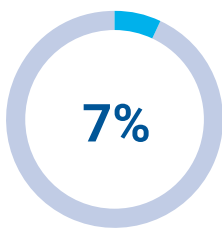


# Online Platforms and Platform Work Estonia

- ✓ ✗ Legally binding definition of online platforms
- ✓ ✗ Specific register of online platforms
- ✓ ✗ Specific regulation applicable to online platforms
- ✓ ✗ Online platforms are considered to be employers

In 2021, the **Information Society Services Act** was amended with the objective of ensuring enforcement of the EU's Platforms Regulation and the e-Commerce Directive in Estonia. The amendment designates the Consumer Protection and Technical Regulatory Authority to exercise supervision over providers of online intermediation services and specifies liability for violation of the Act.



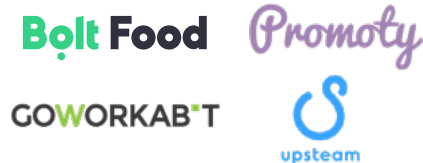
**Only 7% of the working population** in Estonia work via platforms at least once a week. This is approximately 56,000 people.



Estonian workers consider platform work to be a temporary activity rather than a long-term career choice. **Most workers combine platform work with other activities.**



The **average net income** of people working via platforms is lower than those who do not work via a platform.



**Four international platforms have their headquarters in Estonia.**

**Bolt** is a transportation network company that was founded in 2013. The platform operates in 300 cities in 45 countries around the world.

**GoWorkaBit** is an online staffing platform for on-site short-term jobs that was founded in 2013. In 2021, the company had a turnover of €1,844,320.

**Promoty** is a platform that helps brands and agencies to find the right influencers. The platform was founded in 2017. Currently, the company works on influencer marketing campaign in eight markets covering the Baltics, Nordics and Netherlands.

**UpSteam** is a mobile car-wash platform that was founded in 2017. The platform operates in Estonia and Finland.



**The public discourse is highly influenced by a techno-optimism that regards platform work as a business opportunity.** As a result, algorithmic control, sanctions for non-compliance, declining income, a competitive work environment or other conditions that negatively affect workers have been largely absent in the debate in Estonia.

Nevertheless, some studies suggest that Estonian workers are struggling with the way the quality of their work is assessed. There is a growing use of customer rating systems that workers find unfair and difficult to challenge. Negative ratings can lead to the closure of their profiles. As a result, workers cannot enter into a dialogue with platforms, as the customer service of some platforms is difficult to reach or only responds with delay.

In the majority of cases, the discussion on the employment status of platform workers has been dominated by the views of those who favour the status of independent contractor. Reclassification of the current status is seen as a threat to flexibility both by platform companies and the Estonian Employers' Confederation, but even by some platform workers.



**There are no collective agreements at any level covering platform workers in Estonia.** In many cases, platform workers see the solution in leaving the platform if they feel dissatisfied with working conditions rather than entering into a dialogue with the platform or organising with other workers. In some cases, the accounts of platform workers were closed down after they publicly criticised working conditions, for instance in online communities.

Even if there is a lack of solidarity among Estonian platform workers and low interest in organising, there are a couple of important initiatives that can be singled out.



In **2019**, Bolt drivers organised a protest against the pricing system. Drivers switched off their app during peak hours. However, no agreement was reached.



In **2020**, a few Estonian taxi drivers created a non-profit organisation called 'Eesti Taksokoondis' that represents the interests of all drivers (both traditional taxi drivers and those who work via platforms). The goal of the organisation is to fight for better working conditions and create an alternative ride-hailing platform that is managed by the workers themselves.