

WINS

Promoting Workers' INvolvement in Social Economy Enterprises

National Workshop - Spain

The challenge of worker cooperative platforms

19th November 2021 from 10:30 to 13:00 CET

ZOOM

SUMMARY

The Spanish local workshop aimed to gather information about the situation of digital platform workers who often working precarious jobs, especially in sectors such as delivery and mobility. 30 participants have joined to the event, mainly representatives of social economy organisations, trade unions and academia.

Worker cooperatives are getting ahead of legal and political loopholes by responding to these challenges through successful business development. Work cooperatives provide good working conditions and participation for those workers who perform jobs offered on these platforms.

Therefore, the workshop focused on knowing if worker cooperatives are the solution to improve worker participation in digital platforms.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Paloma Arroyo, General Director of COCETA

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Paloma Arroyo had to be absent, and it was Pedro Blazquez who welcomed the attendees to the workshop. He also framed the Local Workshop within the WINS project, commenting on its objectives, emphasizing on making visible the participation of workers in social economy enterprises and, mainly, on making them aware of the rights of participation and consultation

of information. He also focused the debate on whether worker cooperatives are really the formula for promoting decent working conditions for workers and their participation in the company.

THE MODELS OF COOPERATIVE PLATFORMS. PLATFORM COOPERATIVES OR COOPERATIVE WORK PLATFORM?

Mr. Alberto Emparanza Sobejano, LKS Next

Alberto gave a legal perspective on what are the legal-technical characteristics of the operational digital platforms and if indeed the cooperative model of a worker cooperative is the one that best suits all of this.

He also commented that a digital cooperative platform is a new type of business, and this type of business can be very suitable to ensure that different market niches can be managed through this formula with the benefit that people are the ones who lend their services and are cooperative partners, that is, they are within a much more humane, much warmer, more democratic structure.

He also exposed some difficulties around data protection, insisting on the need for data-sensitive compliance programs.

He ended his intervention, differentiating our work cooperatives from those that are being created around GLOVO, and other entities, which are false cooperatives.

THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS ON THE PLATFORM COOPERATIVES

Raúl Olmos · CCOO Confederation

Raul approached how they see the digital platforms from the union environment and what has been their experience, in some cases in recent times, and in other cases, to experiences they have had, possibly throughout their lives in the union environment.

He stated that we are facing a paradigm shift mainly in the way we produce, in the way we organize work, in a society connected through the internet. And that all this leads us to the implementation of new forms of work organization beyond what we have prioritized for more than 20 years on networking.

He focused on the need to fight against two effects: the search for escape effect and the search for the abandonment of corporate responsibility and the centralization of risk.

CASE STUDY # 1

Angels Cobo, SUARA <https://suara.coop/es>

Angels gave a summary of the SUARA cooperative, reflecting that they are a non-profit worker cooperative with more than 1,200 female workers in the sector of care for people, education, and social inclusion.

She commented on different data about the sector. Indicating that women are penalized both in their retirement and in their annual income, and mainly that the companies in the sector are underfinanced and that there is a high percentage of informal economy in parallel.

She exposed the complicated situation suffered by the homeless unemployed due to the lack of unemployment benefits and the need for regulation. In addition to the conclusion that she reaches based on the cost assumptions that she raises, hardly sustainable anywhere.

As a solution, they are working on the idea of platforms in which not only professionals act to cover all the necessary hours that a dependent person needs, thus involving all community agents being the ones who cover other needs.

CASE STUDY #2

Ariadna Serra, LES MERCEDES <https://mensajerialesmercedes.com/>

Ariadna presented the Cooperativa de las Mercedes de Barcelona. A cooperative formed by a group of women dedicated to home delivery. A project born in the pandemic. They abandoned their previous jobs, which had more vertical structures, to establish themselves as a Worker Cooperative.

They told us about MatchImpulsa, which is a project that has been selected by the City Council and the Ouverta University. And specifically, about "Bol en Bici", which is a platform that tries to respond to the immediacy of traditional delivery systems, creating a proximity delivery with seasonal menus and returnable bowls made from recycled plastic.

She commented that the mobility sector needs help and looks for tools to join forces and be able to share them.

CASO PRÁCTICO #3

Jep Pedrosa, TRASPOT VISIBLE <https://transportvisible.cat/>

Jep contributed to the workshop the concept of the ecosystem, making visible the services of worker cooperatives in the mobility sector and mass distribution from the point of view of environmentalism, converging in management tools and assets.

He commented on the need to create an ecosystem in cooperative platforms that include worker cooperatives, service cooperatives, and consumer cooperatives, where each one fulfills its function from the complementarity provided by the concept of cooperativism.

It is in this integration work in the sectors mentioned that he had an impact that the “Visible Transport” model works.

According to Jep, his proposal allows the decision on the part of the working partners by controlling the means of production and being able to redesign them. And therefore, socialize them.

He was also critical of the idea of being with those technologies that are not adapted or are not designed to favour participatory processes.

DEBATE

Mainly it focused on determining if we are facing a paradigm shift regarding the organization of work through new models of platforms cooperatives or if we were digitizing traditional worker cooperatives based on platform consumption criteria.