

# ▶ Work Organisation and Organisational Risks in the Digitalised Workplace

Annarosa Pesole

Labour Market Specialist, INWORK

## ► Concept of algorithmic management

- Algorithmic management refers to the use of algorithms and data-driven systems to make decisions, allocate resources, and manage workflows within organizations.
- Despite being developed originally to manage a dispersed workforce in digital labour platforms, the direct and explicit application of algorithmic tools for the management of work is evolving and growing across several sectors.
- In many cases, algorithmic tools are implemented for the management of other aspects and processes at the workplace.
- The use of algorithms for the management of different aspects of economic activity has significant implications for work organisation, task allocation, job quality and industrial relations.

## What is algorithm management used for?

- **Planning** is the determination of courses of action to achieve desired goals. An aspect of planning is staffing, that is the strategic decision of how many people to involve in the provision of the service.
- **Organising.** Algorithms are used to: Assign task; match with clients; define time slot/shifts; define geographical access; determine remuneration (surging pricing mechanisms); Gamification/engagement.
- **Directing.** Algorithms are used to direct workers during the execution of the task. For example, by recommending course of actions, by giving instructions (i.e. following a specific route, tagging objects in a specific order, etc) or by determining the pace of work (i.e. giving a certain amount of time to complete the task, or scheduling the different steps of the task). Generally, the directing functions defined by the algorithms includes all those aspects that inform/address/command workers on how to perform the task.

## ► What is algorithm management used for?

- **Monitor and supervise** workers during the provision of work or once the task is completed. The monitoring and supervising algorithms do:
- **Evaluate** workers activity (ratings, rankings, award or prizes to have met specific goals or thresholds, badges to certify a qualification). (i.e. workers' appraisal is outsourced and established by third parties external to the working organisation)
- Decide on workers outcome and **access to future tasks**
- **Deactivate or dismiss workers**

## ► Opportunities for OSH in Digital Technologies and Algorithmic Management

- **Enhanced hazard detection through real-time data and sensors.**
- **Improved risk prevention using predictive analytics and early-warning systems.**
- **More consistent application of safety protocols via algorithmic decision support.**
- **Personalized training and ergonomic guidance based on worker-specific data.**
- **Potential for reducing dangerous tasks through automation and digital assistance.**

## ► **OSH Risks Linked to Digital Technologies and Algorithmic Management**

- **Work intensification and pace control driven by algorithms.**
- **Loss of autonomy and increased stress from automated monitoring.**
- **Opaque decision-making and uncertainty in algorithmic task allocation.**
- **Data-driven surveillance reducing privacy and increasing psychosocial risks.**
- **Fatigue and physical strain from optimized, break-minimizing schedules.**
- **Mental health impacts from ratings, penalties, and unpredictable allocation.**
- **Safety compromises to meet algorithmic performance targets.**

## Algorithmic management of work: Policy implications

- Data protection and privacy (no control over own digital identities, no control over own data shared with third parties and for what purposes)
- Impoverishment of working conditions (reduction of autonomy and freedom at work, increase of routinisation and standardisation of process, work intensification)
- Workers' health and safety (technofatigue, eyestrain, stress, fear, anxiety, blurred private and working life)
- The risk of algorithmic bias and discrimination (perpetuating social biases with limited scope for redress)
- Weakening of workers' bargaining power (controlling and influence workers attitude and behaviours)
- Freedom of association (restriction to workers interactions)
- Labour rights (commodification of work, labour's externalisation)

# ► Fundamental principles and rights at work


## Examples from Member States



## OSH

- In Malta platforms are required to evaluate the risks of automated monitoring and decision-making systems on the health and safety of workers, with particular regard to risk of accidents and psychosocial and ergonomic risks. In addition, the use of automated monitoring and decision-making systems that put undue pressure on workers is prohibited.
- The Eu Directive on Platform work specifies that digital labour platforms shall:
  - ▶ evaluate risks of automated decision-making and monitoring as regards OSH, and pay specific attention to ergonomic and psychosocial risks, as well as work-related accidents;
  - ▶ assess whether safeguards to those systems are adequate given the specificities of the work environment; and
  - ▶ introduce appropriate preventive and protective measures

## OSH

- 
- In the Republic of Korea, the Occupational Safety and Health Act extends protections specifically to cover passenger transportation and delivery platform workers and provides that platforms are responsible for measures to prevent industrial accidents.
  - In Italy, existing OSH protections have also been extended to platform workers, including those classified as self-employed.
  - In Portugal, under passenger transport legislation, the operator (the person providing the service) is responsible for observing all legal provisions relating to occupational safety and health.

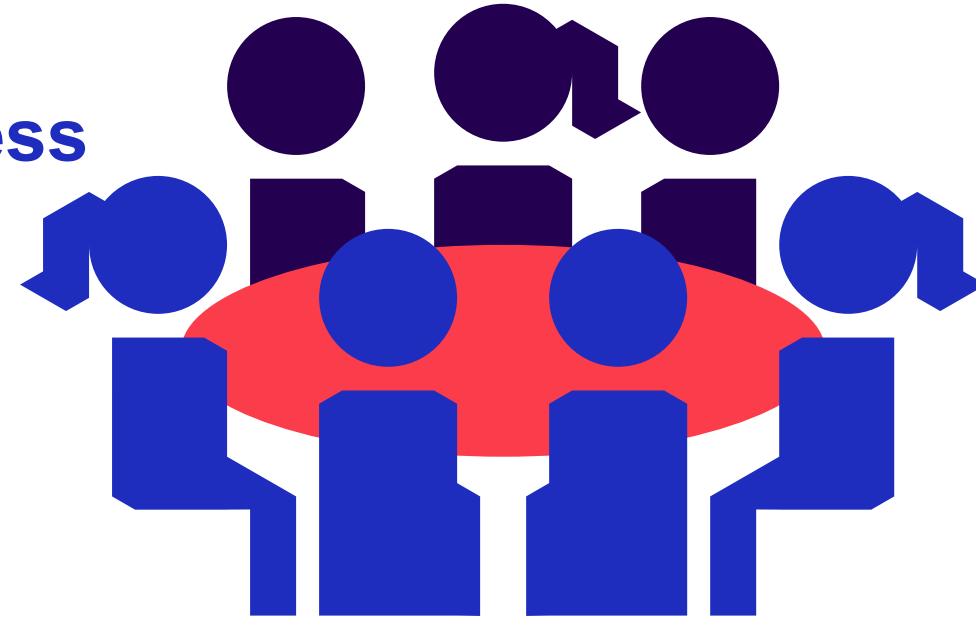
# Realizing Decent Work in the Platform Economy Standard Setting

September 2025



## Background to the standard setting process

- ▶ Meeting of Experts on Decent Work in the Platform Economy (October 2022)
- ▶ ILO Governing Body (March 2023) decided to place on the agenda of the 113th Session (June 2025) a standard-setting item on decent work in the platform economy with a double-discussion procedure



## Normative gap analysis

---

Some ILO standards have direct applicability to platform workers whether they are in wage or non-wage employment

---

Existing standards do not address some of its specific characteristics, or do not address new developments driven by technological changes

---

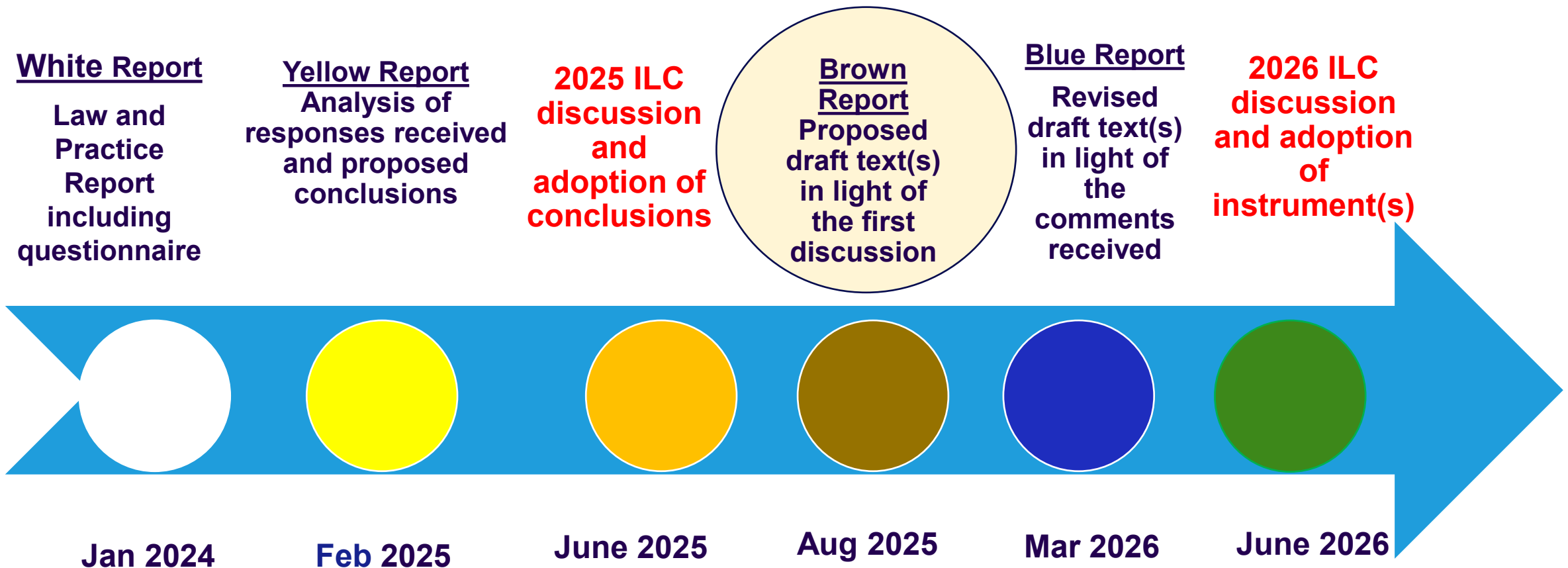
Normative gaps on dispute resolution exist, particularly given the cross-border nature of work

---

Several standards have gaps in their scope, notably coverage of the self-employed

---

# Overview of the standard setting process



# Next steps: Report V (3) (the Brown Report)

15

Released on 15 August 2025 accompanied by a form for replies.

Includes commentary by the Office.

Contains the **draft texts of a Convention and Recommendation** for constituents to consider.

**Invites** constituents to share their views on the texts and reply by 14 November

## ► Report V (4) (the Blue Report)

Based on replies to the Brown Report, the Office will prepare a report and a further draft Convention and Recommendation.

The report is scheduled to be released in March 2026.

It will be considered by the Conference in June 2026.





# THANK YOU

