NEW FORMS OF WORK AND PLATFORM WORK IN CENTRAL ASIA

Country profile: Tajikistan

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The present report is exploring new forms of work in Tajikistan, particularly online work on and off digital platforms and on-location platform work.[1] It investigates the prevalence of these new types of work, their appeal to workers, workers' profiles, working conditions, the current regulatory landscape, as well as the relevant policy implications. This report is one of four reports developed within the scope of the ETF research project in Central Asia, which also encompasses studies in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan.

It is a pioneer study in this field in Tajikistan, and as such it encountered difficulties related to the lack of information and specialists. However, much work has been done to search for and analyse available information sources. The report was developed based on data obtained through desk research, scraping of online labour platforms and stakeholder interviews. Firstly, desk research included a review of official statistics, policy and legal documents, digital platform websites, specific regulations, project reports, but also relevant literature, research papers, studies, news articles, etc. Secondly, quantitative data on online platform workers was obtained through web scraping of data from some of the most popular online labour platforms in the region, as well as through the existing Online Labour Index database. Thirdly, data from the desk research and online labour platforms was integrated with the information gathered through the stakeholder interviews. Interviews were conducted with representatives of country policymakers, employers' organisations, as well as specialists and practitioners in the field of employment and labour market, digitalisation and digital labour platforms. The development of the report, including the empirical research, encompassed the period from May to October 2023.

The report is structured in the following way: (i) outline of the country's economy, labour market, youth statistics, Internet and digitalisation, (ii) review and analysis of online work on and off digital platforms in the country (iii) review and analysis of on-location platform work in the country (iv) identification of the current regulations, policies, and strategic approaches related to the new forms of work, as well as (v) outline of the main policy recommendations.

---

[1] Definitions of terms used in the report are provided in the Glossary.

SETTING THE SCENE

Main economic indicators

Tajikistan has demonstrated strong economic performance over the past decade, with annual growth rates exceeding 7% on average. Sustained economic growth has led to improved living standards, with the poverty rate falling from 32% in 2009 to 13.4% in 2022 (with the international poverty line of $3.65 a day in 2017 PPP).[2] The growth of gross domestic product (GDP) at the end of 2021 amounted to 9.4%, while inflation in 2022 amounted to 4.2%.[3] Tajikistan is considered to have significant growth potential, which includes a young and growing population, water and hydropower potential, agriculture and food processing, mineral resources and tourism.

Considering the participation of the economic sectors in the formation of the country's GDP, the industrial sector has significantly increased its contribution to GDP in the previous years. In the period 2012-2021, the share of industry in the formation of GDP increased by almost 75%, the share of construction increased by almost 35%, and the share of the services sector over this period decreased by almost a quarter. In 2021, however, while agriculture and industry remained at the core of the country's economy (shares in GDP were 22.4% and 23.8%, respectively), the service sector generated the largest share of the GDP (32.9%).[4]

Hydropower has traditionally been one of the main pillars of the Tajik economy, and in 2021 the country exported electricity to the neighbouring countries worth nearly $100 million, while the electricity import amounted to around $17 million. In total, about 20 billion kWh was generated in the republic during the year.[5]

Some of the longer-term problems of the Tajik economy are still present. The budget deficit widened to 1.9% of GDP in 2022, from 1.4% in 2021.[6] As before, the country's imports far exceed the exports. The republic is still extremely dependent on remittances from migrants and they amounted to almost a third of the country's GDP in 2021 and surged to over half of the GDP in 2022.[7]

Labour market

The employment rate of the population in both 2021 and 2022 amounted to 38% – among women 29.3%, and among men 46.7%.[8] The employment retains its agrarian nature, even though there was a significant change in the sectoral structure of employment in the period 2012-2021, shifting from agriculture to other sectors. However, even though the share of the agricultural sector in the overall employment decreased by 8 percentage points, this sector is still the largest contributor to employment at 42.6% in 2021 (with the shares of the industry and the services sectors at 20% and 37%, respectively).[9]

---

[2] World Bank (2022). The World Bank in Tajikistan. Overview.
https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tajikistan/overview
[3] Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. https://stat.tj/en/tables-real-sector,
https://www.stat.tj/en
[4] Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. https://stat.tj/en/tables-real-sector
[5] Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. https://www.stat.tj/en/macroeconomic-indicators
[6] World Bank (2022). The World Bank in Tajikistan. Overview.
https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tajikistan/overview#3
[7] World Bank (2022). Personal remittances, received (% of GDP) – Tajikistan.
https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=TJ
[8] World Bank (2022). Employment to population ratio, 15+, total (%) (modeled ILO estimate) – Tajikistan.
https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.EMP.TOTL.SP.ZS?locations=TJ
[9] World Bank (2022). Employment in agriculture (% of total employment) (modeled ILO estimate) – Tajikistan
https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.AGR.EMPL.ZS?locations=TJ.

The unemployment rate (of persons 15+) stood at 7.7% in 2021 (7.8% in 2022). This indicator among women was 6.3% (6.4% in 2022), and among men – 8.6% (8.7% in 2022).[10] In the period 2013-2021 the average birth rate per thousand people was nearly 26, while the average death rate per thousand people was only 4, meaning that the average annual population growth rate was 2.2%.[11] In this situation, the population grows faster than the share of the employed population.[12]

Currently, in Tajikistan, the level of informal employment is comparatively higher than in most of the other countries in the region. According to the 2016 Labour Force Survey (LFS),[13] 29.4% of employment in all sectors of the country's economy (except agriculture) is informal. When including agriculture (comprising 45.8% of total employment according to the 2016 LFS), the share of informal employment is likely to exceed 40%.[14] This clearly indicates the inefficient functioning of the labour market.

Moreover, the labour market of Tajikistan is characterised by relatively high level of labour migration of Tajik workers to other countries (constituting at least 10% of working age population).[15]

Youth statistics

The unemployment rate among the youth (15-24 years old) is twice as high as the unemployment rate for the entire population, and in 2021 amounted to 17% (17.4% in 2022) – 14% for women (14.3% in 2022) and 19% for men (19.6% in 2022).[16] The inability of Tajikistan's economy to provide all youth with work has led to mass labour migration. Annually, 150,000 young people enter the labour market of Tajikistan, but only 30,000-40,000 of them are able to find jobs. The rest seems to have two main paths. The first is ending up in the economically inactive group. Even if young people keep composure after long and unsuccessful job search, many ultimately give up the struggle for a job and join a number of economically inactive population. Each year the youth inactivity grows in Tajikistan and the level of NEETs (young people not in education, employment or training) according to the 2016 LFS was 29,3%.[17]

The second path is to leave Tajikistan. Migrants typically leave Tajikistan for construction, agricultural, or other types of work during the summer period (March/April to October/November) and return home.[18] Apart from the seasonal migration also highly qualified specialists leave the country. According to the national statistics, despite the current Western sanctions imposed on the Russian Federation, the number of Tajik migrants who left for Russia has doubled. At a press conference on July 26, 2022, the Minister of Labour, Migration, and Employment of the Population, Shirin Amonzoda, stated that more

---

Employment in industry (% of total employment) (modeled ILO estimate) – Tajikistan. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.IND.EMPL.ZS?locations=TJ.
Employment in services (% of total employment) (modeled ILO estimate) – Tajikistan https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.SRV.EMPL.ZS?locations=TJ.

[10] World Bank (2022). Unemployment, total (% of total labor force) (modeled ILO estimate) – Tajikistan. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS?locations=TJ

[11] Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. https://www.stat.tj/en/tables-socio-demographic-sector

[12] Постановление Правительства Республики Таджикистан О Концепции развития продуктивной занятости в Республике Таджикистан на период до 2040 годаот "28" мая 2022 года, №263.

[13] In Tajikistan, during the period of state independence, the Labour Force Survey was conducted only three times (in 2004, 2009 and 2016).

[14] ILO (2018). Social Protection Assessment-Based National Dialogue. Towards a Nationally Defined Social Protection Floor in the Republic of Tajikistan. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/information-resources/publications/WCMS_673587/lang--en/index.htm

[15] Правительство Республики Таджикистан (2023). Зеленое развитие для всеобщего процветания: добровольный национальный обзор Таджикистана. https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2023/VNR%202023%20Tajikistan%20Report%20RU.pdf

[16] World Bank (2022). Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24) (modeled ILO estimate) - Tajikistan. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.1524.ZS?locations=TJ

[17] Mirov, L., The impact of education and family background on NEET-youth. Innovations and Investments, No 9, 2020. https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/neet-molodezh-tadzhikistana-rol-obrazovaniya-i-semya

[18] Asian Development Bank (2020). Strengthening Support for Labour Migration in Tajikistan: Assessment and Recommendations. Strengthening Support for Labor Migration in Tajikistan: Assessment and Recommendations (adb.org)

than 322,000 people left for labour migration in the first half of 2022. This is twice as many as compared to the same period last year.[19] In general, labour migration concerns almost a third of the country's labour force, with the majority being young people (15-39 years old), predominantly male citizens from rural areas with general education, while the proportion of labour migrants with vocational education is declining.[20]

Migration is further encouraged by other characteristics of the employment sector in Tajikistan, such as low wages (this figure in 2021 (136.2$/month) was 5.5 times lower than that of the Russian Federation (767.8$/month)[21] which, in dollar terms, are also the lowest among the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).[22] Other adverse characteristics include slow expansion of the capacity of the employed workforce compared to the growth of the labour force, as well as a rather large share of the agricultural and low-paid segments of the employment sector.

Inadequate education and lack of experience among young migrants compel them to accept work characterised by unfavourable working conditions, unfair wages and subpar worker rights, losing a chance of decent salaries and facing the risk of deportation from the destination country. Experiencing setbacks in both local and foreign job markets leads young people to alienation, frustration and in some cases – to political radicalisation.[23] [24]

Internet and digitalisation

The information and communication technology (ICT) sector in Tajikistan in the period 2000-2015 was one of the fastest growing in the country. However, Tajikistan now suffers from limited access and high prices for the Internet services, especially in rural areas, where more than 70% of the population lives. These connectivity and Internet access related barriers prevent Tajikistan from attracting more private investment, and limit opportunities for an economic breakthrough by means of the digital transformation of the private sector, as well as for strengthening international partnerships.

The majority of the country's population recognises the need for digital competence, but only a third of the population in Tajikistan (3.3 million people) used mobile Internet in 2021, and there is a serious digital skills gap among the population.[25]

The use of digital technologies is expanding in the country's education system. Educational institutions have access to the Internet in accordance with the state requirements. The subject of computer science is included in the general education curricula, and training for ICT in the vocational education institutions is being carried out.

However, the quality of educational programmes and professionals within the vocational education does not meet the requirements of the digital economy. There is a shortage of qualified teachers at all levels of education. There is also a "brain drain" among qualified professionals.

[19] Central Asian Bureau for Analytical Reporting (2022). 100K New Jobs in Tajikistan: Is it a reality or dream? 100K New Jobs in Tajikistan: Is it a Reality or a Dream? - CABAR.asia

[20] Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. Labour Force Survey (2016) / Report prepared on the results of the labour force survey conducted from July 20 to August 20, 2016.

[21] Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan (2022). Labour market in the Republic of Tajikistan, 2022.

[22] Central Asian Bureau for Analytical Reporting (2023). Wage and GDP growth do not impact living standards in Tajikistan, 2023, https://cabar.asia/en/wage-and-gdp-growth-do-not-impact-living-standards-in-tajikistan

[23] Asian Development Bank. Strengthening Support for Labour Migration in Tajikistan: Assessment and Recommendations (2020). Strengthening Support for Labor Migration in Tajikistan: Assessment and Recommendations (adb.org)

[24] IOM (2020). External Youth Migration in the Countries of Central Asia: Risk analysis and minimization of negative consequences. External Youth Migration in the Countries of Central Asia: Risk analysis and minimization of negative consequences | IOM Publications Platform

[25] Asian Development Bank (2023). News Releases. ADB emphasised the importance of the digital economy to support growth and public services in Tajikistan. АБР подчеркнул важность цифровой экономики для поддержки роста и государственных услуг в Таджикистане | Asian Development Bank (adb.org)

In 2022, the United Nations (UN) published a study and the accompanying rating of the countries of the world in terms of the development of e-government (E-Government Development Index). Titled 'The United Nations E-Government Survey: E-Government for the People', the paper assesses the readiness and capability of national governments in 193 countries to use ICT to deliver public services to citizens. Tajikistan was ranked 129th.[26]

In the Network Readiness Index (NRI) 2022,[27] ranking a total of 131 countries based on their performance across 58 variables, Tajikistan was ranked 111th. The country ranked lower in the "Technology" (118th), "Governance" (119th), and "People" (120th) components, as well as the indicators related to the use of ICT by "Government" (121st) and "Businesses" (127th).[28]

---

[26] United Nations (2022). Department of Economic and Social Affairs, E-Government Survey 2022. The Future of Digital Government. https://desapublications.un.org/sites/default/files/publications/2022-09/Web%20version%20E-Government%202022.pdf
[27] Initially launched in 2002 with the World Economic Forum, the NRI has been redesigned in 2019 under the auspices of the Portulans Institute based in the USA, to reflect how technology and people need to be integrated within an effective governance structure in order to have the right impact on economy, society and environment. Portulans Institute (2023). Network Readiness Index. Available at: https://networkreadinessindex.org/
[28] Dutta, S., & Lanvin, B. Portulans Institute (2021). The Network Readiness Index 2021. Shaping the Global Recovery. How digital technologies can make the post-COVID world more equal. Available at: https://nonews.co/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NRI2021.pdf

ONLINE WORK ON AND OFF DIGITAL LABOUR PLATFORMS

The penetration of information technologies at a rapid pace in all spheres of public life is becoming the basis for the emergence of new forms of employment based on online freelancing on and off digital platforms. Most of the online freelancers in Tajikistan belong to limited circles of highly qualified professionals, who are well aware of the possibilities of Internet technologies and have the skills to use them. In this regard, issues related to online work are only a concern for a narrow circle of people. Thus discussion about these new forms of employment are rare in Tajikistan's public space. In this chapter, we review the prevalence, types and other aspects of online freelancing.

Prevalence and attractiveness of online work

Online Labour Index data[29] indicates that online platform work in Tajikistan has experienced remarkable growth since 2018, although with significant fluctuations. The highest peak occurred in the first half of 2022, with an astounding 25,000% increase compared to the initial measurement. While there has been a subsequent drop in the activity since then, as of summer 2023, the level remained 5,000% higher than it was five years prior. This large increase could be potentially explained by the influx of Russian freelancers into Central Asian countries, but there is no solid evidence for this claim. Furthermore, the baseline against which increase was measured was extremely low, meaning that there was a low number of active platform workers in Tajikistan in 2018.

Figure 1. Change in engagement of online platform workers from Tajikistan on English language platforms over time


---
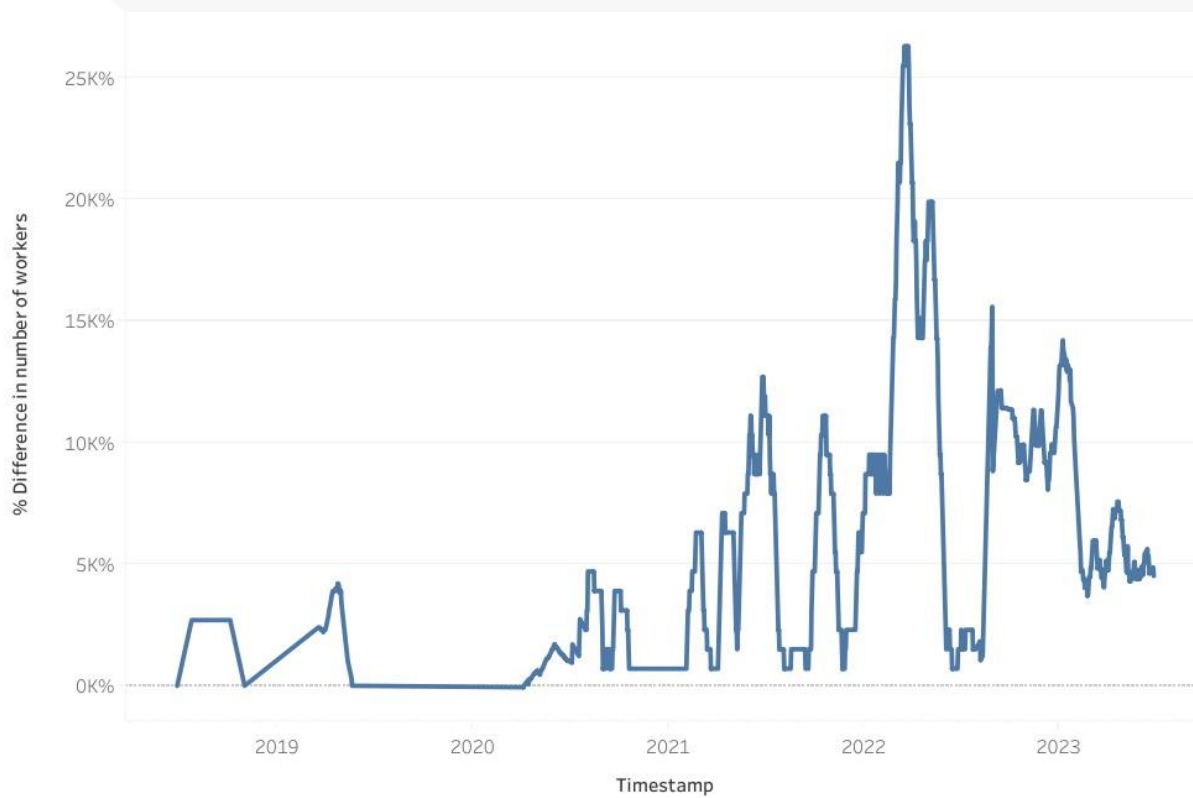
29 ILO. The Online Labour Index 2020. http://onlinelabourobservatory.org/oli-supply/

Note: The graph presents the percentage change between the number of active workers from Tajikistan on a specific day compared to the number of active workers at the start of data collection in 2017, which is used as a reference date. This graph was based on OLI data which calculated a weighted estimate of currently active workers by periodically sampling workers on five of the largest online platforms once every 24 hours. Platforms included are Upwork, Freelancer, Guru, Peopleperhour and MTurk

The research conducted for this study also involved scraping data from three major digital platforms that are used in Tajikistan: English-language Freelancer and Guru, as well as Russian-language Weblancer. However, the study identified only 342 registered profiles from Tajikistan on these platforms, making platform workers from this country the least numerous in the region. Additionally, out of the 342 registered profiles, only 7% can be considered active.[31] Among these profiles, approximately 68% of the workers are active on English language platforms, while the remaining 32% are active on the Russian language platform Weblancer. It is noteworthy that this Russian language platform is significantly less popular in Tajikistan compared to Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

As depicted in the figure below, online workers from Tajikistan have demonstrated a long-standing presence on the Weblancer platform. A significant majority of workers have been active on the platform for 7 years or more, with some even maintaining their activity for as long as 16 years. Notably, the figure also highlights the continuous influx of new members, with new profiles being created within the past two years.

Figure 2. Distribution of time that workers were registered on Weblancer platform
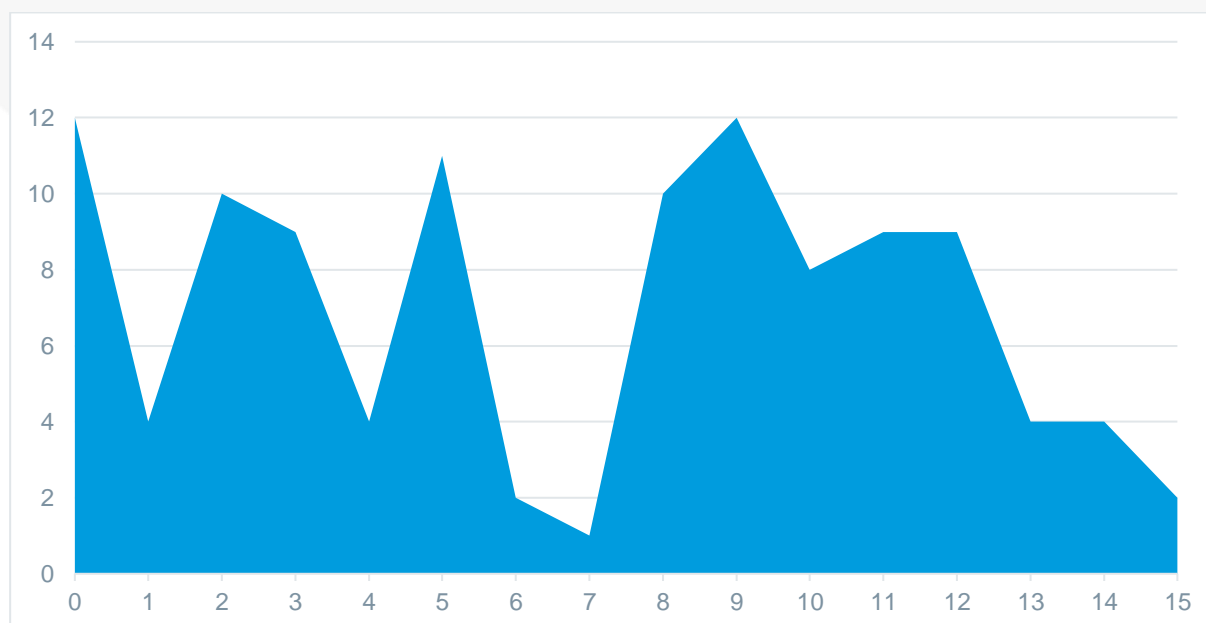
Source: PPMI, based on data from Weblancer collected in April 2023

Currently, more than 20 online platforms operate in Tajikistan, among which the most popular are Freelancer.com,[32] Upwork,[33] Fiverr,[34] Toptal,[35] Guru,[36] Workspace.ru,[37] Pchel.net,[38] Flagma.[39] At present, there is no successful national digital labour platform in Tajikistan, and the existing local websites are mainly of the nature of job announcement boards. It should be noted that online freelance

[30] ILO. The Online Labour Index 2020. http://onlinelabourobservatory.org/oli-supply/
[31] Active workers are those who managed to secure at least one work task on the target platform
[32] Freelancer. https://www.freelancer.com.ru/freelancers/tajikistan
[33] Upwork. https://www.upwork.com/search/profiles/?loc=tajikistan&q=tajikistan
[34] Fiverr. https://www.fiverr.com/
[35] Toptal. https://www.toptal.com/
[36] Guru. https://www.guru.com/
[37] Workspace. https://workspace.ru/specialists/dushanbe/
[38] Pchel.net. https://pchel.net/workers/city=dushanbe/
[39] Flagma. www.flagma.com

work also takes place outside the digital labour platforms. Freelancers also secure jobs through professional communities, personal connections or specialised agencies. However, no data is available to quantify the prevalence of such arrangements.

The main factor influencing the popularity of online work is higher wages compared to traditional work. Tajikistan has the lowest wages in dollar terms among the former Soviet republics. A number of other factors affecting the popularity of online work include the lack of productive jobs in the country's economy, the flexibility of working hours, low barriers to the availability of such jobs, and the ability to participate in a competitive environment.[40]

Online work occupations and worker profiles

An analysis of information from digital labour platforms operating in Tajikistan on indicates that this market mainly covers professional services such as research, analytical, accounting, consulting, translation, multimedia, graphic design, photo editing, posting ads, social media management, website creation and maintenance, etc. Other online services of a lower level of professionalisation include clerical and data-entry tasks, content filling, etc. While the first group of jobs (professional online services) require high professional and sectoral as well as information and communication knowledge and skills, and the second group requires basic computer literacy skills, and is therefore characterised by lower entry barriers.

These occupations of online platform workers from Tajikistan are unevenly distributed. The highest number of workers is engaged in the fields of creative and multimedia, accounting for a 36% share. This is followed by software development and technology, which constitutes 28% of the total, and writing and translation, comprising 22%. The occupations generally require higher qualification levels. The remaining online platform workers are involved in clerical and data entry, sales and marketing, and professional services, in that respective order.

Figure 3. Distribution of occupations among registered online platform workers from Tajikistan
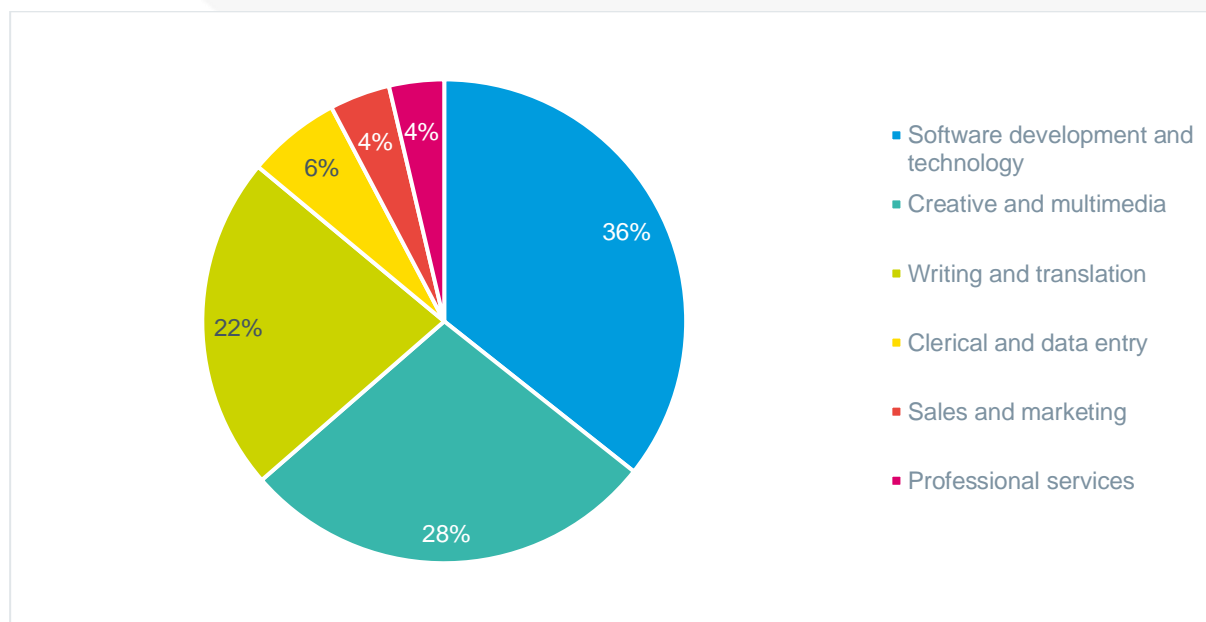
Source: PPMI, based on data from Freelancer, Guru and Weblancer collected in April 2023

Note: We analysed the total of 342 registered platform profiles from Tajikistan. It was not possible to determine the occupation for 21% of the profiles and they were excluded from this graph.

---

[40] Interview with a project manager of an NGO

The online platform workforce in Tajikistan is predominantly male, with men comprising 88% of the total share, which is the highest in the region. Women have a notable presence in the fields of clerical and data entry, as well as writing and translation, accounting for over one-fifth of the total share. However, their representation in the remaining occupations is either minimal or non-existent. The data is corroborated by the interviews, in which participants noted that in the sectors of clerical tasks, writing and translation, the number of female online workers is increasing.

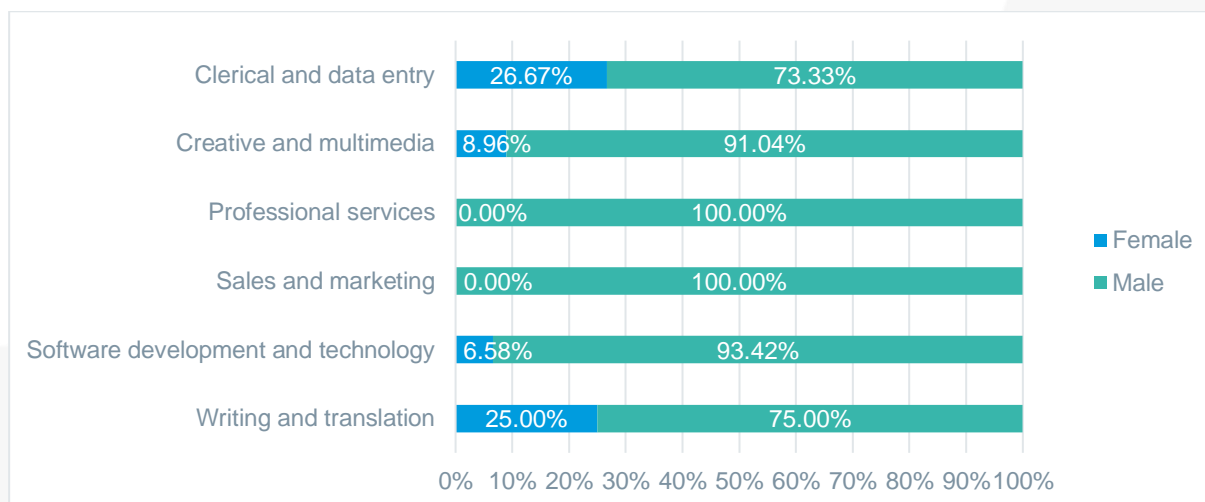*Figure 4. Gender distribution of registered online platform workers by occupation*

Source: PPMI, based on data from Freelancer, Guru and Weblancer collected in April 2023

Note: We analysed the total of 342 registered platform profiles from Tajikistan. It was not possible to determine gender for 17% of the profiles and they were excluded from the graph

Online platform workers from Tajikistan are primarily young, as indicated by the figure below. The majority of registered workers on the Weblancer platform fall within the age range of 20 to 40 years old. However, there is also a presence of both older and younger workers, demonstrating a diverse age distribution.

Figure 5. Distribution of age of registered online platform workers from Tajikistan
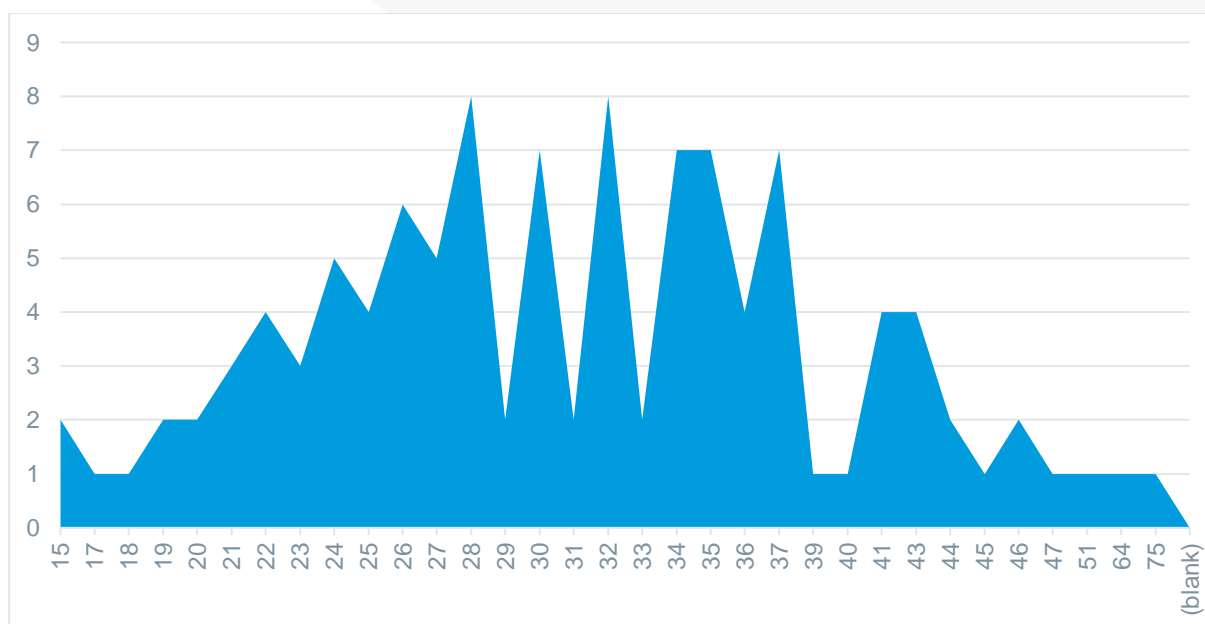
Source: PPMI, based on data from Weblancer collected in April 2023

Note: We analysed the total of 109 registered platform profiles from Tajikistan.

Information about the education and qualifications of online workers is not available, however, as in other regions, it tends to correlate with the complexity of the types of work and tasks. Whole higher education degrees are necessary for some activities, especially in the professional services segment, other tasks such as data entry might not require more than secondary education and knowledge of English.

Within the framework of this study, it was not possible to find information on whether this work is full-time or part-time for the majority of workers. Nevertheless, according to experts, in most cases, online work is short-term and temporary, with a likely exception of accounting services. Online work in the sectors of creative and multimedia work and software development and Internet technology services in most cases is of a primary nature, while in other sectors it usually serves as supplementary employment.[41]

Working conditions

As part of this study, little information exists to assess working conditions and career prospects in online work. In practice, there are cases when the skill level of online workers is much higher than the level required for the work performed. Staying in such a job for a longer period of time can lead to deterioration of skills. This is also due to the fact that platform workers usually have limited opportunities for career advancement.

Labour relations in the context of the research and professional advisory services and professional services in the management sector are in most cases regulated by national civil law in the form of service contracts. The formality of labour relations is more characteristic of the services performed outside of digital platforms. In other sectors of online platform work, informal labour relations prevail.

On average, online platform workers from Tajikistan are requesting USD 14.98 per hour. However, there is a notable difference in the requested rates across different platforms. The Russian language platform Weblancer has significantly lower rates, with workers requesting only USD 6.67 per hour. In contrast, on Freelancer and Guru, the requested rates are higher, averaging at USD 14.40 and USD 17.36 per hour, respectively.

Average hourly platform rates are considerably higher than the local average net hourly wage, which stood at around USD 1.2 in July 2023.[42] In fact, the average hourly rates on the selected digital platforms are more than twelve times higher than the local average, indicating that online labour platforms offer significant earning opportunities in the context of Tajikistan. However, it is important to note that these figures may not directly reflect the actual earnings of workers. The requested rates can differ from what workers ultimately receive, platform earnings are irregular and securing jobs on platforms may involve a substantial amount of unpaid work. According to interviewed experts, the salary of online work is at least 3 times higher than in traditional types of work.[43]

The figure below illustrates the gender differences in earnings of online platform workers in Tajikistan. It shows that, on average, men tend to request higher hourly rates compared to women, with men requesting an average rate of USD 15.43 and women requesting an average rate of USD 13.68. However, it is worth noting that women requested higher rates in the clerical and data entry occupation. Tajikistan stands out from other countries in the region, such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, where women on average request higher hourly rates than men.

Regarding the variation of hourly rates across occupations, the highest rates are observed in sales and marketing and professional services. They are followed by creative and multimedia, writing and

---

[41] Interview with a labour market expert

[42] CEIC data / Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. Tajikistan Average Monthly Salary (2011-2023). https://www.ceicdata.com/en/tajikistan/average-monthly-salary/average-monthly-salary#:~:text=Tajikistan%20Average%20Monthly%20Salary%20data,Jul%202023%2C%20with%20151%20observations

[43] Interview with a labour market expert

translation, and software and technology. The lowest rates are observed in the clerical and data entry field. It is noteworthy that the higher-paid occupations in Tajikistan also tend to be male-dominated.

*Figure 6. Hourly rates of online platform workers by occupation and gender (USD)*
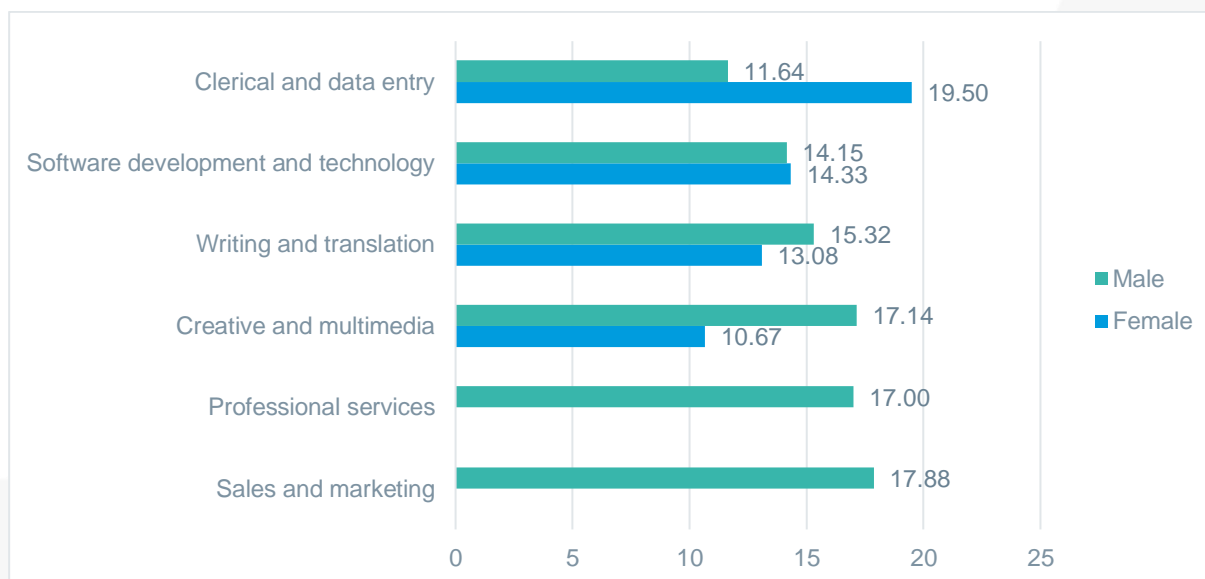
Source: PPMI, based on data from Freelancer, Guru and Weblancer collected in April 2023

Note: We analysed the total of 342 registered platform profiles from Tajikistan

Obstacles to the effective development of platform employment in Tajikistan include, in particular, the duration and cost (in particular SWIFT) of money transfers to Tajikistan from distant foreign countries.[44]

---

[44] Interview with a project manager of an NGO

ON-LOCATION PLATFORM WORK

On-location platform work in Tajikistan mostly entails ride-hailing and delivery services in larger cities. However, the available data indicates that these type of activities are only emerging in the country, and remain low profile. In the media and the public discourse, these types of work are not intensively considered. In this chapter, we overview the scarce available evidence on the prevalence, types and other aspects of on-location platform work.

Prevalence and attractiveness of on-location platform work

Statistics on the on-location platform work and its prevalence in Tajikistan are not available. However, some insights into this phenomenon could be made based on the analysis of the most popular platforms, as well the review of platform advertising in the Internet, TV, radio and newspapers.

In Tajikistan, ride-hailing services seem to be the most popular type of work conducted though on-location platforms, followed by delivery, and domestic services (which can be considered as an emerging sector). Most popular ride-hailing platforms in Tajikistan include Rakhsh Taxi, Yak Taxi (the first eco-friendly taxi in Tajikistan), Olucha Taxi, Atlas Taxi, and Somon Taxi. The very first of them, Rakhsh Taxi, began to fully operate in Dushanbe in 2015.[45] According to taxi drivers from leading companies and specialists,[46] about 12,000 people are employed in this sector. Interviews conducted for this study show that the demand for these services is much greater than the current supply (resulting in extended waiting times for an ordered taxi recently).

Yandex Go, a Russian ride-hailing platform popular in the Central Asia region, is not operational in Tajikistan. In 2023, the company tried entering the local market, but shortly after the launch of the platforms' operations, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan declared Yandex Go activity illegal, due to the absence of official registration in Tajikistan. Around 16 drivers working through the platform have been arrested by the police for "violation of license requirements or conditions for carrying out a certain type of activity", which is an administrative offence in the country.[47]

In the delivery sector, the most notable are platforms such as Beeyor.tj,[48] which provides food, supermarket and flower delivery services, as well as platforms offering food delivery services such as Zoodfood,[49] Beeyor.tj,[50] Dostavka.tj,[51] Shef.tj[52] and Kenguru.tj.[53] However, the scope of their operations is not large in the city of Dushanbe (it was not possible to identify more detailed information). The very first of them, Shef.tj, began operating in Dushanbe in 2011 and currently about 250-300 persons are employed in this sector.[54]

The main factor influencing the popularity of on-location platform work is the lack of quality jobs in the country's economy. A number of other factors affecting the popularity of this type of work include the flexibility of working time, and low barriers to the availability of such work.

---

[45] Facebook / Rakhsh Taxi. https://www.facebook.com/rakhshtaxi/posts/2458452560924441/
[46] Interview with a labour market expert
[47] Asia Plus Media Group / Tajikistan (2023). Police in Dushanbe detained Yandex Go taxi drivers What's wrong with the service in Tajikistan? https://www.asiaplustj.info/ru/news/tajikistan/society/20230218/militsiya-v-dushanbe-zaderzhala-taksistov-yandeks-go-chto-ne-tak-s-rabotoi-servisa-v-tadzhikistane
[48] Beeyor. https://beeyor.tj
[49] Instagram / Zood Food Tajikistan Доставка еды (@zoodfood_tajikistan) • Zdjęcia i filmy na Instagramie
[50] Beeyor. https://beeyor.tj/ru
[51] Dostavka. https://dostavka.tj
[52] Shef. https://eda.shef.tj
[53] Kenguru. https://kenguru.tj
[54] Interview with a middle-level manager working in an on-location platform

On-location platform worker profiles

Currently, on-location platform work in Tajikistan is mainly by ride-hailing platforms and food and goods delivery platforms.

The information collected through interviews showed that in these sectors employment is formed on the basis of service contracts between company owners and taxi drivers or couriers.[55]

In terms of gender, on-location platform workers are generally male-dominated. This is due to the fact that there are more male drivers than women. Among ride-hailing drivers there are representatives of a wide age segment, from young people to people of retirement age. Young people are mainly involved in the delivery of goods sector, which to some extent facilitates the transition of young people from education to work. Among the couriers, quite a lot (about 70%) are young people from poor families, especially students and graduates of secondary education.[56]

This study was unable to find information on the education and qualifications of on-location platform workers. However, to work on these platforms, it is enough to have a driver's license, simple arithmetic skills, and elementary communication skills. However, the owners of goods delivery companies complain about the low level of communication skills with clients and poor knowledge of the city's geography among applicants for work in these companies. Therefore, all companies provide a week of on-the-job training at the beginning of work.[57]

It was also not possible to identify to how many people platform work is the primary source of income. However, desk research indicates that ride-hailing work mostly serves as a primary source of income, while delivery work is mostly a side job in Tajikistan.

Working conditions

Data to assess the working conditions and career prospects in the on-location platform work was not available, at least partly because of the small scale of on-location platform work activities in the country.

The remuneration in on-location platform work is mostly based on piecemeal basis – the workers are paid by the ride/delivery. Taxi service companies retain 5% of the cost of transporting passengers, the remaining 95% is the taxi driver's salary. At the same time, "production costs" (payment for fuel, car repairs) are borne by the taxi driver. The means of transport (cars) mainly belong to the taxi drivers themselves. If the car belongs to a company, then the driver rents it from the owner for a certain amount. In the case of companies delivering goods, the company retains 10% of the cost of transporting goods, the remaining 90% is the courier's wages. At the same time, "production costs" (payment for fuel, vehicle repairs) are borne by the couriers. The means of transport (mainly scooters and bicycles) are mainly owned by the couriers themselves.[58]

The owners of goods delivery companies complain about the instability of couriers' employment (they are not consistently available and do not work during certain periods).[59]

Similarly to the online platform work, in practice there are cases when the skill level of on-location platform workers is much higher than the level required for the work performed. For example, in one goods delivery company, about 30% of couriers have a diploma of vocational education.[60] Staying in such a job for a longer period of time can lead to deskilling and limited career advancement opportunities.[61]

---

[55] Interviews with middle-level managers working in on-location platforms
[56] Ibid
[57] Ibid
[58] Ibid
[59] Ibid
[60] Ibid
[61] Interview with an expert on labour market, youth employment, and artificial intelligence

The provision of platform ride-hailing services is in most cases regulated by national civil law in the form of service contracts. In the goods delivery sector, informal labour relations prevail. The main reason for the informality are high income taxes (37%).

In general, only formal employment is included in the regulatory and legal space of state regulation of the labour activity. This excluded many platform workers from the labour protection, as many of them do not register with tax authorities as individual entrepreneurs and operate in the shadow economy.

CURRENT REGULATION, POLICIES AND STRATEGIC APPROACHES

Labour market, employment and skills development

The National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period up to 2030[62] set out the expansion of productive employment as one of the four national priorities of the country.

The Concept for the Development of Productive Employment in the Republic of Tajikistan in the period up to 2040[63] provides for the creation of regulatory, methodological, organisational and personnel foundations for the formation of a system of distance learning and distance employment. On the basis of this Concept, the State Programme for the Expansion of Productive Employment in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2023-2027 was developed.[64]

The issues related to platform work are touched upon in several recent initiatives. At the time of reporting, the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan is developing a new version of the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On Employment", which could become a basis for the formation of mechanisms for regulating digital platform employment. Also, the Ministry, within the framework of a joint project with the UNICEF Office in Tajikistan, is working to create Distance Employment Centres designed to teach young people how to use digital platforms to find paid work and assist them in finding employment on digital labour platforms. Currently, five such centres have been established.[65] Moreover, starting from 2022, the Ministry, again together with the UNICEF Office in Tajikistan, has been implementing the 'Impact Sourcing' project, which contributes to the development of online platform work among young people. This practice can soon become the basis for the development of state policy for the development of digital platform work.[66] Also, the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment is developing a draft Decree of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan "On introducing the procedure for issuing temporary labour certificates to self-employed citizens".[67]

What concerns some types of on-location platform work, in 2022, two new chapters (chapters 21 and 22) were introduced into the Labour Code[68] of the Republic of Tajikistan, regulating the labour relations of 'domestic workers' and 'home workers' (see more in the section on the labour market). In accordance with these new norms of the Labour Code, "domestic workers are recognised as employees performing work (services) in the household for employers who are natural persons", and home workers are "persons who have concluded an employment contract with the employer on the performance of work at home or another place adapted for the performance of work, by personal labour using their own materials, equipment, tools and devices or provided by the employer or purchased at the expense of the employer". Therefore, the category 'domestic worker' includes on-location platform workers (for example, cleaners), while the 'home workers' category can include online workers who perform tasks for clients working from home.

Measures aimed at solving the problems of employment of youth (in particular NEETs), women, persons without appropriate qualifications, the unemployed, inactive and migrants, include medium-term state programmes to promote employment of the population are being adopted. The last such programme (the State Programme for the Promotion of Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2023-2027)

---

[62] Agency of Social Insurance and Pension under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (2016). National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan in the period up to 2030. https://nafaka.tj/images/zakoni/new/strategiya_2030_en.pdf
[63] Decree of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan dated May 28, 2022, No. 263 // Concept for the development of productive employment in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period up to 2040.
[64] Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan dated 31.08.2023, No. 419.
[65] Interview with a representative of the Labour Market and Employment Department of the Ministry of Labour
[66] Karamaliev, K., UNICEF Tajikistan (2020). Digital outsourcing help girls in Tajikistan to transit to decent work-life. Digital outsourcing help girls in Tajikistan to transit to decent work-life | UNICEF Tajikistan
[67] Information shared by the Ministry representative.
[68] Labour Code of the Republic of Tajikistan / 23.07.2016, no. 1329.

was adopted by the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan dated March 28, 2023, No. 135.

Currently, issues of digital platform work have not been considered in the country within the framework of a tripartite social partnership between trade unions, employers and the government.[69]

Digitalisation

One of the key components of the innovation economy, the formation of which is provided for in the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan in the period up to 2030[70] (2016), is the digital economy. The development of the digital economy policy takes place within the framework of the implementation of this Strategy.

Political approaches and measures related to digitalisation and digital skills are reflected in the Concept of the Digital Economy in the Republic of Tajikistan (Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan dated December 30, 2019, No. 642).[71] The concept provides for a gradual, phased transition to the implementation of the vision of digital transformation in the republic. Initially, three stages are planned until 2025, 2030 and 2040. Firstly, the Concept seeks to strengthen the non-digital foundation needed for digital transformation, such as the legal and regulatory framework. The next stage is the strengthening of the digital infrastructure, that is, the provision of ubiquitous broadband access, the development of communication systems and digital platforms. The final stage of transformation is the digitalisation of key areas of the economy, and then the social sphere, energy, mining, agriculture, the transition to digital government and the creation of new sectors such as financial technology. All stages of the implementation of digital transformation will also be carried out as part of the Digital CASA project.[72]

Implementation of the Digital CASA project is intended to solve the problem of availability, speed and price of broadband Internet. The basis and idea of the project is to connect the fibre optic lines of Central and South Asia. Potential participants are Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Moreover, the Concept of the Digital Economy in the Republic of Tajikistan at the first stage provides for the training of highly qualified personnel and management for conducting digital projects, as well as the creation of a system for the training of qualified personnel both at universities and enterprises, and for the development of digital skills among the population as a whole. The concept provides for the development of a multi-stage plan for the continuous professional development of government employees and the digital ecosystem, who will be engaged in digital transformations. These measures will involve young people more effectively. The further development of the digitalisation of the country's economy and its penetration into the labour activity of people will certainly contribute to the growth of their labour incomes.

Tajikistan has established some science and innovation infrastructure, represented by various development institutions, innovation parks and centres, to be used to develop the digital economy. In addition, there are mechanisms for the creation of public-private partnership (there is a law[73] and projects on PPP - "Dushanbe Smart City"[74]). To date, however, special innovation management regimes

[69] Interview with a representative of the Labour Market and Employment Department of the Ministry of Labour

[70] Agency of Social Insurance and Pension under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (2016). National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan in the period up to 2030. National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan in the period up to 2030_en.pdf (nafaka.tj)

[71] Concept of the Digital Economy in the Republic of Tajikistan/ Decree of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, dated December 30, 2019, No. 642. https://policy.asiapacificenergy.org/sites/default/files/Concept%20of%20the%20Digital%20Economy%20in%20the%20Republic%20of%20Tajikistan%20%28EN%29.pdf

[72] This project, implemented by the World Bank Group, is aimed at connecting two regions - Central and South Asia - with a fiber optic line. Expected effect - residents of the post-Soviet south will have access to cheap broadband Internet, due to alternative networks.

[73] Law of the Republic of Tajikistan on Public-Private Partnership, dated December 28, 2012, No. 907.

[74] "Dushanbe Smart City" – state unitary enterprise, which is eagerly incorporating digital technologies in public services and involves digital companies for the development of its smart city project.

are poorly developed and there are not enough initiatives to support digital entrepreneurs. There are no mechanisms for financing digital innovation, limited sources of financing for start-ups, no special tax regimes, and no programmes to support high-tech exports.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The online and on-location platform work can be an opportunity for Tajikistan to create credible and sustainable alternative to migration and "brain drain". Taking advantage of the global trend of new forms of work in the Tajik economy has a potential to reduce the outflow of labour force from the Tajik market. In particular, having a well-developed environment for online and on-location services, with incentives for young entrepreneurs to set up such companies, would have positive impact on the retention of skilled and talented people in the country and attracting new talents to the country or to working with Tajik companies online.

Online and on-location platform work offers promising opportunities for workers, businesses and the society. For workers it can offer income-generating opportunities, a vehicle for fostering entrepreneurship and regularising undeclared work. It is also a factor reducing unemployment, and the opportunity of low-barrier entry to employment, especially for young or low-skilled. For businesses, cost reduction and flexibility are the main attractions. At a societal level, it has the potential to be an engine of employment growth.

However, to seize these opportunities, the current situation with the digital platform employment requires:

- Speedy formation of the legislative and regulatory framework for the development of this form of employment.

- Special attention of policymakers to social protection of the online and on-location workers as well as tax regulations. The absence and/or inadequacy of such regulations create fears and contribute to the slowdown and blockage of the new forms of work.

- Focus on expanding Internet infrastructure in education, businesses and for individuals. It is necessary to improve the position of Tajikistan in international rankings, increase access of the population and households to broadband and mobile Internet, increase international traffic and bandwidth, increase the number of fibre optic connections, increase the institutions connected to a single state digital system and the number of users of digital services, increase the quality of digital services provided, and the share of services provided in the digital format.

- Collaboration mechanisms between all participants and stakeholders of the new forms of work, such as platform companies, platform workers, civil society organisations, social and educational institutions, international organisations, etc. in order to create a system of collecting and monitoring of data on trends and prospects for the platform work, and to identify the needs and solutions for development of the platform economy.

- Efforts on providing training of highly qualified and skilled personnel for digital projects, as well as a system for training qualified staff in schools, universities and enterprises.

- Efforts on training and retraining of the population, including vulnerable people: women, pensioners, the unemployed, migrants, people with disabilities. This could be implemented through workshops and online and offline courses to enhance digital literacy, entrepreneurship, remote collaboration, and other relevant skills.

REFERENCES

Agency of Social Insurance and Pension under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (2016). National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan in the period up to 2030. https://nafaka.tj/images/zakoni/new/strategiya_2030_en.pdf

Agency of Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan/database// https://stat.tj/tj/tables-real-sector

Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, https://www.stat.tj/en/macroeconomic-indicators

Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, Labour Force Survey (2016) / Report prepared on the results of the labour force survey conducted from July 20 to August 20, 2016

Asian Development Bank (2023). News Releases. ADB emphasised the importance of the digital economy to support growth and public services in Tajikistan. АБР подчеркнул важность цифровой экономики для поддержки роста и государственных услуг в Таджикистане | Asian Development Bank (adb.org)

Asian Development Bank, Strengthening Support for Labour Migration in Tajikistan: Assessment and Recommendations (2020). Strengthening Support for Labor Migration in Tajikistan: Assessment and Recommendations (adb.org)

Asia Plus Media Group / Tajikistan (2023). Police in Dushanbe detained Yandex Go taxi drivers What's wrong with the service in Tajikistan? https://www.asiaplustj.info/ru/news/tajikistan/society/20230218/militsiya-v-dushanbe-zaderzhala-taksistov-yandeks-go-chto-ne-tak-s-rabotoi-servisa-v-tadzhikistane

CEIC data / Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan. Tajikistan Average Monthly Salary (2011-2023). https://www.ceicdata.com/en/tajikistan/average-monthly-salary/average-monthly-salary#:~:text=Tajikistan%20Average%20Monthly%20Salary%20data,Jul%202023%2C%20with%20201 51%20observations

Central Asian Bureau for Analytical Reporting (2022). 100K New Jobs in Tajikistan: Is it a reality or dream? 100K New Jobs in Tajikistan: Is it a Reality or a Dream? - CABAR.asia

Central Asian Bureau for Analytical Reporting, Wage and GDP growth do not impact living standards in Tajikistan (2023) https://cabar.asia/en/wage-and-gdp-growth-do-not-impact-living-standards-in-tajikistan

Decree of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan dated March 28, 2023, No. 135. // State Programme for the Promotion of Employment of the Population of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2023-2027.

Decree of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan dated May 28, 2022, No. 263. // Concept for the development of productive employment in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period up to 2040.

Dutta, S., & Lanvin, B. Portulans Institute (2021). The Network Readiness Index 2021, Shaping the Global Recovery. How digital technologies can make the post-COVID world more equal. Available at: https://nonews.co/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NRI2021.pdf

ETF KIESE database

Facebook / Rakhsh Taxi. https://www.facebook.com/rakhshtaxi/posts/2458452560924441/

ILO (2018). Social Protection Assessment-Based National Dialogue. Towards a Nationally Defined Social Protection Floor in the Republic of Tajikistan. Social Protection Assessment-Based National Dialogue. Towards a Nationally Defined Social Protection Floor in the Republic of Tajikistan (ilo.org)

ILO. The Online Labour Index 2020, http://onlinelabourobservatory.org/oli-supply/

Instagram / Zood Food Tajikistan Доставка еды (@zoodfood_tajikistan) • Zdjęcia i filmy na Instagramie

IOM (2020). External Youth Migration in the Countries of Central Asia: Risk analysis and minimization of negative consequences. External Youth Migration in the Countries of Central Asia: Risk analysis and minimization of negative consequences | IOM Publications Platform

Karamaliev, K., UNICEF Tajikistan (2020). Digital outsourcing help girls in Tajikistan to transit to decent work-life.
Digital outsourcing help girls in Tajikistan to transit to decent work-life | UNICEF Tajikistan

Labour Code of the Republic of Tajikistan / 23.07.2016, No. 1329.

Law of the Republic of Tajikistan on Public-Private Partnership, dated December 28, 2012, No. 907.

Mirov, L. The impact of education and family background on NEET-youth. Innovations and Investments, No 9, 2020. https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/neet-molodezh-tadzhikistana-rol-obrazovaniya-i-semya

Concept of the Digital Economy in the Republic of Tajikistan/ Decree of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, dated December 30, 2019, No. 642.
https://policy.asiapacificenergy.org/sites/default/files/Concept%20of%20the%20Digital%20Economy%20in%20the%20Republic%20of%20Tajikistan%20%28EN%29.pdf

United Nations (2022). Department of Economic and Social Affairs, E-Government Survey 2022. The Future of Digital Government. https://desapublications.un.org/sites/default/files/publications/2022-09/Web%20version%20E-Government%202022.pdf

UNDP Tajikistan (2010). Employment in the context of human development.
https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/tj/UNDP_TJK_HDR_2009_Rus.pdf

Website of the platform "Freelancer", available at: https://www.freelancer.com.ru/freelancers/tajikistan

Website of the platform "Upwork", available at:
https://www.upwork.com/search/profiles/?loc=tajikistan&q=tajikistan

Website of the platform "Fiverr", available at: https://www.fiverr.com/

Website of the platform "Toptal", available at: https://www.toptal.com/

Website of the platform "Guru", available at: https://www.guru.com/

Website of the platform "Workspace", available at: https://workspace.ru/specialists/dushanbe/

Website of the platform "Pchel.net", available at: https://pchel.net/workers/city=dushanbe/

Website of the platform "Flagma", available at: www.flagma.com

Website of the platform "Beeyor", available at: https://beeyor.tj

Website of the platform "Dostavka", available at: https://dostavka.tj

Website of the platform "Shef", available at: https://eda.shef.tj

Website of the platform "Kenguru", available at: https://kenguru.tj

World Bank (2022). The World Bank in Tajikistan. Overview.
https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tajikistan/overview

World Bank (2022). The World Bank in Tajikistan. Overview.
https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tajikistan/overview#3

World Bank (2022). Personal remittances, received (% of GDP) – Tajikistan.
https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=TJ

World Bank (2022). Employment to population ratio, 15+, total (%) (modeled ILO estimate) – Tajikistan. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.EMP.TOTL.SP.ZS?locations=TJ

World Bank (2022). Employment in agriculture (% of total employment) (modeled ILO estimate) – Tajikistan https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.AGR.EMPL.ZS?locations=TJ.
Employment in industry (% of total employment) (modeled ILO estimate) – Tajikistan.
https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.IND.EMPL.ZS?locations=TJ.
Employment in services (% of total employment) (modeled ILO estimate) – Tajikistan
https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.SRV.EMPL.ZS?locations=TJ.

World Bank (2022). Unemployment, total (% of total labor force) (modeled ILO estimate) – Tajikistan.
https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS?locations=TJ

World Bank (2022). Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24) (modeled ILO estimate) - Tajikistan. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.1524.ZS?locations=TJ

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Freelancer	A person who is self-employed and not necessarily committed to a particular client long term. The most common fields, professions and industries where freelancing is predominant include music, writing, acting, computer programming, web design, graphic design, translating and illustrating, and film and video production.
Informal employment	The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines informal employment as all forms of remunerated work that is not registered, regulated or protected. These are also referred to as 'shadow' or 'grey' employment arrangements.
New forms of work	New forms of work, other than regular employment and traditional self-employment, emerging in the context of the transformation of labour markets and economies. New forms of work are characterised by one or more of the following characteristics: innovative forms of work organisation and contractual arrangements, provision of work on discontinuous or intermittent basis, absence of one on one employment relationship, a place of work that is outside of employer premises, and the use of digital technology that changes patterns of work. Examples of new forms of work include platform work, remote work using information and communication technologies (ICT), voucher-based work, employee sharing, portfolio work and other arrangements.
Online labour platform	The term used to distinguish platforms that mediate labour arrangements from other sorts of platforms. For example, Facebook, Google, Amazon, Upwork and Uber are all online platforms, but only the last two of these are online labour platforms. Their main business model is related to mediation between labour service providers and buyers. The term also excludes online websites acting as pure job advertisement boards or curriculum vitae banks and online info-desks, as online labour platforms also intermediate the service and monetary transactions between workers and clients.
Online platform	A digital service that facilitates interactions between two or more distinct but interdependent sets of users (whether firms or individuals) who interact through the service via the Internet.
Online platform work	Online freelance platform work in which services are provided online and independently of location. It includes both highly-skilled work (e.g. software development and design on platforms like Upwork) and lower-skilled work (e.g. clickwork on platforms like MTurk).
On-location platform work	Platform work in which services are provided at a specific location, where a platform worker should be physically present. Includes both highly

	skilled work (e.g. music teaching, consulting, architecture) and lower-skilled work (e.g. taxi services, food delivery, pet care).
Online work off digital platforms	Freelancing work that is conducted online and independently of location, but outside of digital platforms. The freelance work is provided directly for clients without online labour platform mediation.
Platform economy	Economic and social activity facilitated through online platforms. Like the regular economy, it can be characterised by flow of both capital and labour.
Platform labour/ platform work	All labour provided through, on, or mediated by, online labour platforms in a wide range of sectors, where work can be of varied forms, and is provided in exchange for payment. Platform work can be further divided into online and on-location platform work.
Self-employment	A broad set of labour practices wherein a natural person earns income without an employment relationship with an employer; both bogus self-employment and genuine self-employment are types of self-employment. Self-employment can be registered with authorities in a variety of forms in different countries (e.g. sole proprietor, individual/private entrepreneur, service/work contracts for independent contractors).

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Role/Organisation	Date of interview
Head of Labour Market and Employment Department, Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment	23 June, 2023
Deputy Director, State Agency for Labour and Employment	23 June, 2023
Head of Labour Market Department, Research Institute of Labour, Migration and Employment	30 June, 2023
Digital Freelancing Project Manager, NPO "Ilmhona" (co-learning space)	30 June, 2023
AI instructor, zypl.ai academy	23 June, 2023
Director, ICT Center	30 June, 2023
Manager, Digital platform http://www.joikor.tj	30 June, 2023
IT specialist, Tajik National Association of Social Work Schools	30 June, 2023
Administrator of delivery services, Digital platform beeyor.tj	11 October, 2023
Manager of delivery services, Digital platform kenguru.tj	11 October, 2023
Manager of delivery services, Digital platform Dostavka.tj	11 October, 2023
Supervisor, Digital platform Rakhsh.tj	12 October, 2023