W).

At the same time, digital space was also very important for communication and the development of collective action, and there was lively online communication via Viber groups (D11_W). According to the interviewees, these digital communities were the places where *'workers can grumble about different things that come up all the time'* (D1_E), whilst *'the tension that all workers have in this work are more easily expressed in a digital environment than in face-to-face communication'* (D3_W).

¹¹In an effort to establish themselves in the Greek market, the digital platforms were largely open to everyone, as FDPs hired drivers regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or work experience (D13_W, D11_W, D6_E). Although the high presence of migrant workers on the streets of Athens was quite evident (and also advocated by most interviewees), there are no data on their exact number or legal status. Similarly, several interviewees emphasised that the number of women delivery workers increased after the introduction of FDPs in the Greek market.

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3 In this context, a growing trade unionism emerged among FDP workers that was expressed not
4 only through existing groups like SVEOD but also in new organising models like ASDFDA
5 and the Efood Association.¹² This plethora of different forms of worker voice and
6 representation reflected both the heterogeneity of food delivery workers but also the decline of
7 traditional trade unions (Tapia et al., 2015). At the same time, though, it has contributed to
8 delivery workers' further fragmentation. Nevertheless, based upon its many years of
9 experience, SVEOD has gradually become the main delivery workers' union, though it now
10 also represents many food delivery platform workers. Given that '*many workers do not know*
11 *the law and feel powerless when it comes to claiming their rights*' (D12_E), the union's
12 activities have focused upon explaining to workers the legal framework related to delivery
13 work, mobilising different types of collective solidarity actions and supporting workers who
14 demand their labour rights, protesting against employers/platforms and the state by mobilising
15 the labour inspection mechanism, and negotiating with company owners or organising strikes
16 in direct response to frequently-changing working conditions. These topics were discussed
17 regularly in the Viber chats. The core group that actively participated in the SVEOD union
18 consisted mainly of people for whom delivery work was their main occupation, whether
19 through platforms or not. Most of these workers were also active in various political groups.
20 They were strongly committed to the cause and had a broad understanding of the issues facing
21 the sector (D8_E, D12_E, D1_E). In contrast, despite facing significant challenges, occasional
22 or freelance platform workers, who largely perceived themselves as distinct from other delivery
23 workers, did not generally participate in union activities (D8_E, D2_W, D6_E, D1_E), which
24 some employees found frustrating – as one commented, '*many freelancers do not realise the*
25 *sense of camaraderie, they do not understand the importance of the union*' (D8_E). Similarly,
26 migrant workers' participation in the union was limited, despite being exposed to the most
27 adverse working conditions. The fact that these workers often have different cultural, linguistic,
28 and socio-economic backgrounds to Greek workers and may have been exploited or
29 discriminated against in the past can pose a challenge for trade unions in terms of
30 communication, understanding the specific needs of different groups, and fostering a sense of
31 unity and trust among members (Marino et al., 2015). However, as the interviewees
32 emphasised, there are several cases of migrant workers who have joined the union and who
33 have received support in various areas beyond their working conditions.

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36 Overall, most interviewees agreed on the importance of trade unions and expressed the hope
37 that greater labour solidarity and collective responses would help to reshape the DPSE. As two
38 workers put it: '*the camaraderie and solidarity that stem from these processes make you feel*
39 *that you are not alone*' (D8_E); and '*it is the only way to gain something at work, but also in*
40 *the political and social sphere*' (D12_E). Another worker stressed the overall contribution of
41 the union, as it '*has won many struggles against the state and employers, but above all it has*
42 *gradually created more knowledge and shaped awareness of delivery work*' (D12_E). One of
43 the most important collective victories was the adoption of Law 4611/2019, which provided the
44 framework for the imposition of further obligations on employers towards workers. The
45 subsequent implementation of the 2021 law, however, led to a serious crisis in September 2021
46 when Efood, which was employing drivers on fixed-term contracts, decided to convert all
47 employees into freelancers upon expiration of their contracts. As a '*result of the systematic*
48 *work of the union and the socialisation of workers on the streets*' (D3_W), though, FDP
49 workers engaged in several collective actions and mobilisations in both the physical and digital
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54 ¹²ASDFDA is the Association of Self-employed Distributors and Food Distributors of Attica (courier and delivery).
55 Founded in 2022, it aims to protect and promote the labour, economic, insurance, trade union, and social policy
56 interests of self-employed distributors of food and other consumer and non-consumer goods by bringing them
57 together in a close bond of solidarity and collegiality. The Efood Association is the Union of Employees in Efood
58 of the Region of Attica. Founded in 2021 by a group of the platform's 'oldest' workers, it aims to unite its members
59 and foster by all appropriate means their efforts to develop cooperation, solidarity, and joint actions so as to protect,
60 safeguard, promote, and expand enforcement of their common labour, economic, insurance, social, and trade union
interests.

youthspaces of work. This was supported by a consumer boycott and resulted in a worker victory when Efood withdrew its plans.¹³

Nevertheless, workers still faced many challenges. For instance, the 2019 law (4611/2019, Articles 55 and 56) was not consistently enforced whilst the Labour Inspectorate had shortcomings that hindered effective interventions in cases of labour law violations. Equally, overtime was not consistently compensated whilst the requirement that food delivery should be considered a physically-demanding and unhealthy occupation was largely disregarded. These challenges culminated in the adoption of Law 4808/2021, which allows companies to classify all workers as freelancers. In this context, one interviewee emphasised that *'subcontracting is a condition that cannot be controlled by traditional means'* (D3_W).

In sum, the above vignettes show how FDP workers' struggles and the formation of collective actions are dynamic and multi-layered processes that were negotiated in both physical and digital space (see Table 2). These workers' rights were subject to constant renegotiations between the platforms, the state, and the workers (see Figure 1) in an unremitting struggle whose driving force was clearly articulated by one interviewee: *'When companies climb up the ladder of capitalism, they always force workers down. This will always be the case with delivery workers. However, we cannot ignore the fact that there are movements all over Europe defending workers' rights'* (D11_W).

Insert Figure 1 here.

4. Discussion

Our analysis leads us to make two main points. The first is that the techno-spatial fixing of FDP labour in urban labour markets of less-developed regions (e.g., the Athens market) is producing multiple forms of labour precarity. These techno-spatial arrangements are not only reshaping local labour markets but also the capacities for labour agency. Second, different types of agency have emerged in the physical and digital youthspaces of FDP labour. This is the result of the interplay of centripetal and centrifugal dynamics, including the active engagement of individuals and militant trade unions, as well as the socio-political context in which these youthspaces develop and the timing with which they do so.

With regard to the first point, FDP workers in Athens are clearly exposed to high levels of precarity and dangerous working conditions. This manifests itself in different forms (see Table 2) and has different causes and effects in space and time. The gigification of labour associated with the expansion of digital platforms has taken place against a backdrop of deteriorating social conditions and growing labour surpluses in deregulated labour markets, in Greece (Gialis and Herod, 2014) and elsewhere. The evolving techno-spatial fixes in the southern EU have gradually contributed to the emergence of variegated precarious youthspaces of work, progressively transforming young people living in these regions into cheap and easily exploitable labour – what Marx called the reserve army of labour (Herod et al., 2021). These long-term unemployed, underemployed, and migrant workers (especially temporary workers and non-citizens) are usually seen to represent a labour force with limited labour market power. Their willingness to engage in an ambiguous work environment and to accept lower incomes generally undermines the stability of local labour markets (Coe et al., 2009). On-demand platforms, though, benefit tremendously from this unfavourable environment. Given the absence – or insufficient enforcement – of an adequate legal framework to protect workers in Greece, platforms tend to either circumvent regulations or to create regulatory loopholes to avoid responsibility for these workers (Srnicsek, 2017). In this context, they act as casual labour-hire firms and do not classify workers as employees. They thus avoid many of the costs

¹³In September 2021, the company announced its intention to convert all existing fixed-term contracts into permanent contracts and to hire more than two thousand employees.

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3 associated with employment (e.g., health insurance, annual leave, pensions) and the payment
4 of compensation for idle time. In so doing, they shift the economic risks of work (and non-
5 work) to workers through fragile employment relationships. At the same time, platforms control
6 workers through technology-enabled monitoring mechanisms and behaviour management
7 (Barratt et al., 2020). The joint implementation of these strategies illustrates the central paradox
8 of platform labour: online FDPs exert control over workers, notwithstanding the fact that the
9 vast majority of drivers are considered freelancers or ‘partners’ who have no employer-
10 provided benefits and entitlements. The adoption of Law 40808/2021, which was introduced
11 with the change of government in 2019, paved the way for the consolidation of these strategies
12 in the Greek labour market. Overall, these changes, exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic,
13 are reshaping the relations between capital and labour and increasing precarity by challenging
14 employment standards and making it even more difficult for workers to secure their own social
15 reproduction (Bojadžijev and Mezzadra, 2020).
16

17
18 With regard to the second point about agency, our research shows that FDP workers do have
19 (often significant) agentic capacities. However, their abilities to advocate for improving their
20 situation are subject to multiple dynamics that lead to different types of agency. Thus, we have
21 identified several instances in which both unionised and non-unionised FDP workers have
22 engaged in practices of resistance, reworking, or resilience (Katz, 2004), in diverse physical
23 and digital youthspaces of work and at different scales. For example, the face-to-face interaction
24 of workers on the streets and piazzas of Athens was enhanced by online communication
25 between them. By creating a useful digital space for informal organising and garnering public
26 attention and support for issues affecting working environments, social media platforms and
27 online chat groups have facilitated the development of new forms of praxis, both amongst
28 Athenian FDP workers but also within broader labour movements. This has manifested itself
29 in workers developing alliances at local, trans-local, and cross-sectoral levels. In the case of the
30 FDP workers we examined, they have been able to use their embeddedness in Athens’s built
31 environment – what, following from Cox (1998), we can call their local ‘spaces of dependence’
32 – to develop what he termed ‘spaces of engagement’ on a trans-local level. This has involved
33 establishing networks of support not just across the city, amongst both themselves and their
34 customers and the general public, but also across Greece. For instance, during the 2021 Efood
35 dispute, when the platform tried to convert contract workers to freelancers, the Hotel, Tourism
36 and Catering Workers of Athens trade union endorsed the food delivery workers’ struggles
37 across Greece. These involved thousands of FDP workers and supporters riding motorbikes and
38 scooters through the streets of several Greek cities, with riders wearing Efood blazers and toting
39 Efood containers (Dunkel, 2021). Moreover, FDP workers in Athens have not only built links
40 with FDP workers in other Greek cities, like Thessaloniki and Patras, but also with workers in
41 other European cities, including Berlin and Turin. This represents a process of rescaling their
42 praxis, long a central interest of labour geographers (Herod, 1997; Lier, 2009), as these workers
43 have built networks that stretch far beyond the streets of Athens.
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46 Such struggles over space in Athens bring to light a significant contradiction, however. On the
47 one hand, the absence of an organised labour force and the presence of deregulated labour
48 markets give app-based platforms the space to (further) control labour by limiting, reorienting
49 or diminishing workers’ agency and their ability to stand up for their rights and interests
50 (Cumbers et al., 2016). In particular, the organisational and technological fixes that FDPs
51 impose lead to competition and individualisation within the workforce, as workers become
52 salespersons of their own labour. These fixes contribute to the fragmentation of workers and
53 hinder the development of trade unions. As a result, workers may develop an individualised
54 form of agency (what Katz describes as resilience) as they focus upon improving their own
55 condition – even in the short term – by working harder to increase their income and thus their
56 economic security. This is particularly evident with those FDP workers employed as (first level)
57 subcontractors and in the case of migrant workers, with both of these groups engaging in more
58 or less conscious acts of compromise. In doing so, workers act at the expense of their
59 colleagues’ demands and provide platforms with additional forms of flexibility by rejecting the
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3 demands of other workers and generally aligning their personal labour interests with those of
4 capital (Gialis and Herod, 2014). In this context, Siemiatycki's (2012: 470) assertion that 'under
5 certain circumstances, labour plays its part in shaping the geography of capitalism, not by
6 challenging capital but by complying with its imperatives' is worth considering. This type of
7 agency is supported by the platforms and further encouraged by the insufficient monitoring
8 offered by state regulatory institutions (Bocking, 2018). As one interviewee aptly described it,
9 *'the way the whole thing is set up is brilliant and terribly honest and reflects the last rung of*
10 *capitalism'* (D4_W).

11
12 On the other hand, groups of FDP workers have developed strategies to cope with precarity and
13 to create more formal and socially-protected labour markets through practices of what Katz
14 calls reworking and resistance. The former describe actions of confrontation, negotiation, and
15 bargaining, which find expression in the 'everyday micro-struggles' (Anwar and Graham,
16 2020) of workers that they develop in the context of their self-reproduction and economic and
17 political praxis (Herod, 1997; Katz, 2004). Such actions are expressed primarily through their
18 right to disconnect – both literally and figuratively – by prioritising their physical and mental
19 health over their commitment to the platform. Thus, drivers often choose to close the app and
20 refuse a delivery or decide to drive slowly despite the pressure for a quick delivery, or even
21 sometimes deal with customers in their own way and ignore the platform's instructions. In this
22 regard their actions mirror those of the German FDP workers studied by Heiland (2021), who
23 also frequently turned off their apps to escape their platform's spatial surveillance and control.
24 Meanwhile, acts of resistance can be seen in the deliberate and collective efforts of protest,
25 demand, and solidarity on the part of FDP workers to change the law to provide them with more
26 protection (as in the adoption of Law 4611/2019) and in the large-scale protests against the
27 institutionalisation of freelancing in food delivery (as in the adoption of Law 4808/2021). The
28 role of trade unions like SVEOD and the Efood Workers' Union in this regard has been crucial,
29 as they focused upon organising solidarity and protest actions and uniting this heterogeneous
30 workforce. SVEOD also contributed to the creation of cross-local networks to link Athens's
31 FDP workers with the collective actions of other precarious workers.

32
33 Although much of what labour geography has identified as labour agency involves what Katz
34 called reworking and resistance and emphasises collective over individual action (Coe and
35 Jordhus-Lier, 2011), it is, however, useful to investigate the connections between these different
36 strategies, rather than thinking of them as distinct categories of action. This is because
37 individuals or small groups of workers who start off simply trying to get by (that is, they fall
38 into Katz's category of resilience) have sometimes been able to transform docile resilience into
39 more combative reworking and/or resistance strategies. Thus, whilst resilience might be seen
40 as little more than acceptance of present economic conditions and/or collaboration with
41 employers, it can be an important starting point for developing more pugnacious actions
42 because it 'enables people (migrants for example) to get by, to enter reciprocal relations, and
43 to shore up their resources, all of which are crucial underpinnings of projects to rework or resist
44 the oppressive circumstances that call them forth' (Katz, 2004: 246). Whether acts of resilience
45 and reworking/resistance work with or against each other, though, is shaped significantly by
46 how the complex and intersecting social and cultural processes and institutional dynamics
47 within which workers find themselves are 'grounded' or embedded in various space-time
48 contexts (Coe and Jordhus-Lier, 2023). Hence, whether and how FDP workers are able to come
49 together in the physical spaces of Athens's built environment and in the cyberspaces of various
50 group chats and the like is important for shaping the kinds of agencies they can manifest. Given
51 this, labour scholars must recognize that workers' other positionalities and identities, ones that
52 reach far beyond the workplace, shape how workers act as well as how they experience and
53 describe their own actions.

54
55 Overall, the actions of Athenian FDP drivers were spatially and socially shaped by the interplay
56 between platform strategies, local labour market realities, and formal and informal institutional
57 political praxis (see Figure 1). In turn, they have influenced the rights FDP workers enjoy today.

Hence, the adoption of the 2019 law, which secured several of these rights, was the result of: i) the early expansion phase of the platforms; ii) the agenda of the previous government; and iii) the experience and collective reflexes of the militant trade unions. The latter can be seen as part of the general social and political upheaval of the last decade, which has fuelled the development of countless collective actions and grassroots movements against austerity measures (Herod et al., 2022). Indeed, since 2009 Athens has become a veritable arena for multiple struggles and collective expressions of solidarity and resistance. At the same time, though, the adoption of the 2021 law that promoted freelancing in food delivery can be seen as the result of countervailing forces, namely: i) the absence of a strong labour protection law in Greece; ii) the neoliberal agenda of the new government; iii) the establishment of the FDP in the Greek market through the employment of thousands of workers at that time; and iv) workers' sometimes anaemic agency due to their heterogeneity and fragmentation, as well as pandemic-induced isolation. Nevertheless, and despite these centrifugal forces, the FDP workforce in Athens retains a remarkable degree of agency that gives rise to some optimism for collective action. It is a significant case of groups of locally-based gig workers coming together and developing local and cross-spatial solidarity networks that have led to an effective and victorious struggle.

In sum, FDP workers' abilities to create particular spatial fixes at particular geographical scales at particular historical moments – whether through acts of resistance, reworking, or mere resilience – is a crucial factor in the development of the geography of (platform) capitalism (Herod, 1997), one that requires greater theoretical and empirical consideration. Given that platforms will become more rather than less prevalent in the future, it is crucial to understand how workers can come together to contest the precarity generated by such platforms and how this can challenge the regulatory inaction of various state institutions (Barratt et al., 2020). Our research has shown that today's youthspaces of work offer both new challenges and new possibilities, as growing precarity in youth labour markets is often confronted with solidarity and collective action. To this end, research should develop intersectional readings of the three Rs identified by Katz in order to reveal the multiple physical and digital youthspaces of work with which workers grapple.

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Table 1. Research Design

Features/Parts*	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3
Research Objective(s)	Explore precarity and collective agency	Map modes of networking and working arrangements	Develop a timeline of collective agency
Research Tool	In-depth semi-structured interviews	Field observations (digital)	Document analysis
Research subjects/objects	Young FDP workers	Young FDP workers	Greek press Union's website
Time frame	July 2021-September 2021	August 2021 - July 2023	July 2021- July 2023

Table 2. The factors related to the reproduction of precarity and the development of labour agency in physical and digital youthspaces of FDP work

	Locus of interaction	Factors related to the reproduction of precarity	Factors related to the development (or not) of labour agency
Physical youthspaces	City streets and piazzas Union's meeting points	Exposure to outdoor conditions and COVID-19, lacking protection equipment and sheltered rest areas	Discussion of working conditions and ways to organise through face-to-face communication of co-workers, expressions of solidarity, and protests Long experience of unionised FDP workers
Both physical and digital youthspaces		Temporary and unclear employment relations with platforms. Exploitation of ununionised (often migrant) workers through subcontracting Loose and degrading legal framework in terms of labour rights protection	Heterogeneity and lack of unity amongst workers, lack of class consciousness, defeatism Grassroots movements and trans-spatial solidarity networks developed in the context of recent crises. Repression of demonstrations by state authorities
Digital youthspaces	Platforms' digital apps Digital chatting apps Social media	High probability of accidents due to platforms' push for longer working hours and fast and dangerous driving encouraged by monitoring and rating systems High levels of stress imposed by platform operators	Competition, individualisation of (freelance) FDP workers, aggressive or racist behaviours amongst co-workers Sharing information about traffic, roads, and weather conditions, discussion of working arrangements and ways to organise through FDP workers' online communication Public support of workers' struggles through consumers' digital boycott

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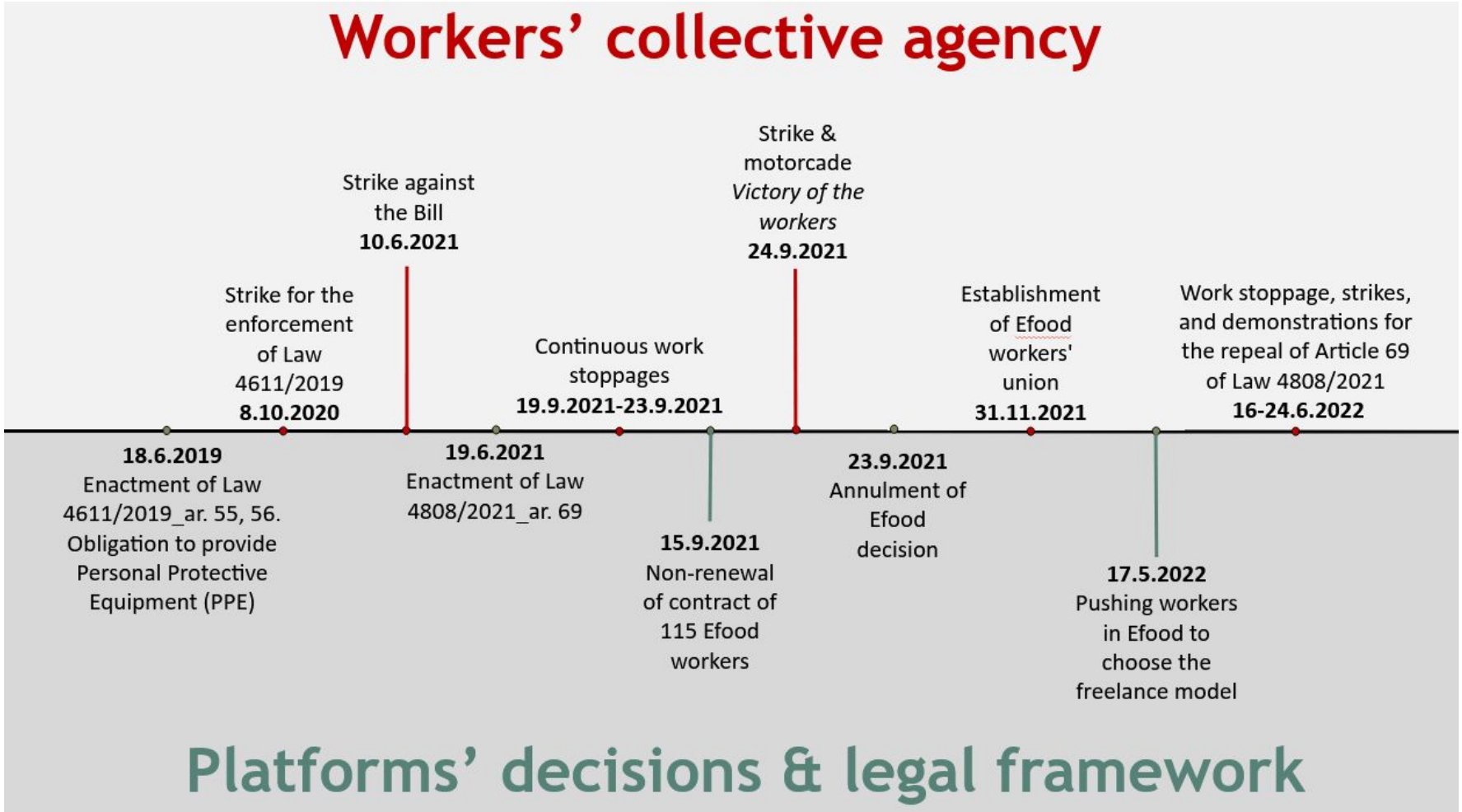


Figure 1. FDP workers' collective agency December 2018 - December 2022. Source: Greek press

Appendix 1. Interviewees' profiles.

Code (E = eFood; W = WOLT)	Age	Gender	Migratory status (migrant/Greek)	Time working via platforms (months)	Time working in delivery (approx. in years)	Employment arrangement	Work hours per day, and workdays per week	Full-time/ Part- time*	Member of trade union (yes/no)
D1_E	26	male	non- migrant	9	3	3-month employment contract	6 hours/day, 5 days/week	part-time	yes
D2_W	29	male	non- migrant	9	1	Freelancer	8 hours/day, 5 days/week	full-time	yes
D3_W	29	male	non- migrant	5	7	Freelancer	6 hours/day, 5 days/week	part-time	yes
D4_W	25	male	non- migrant	14	1	Freelancer	5 hours/day, 3 days/week	part-time	no
D5_E	29	male	non- migrant	12	6	3-month employment contract	4 hours/day, 5 days/week	part-time	no
D6_E	28	male	non- migrant	12	1	3-month employment contract	8 hours/day, 5 days/week	full-time	yes
D7_W	24	male	non- migrant	22	2	Freelancer	8 hours/day, 5 days/week	full-time	no
D8_E	27	male	non- migrant	5	10	3-month employment contract	6 hours/day, 5 days/week	part-time	yes
D9_W	29	male	migrant	12	1	Freelancer	10 hours/day, 6 days/week	full-time	no
D10_E	28	male	non- migrant	5	5	3-month employment contract	6 hours/day, 5 days/week	part-time	no
D11_W	28	male	non- migrant	29	6	Freelancer	4 hours/day, 5 days/week	part-time	yes
D12_E	29	male	non- migrant	6	9	3-month employment contract	6 hours/day, 6 days/week	full-time	yes

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D13_W	26	male	migrant	18	1,5	Freelancer	8 hours/day, 7 days/week	full-time	no
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* Full-time work = more than 30 hours per week; part-time work = less than 30 hours per week.

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