ERASMUS+
COOPERATION PARTNERSHIPS
IN YOUTH

"GIG UP"

Project n°2021-1-DE04-KA220-YOU-000028951

Focus Group Report
Skill Grid

Content

1. Methodology and data collection

This report is based on the collecting data and report on gig economy from experts in five European countries including Germany, Italy, Spain, Cyprus, and Greece. Each country used the same questionnaire for collecting data from experts. Some countries employed online interviews like Germany and others applied face-to face interviews. You can find methods of data collection in each country in below:

1.1 Germany

The method for collecting data was distribution of an online questionnaire among five experts. The survey participants were selected from employers' organizations, business associations, temporary agencies, employment services, and other similar organizations providing staff on a short contract and temporary assignment basis in Germany. The participants were informed about the project, aims and the concept of the gig economy. The questionnaires were filled in English.

1.2 Italy

In Italy two partners MNVG and IULM were collecting data separately. This report includes both partners' results.

MVNGO contacted 5 experts who were solicited to answer the questions. They received the material containing a brief introduction of the project and of the focus group objectives, the questions and the Grid. The participants to the focus group have different profile:

4 of them were HR experts. All of the HR experts have experience in talent acquisition for the company they are working in or for other companies that are using their services, one of these experts has also experience as a freelancer. One Co-founder with a freelance background.

For the focus group instrument development, IULM followed the guidelines about the discussion framework developed and agreed by GIG UP project partners. In order to obtain a greater alignment between different focus groups and initiatives.

The guidelines of the focus group were developed in an English language structure document shared among partners. The presentation of the project, the gig economy concept, the interactive materials (grid and charts) were presented in English but translated and discussed into Italian language for a better comprehension, since all participants were Italian native.

1.3 Spain

The session of interview took place in Acción Laboral's office in Gijón (Spain) with 5 participants: 4 experts in labour market needs and the Operational Responsible in

the region who is in charge of the self-employment section of Acción Laboral. Acción Laboral is an organisation offering training for companies, employment services and a placement agency.

The session lasted for two hours and it was an informal setting in which participants could share their thoughts without fear and in a comfortable group and space.

1.4   Cyprus

The data were collected by face-to-face interviews and presenting aims of the project in Nicosia, Cyprus.

1.5   Greece

Co-working space "Wisedog" is located in Larissa, Greece undertaking mainly projects related to architecture, graphic and interior design. It is an open innovative co-working space that offers permanent work, work space for people who are not employees there as well as the opportunity of working on a fixed-term contract for the needs of a project. "Wisedog" combines this co-working space with a distinctive recreational area which is open for everyone. Innovation Hive scheduled two meetings there with different participants. Data from both meetings are provided in this report.

2. General understanding of the gig economy

2.1   Germany

Although experts were informed about the gig economy by sending information to them, all experts have enough knowledge of the gig economy. The term «gig economy» is presented as a new form of work, working mainly through online platforms. It is widely considered one of the fastest-growing new forms of employment in the world. Another way to put it is freelance or contract work. The term concerns the demand and supply of labour on online platforms, where workers are neither permanent nor part-time.

2.2   Italy

The participants defined the gig economy as a system in which professionals of all types are working independently providing a lot of different types of services, for a specific period of time and for different customers. They agreed on the fact that gig economy temporary or part-time work positions are common, with a flexible work schedule. They specified that customers and gig workers can connect through gig apps or other digital technologies.

The participants were generally quite responsive when answering "what is the big economy and what are the advantages and disadvantages for workers and employers". In general, the concepts of gig economy can be enclosed in two macro-areas for participants:

- short-term contracts and the temporary work
- self-employment through digital platforms.

To summarize, the gig economy is interpreted by participants as an economic model based on lower contractual guarantees than stable and continuous employment services.

2.3 Spain

When asked about their understanding of what the gig economy is, participants were confused, as this is not a term widely used in Spain. However, when the moderator explained the insights they recognised it as freelance jobs, which is a term more known in the country.

Freelance workers are self-workers who offer their services to others.

2.4 Cyprus

Three members of the focus group were fully aware of the term gig economy and could elaborate on how the gig economy works. Following a brief discussion on the history and evolution of the gig economy, all participants became fully aware of the term noting that they can understand what the gig economy is and who are its participants.

All participants agreed that the gig economy can benefit not only the target group of the project but organisations of all sizes and the economy at large.

2.5 Greece

Both sessions started with the definition of "gig economy" and open discussion on this topic. Both groups were unfamiliar with the designation but not with definition as all of them believed that this is the definition of "freelancing".

During the open discussion on the topic the first group asked how many years this term is active, who discovered this term and where they can find more information. The second group mentioned that they knew about "orange economy" which represent the Cultural and Creative sector and other types of economy but not for "gig economy".

3. Advantages and disadvantages of the gig economy

3.1 Germany

As for almost every job opportunity, there are some advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, there is the benefit to have greater control and manage your own schedule by defining your own work goals. In this way, workers have the benefit to manage better their working schedule, define their daily tasks, work remotely in their comfort zone and being more productive, regardless of the time slots. Some other benefits include flexibility, independence, and a wide variety of job opportunities. On the other hand, the disadvantages include lack of benefits/perks since working remotely and in some cases on your own is not promising any future opportunities. In the same way, freelance/external workers often stay out of events/gatherings, etc. which only makes them isolated from the rest of their colleagues. Another quite important issue concerns the taxes that freelancers are obliged to pay off, regardless of their work agreements, which is another cause of stress.

However, businesses also benefit from smart working services that include low-cost services (no additional office expenses), flexibility, freer workspace (especially during the COVID-19 period), better management of the workers/employees through constant meetings/reports, and better workflow (tasks are being carried out easily and on time). Nevertheless, there are some disadvantages like less reliability on workers' daily productivity and contract issues on working hours.

Autonomy is an important benefit for employees. Employees have the option to schedule their timetable, choose the number of projects they want to work on, or they can choose projects based on their preferences. Also, they can choose their work environment and their contractor. Payments based on tasks and little or any supervision from the employers are some other benefits. In contrast, the employees don't benefit from full health care, and they have to do their retirement contributions. Moreover, a lot of self-control is required as they have to manage their time, and finances and they have to stay highly motivated, productive and focused. Also, it's a competitive environment in which employees must ensure that the services they provide are of high quality and they have to keep developing skills and competencies.

Some benefits for employers or companies are the possibility of being flexible regarding their human resources. They can recruit professionals on-demand, so

staffing can be added or subtracted quickly, based on what their needs are at the time. In addition, they can select co-operators based on their performance without providing medical care and other benefits. On the other hand, employers must make sure every time that they choose a skilled person, and that their project or task will be done well. Also, it's hard to determine every time whether a person shares the same vision as you.

Advantages employer: don't have to bind themselves to staff; allows to discern whether the services provided are applicable to their long-term requirements; don't have to provide office space, equipment and so forth; flexibility. Workers can concentrate on what they want to do or what they are good at; can afford more discretion about when and where they work and when they choose not to have flexibility. The possible lack of loyalty, reliability, and availability are the disadvantages for employers.

3.2   Italy

For the workers, the experts identified as advantaged the flexible schedule, the possibility to organize their own time and to choose customers, to work remotely and in an independent way.

They highlighted that autonomy is an important benefit for the workers and the possibility to choose the number of projects they want to work on and choose the projects based on their preferences. The possibility to choose their work environment and the little supervision from the employers were also identified as some other benefits.

The disadvantages for workers mentioned are the absence of some specific rights that may benefit classic employees such as paid days off of sick days, the absence of guarantee to have a constant flow of work and the fact that some customers may be difficult to deal with.

Moreover, a lot of self-control is required as gig workers have to manage their time and finances and they have to stay highly motivated, productive and focused. Some participants also mentioned the competitive and stressful environment in which employees must ensure that the services they provide are of high quality and have to keep developing skills and competencies.

Regarding advantages for employers, the experts highlighted the choice of freelancer with the exact skills required for job with a defined duration, the freedom to end or prolong contracts based on freelancer's skills. The employers or the companies have the possibility to be flexible regarding their human resources and

can recruit professionals on-demand, so staffing can be added or subtracted quickly, based on what their needs are at the time. In addition, they can select co-operators based on their performance without providing medical care and other benefits.

On the other hand, employers must always make sure that they choose a skilled person and that their project or task will be done well. Also, it can be hard to determine every time whether a person shares the same vision as the employer. Some experts added that it can be hard to find a freelancer and finding an experienced one might be expensive. Moreover, if the job is not well prepared from the start, it may require more time and thus higher costs for the employer.

With regard to the advantages of the gig economy the most common response from all participants is the flexibility and organizational modularity of work, that is to choose when to work and for how long. However, during the discussion, flexibility entered as a hypothetical benefit, since it is often not a power in the hands of workers as much as in those of employers.
In addition, among the advantages there is also the ability to find the right work-life balance and the opportunity for the employers to choose the type of work or the projects you want to work on.

With respect to the disadvantages, however, there is no unanimous agreement among the participants, such as for the advantages. In fact, different points of view emerge. The discussion shows greater agreement about the lack of protection and contractual insurance for workers.
Thus, the participants defined as disadvantages:
- the lack of pension;
- health insurance;
- sick leave paid by the employer.

Other interventions in the debate highlight other issues such as:
- Knowledge dispersion
- High turn-over
- The exploitation of workers
- Environmental impacts
- Lobbying
- Transformation of the urban spaces.

3.3   Spain
In general, even though the gig economy offers flexibility to workers, they saw more advantages for employers and more disadvantages for workers. Employers can hire

workers for specific tasks, choosing the cheapest option and without having to maintain them after the task is done. Whereas gig workers have less flexibility and need to work a lot in order to have a stable income throughout the year, don't have paid vacations and have less rights than the rest of workers.

3.4 Cyprus

Taking the discussion further and following through from question 1, the group reached the conclusion that the gig economy provides benefits to job seekers as well as to employers.

Job seekers are provided with the opportunity to seek employment according to their time availability and expertise, while on the other hand, employers can recruit resources on a per "need or project" basis and not employ full time personnel, especially in cases where the need is temporary, seasonal and in general not on a full-time basis.

3.5 Greece

Given that the participants were unfamiliar with the term "gig economy" they were also unaware of the advantages/disadvantages of "gig economy" to workers/employers. The data below is thoughts of the moment.

Advantages:
- It is fast and easy to start work as gig worker/employer
- Flexible working hours.

Disadvantages:
- Taxes
- Expenses
- Insurance.

4. Comments and suggestions for the Skill GRID

4.1 Germany

The Grid contains all the needed information for young people, regarding both entrance and employment into the labour market. However, what is missing at this point is the introduction of youth workers' supporting schemes that look forward to the employability of those people. Such public or private services can be proved quite useful, based on each person's qualifications, standards, and vision.

Also, the Grid contains useful information on several aspects of gig work. However, the table could include more examples of the sectors where self-employment is possible and information on self-employment platforms.

Personal branding and pitching, project/product development skills, time management, mental and health issues, and resilience can be added to the Grid for improving its content. Also, some skills such as self/employment skills, planning, ability to work independently, and other skills and abilities to adapt to the ever-changing labour market conditions should be considered for enhancing the Grid. The most important thing is legal protection. Companies who contract them out often exploit gig workers. This could be averted by clear legal protection and support. Also, a provision of framework and online documents which indicates to-dos and not-to-dos while going into the agreement.

4.2   Italy

The participants had general positive feedback regarding the GRID as the table contains useful information on several aspects of gig work. The experts suggested including in the table more examples of the sectors where self-employment is possible and information on self-employment platforms.

Another suggestion that emerged from different answers collected related to the skills development according to the profession. Several experts highlighted the fact that it could be important to specify in that box that the gig workers must not only constantly keep updating their skills, but also to constantly analyse the market's needs in order to improve their skills accordingly and look for the most used software/programming languages or other tools or services used by customers. Market analysis and also the innovation in one's sector is very important for gig workers to survive in a competitive environment.

About the grid of the skills and tasks of gig workers there were very few responses to animate the debate, some participants affirmed that the grid was very well conceived. The participants suggested to involve in the list of tasks the work on personal branding; the inclusive use of a LinkedIn account aimed at creating and publishing content which might prove the skills and knowledge, and get recommendations. Furthermore, among the skills have been involved issues as data rights; labour rights; knowledge about the algorithms for the platform.

4.3   Spain

A gig worker should have an ability to assume risk and be able to face them. They should be organised, creative and innovative, constant with their work and have an illusion for their vision.

They believe the grid contains many of the skills that these workers should have, but it is also important to have adequate training, knowledge of the sector and its characteristics and some work experience in the field before being freelance. Additionally, managerial skills are really important since they are managing their own business and gigs. Finally, some skills on how to research the conditions and obligations of freelance workers is needed.

4.4   Cyprus

The skills grid is informative and comprehensive and covers a wide area of the skills required in order for professionals to thrive.

Certain soft skills like creativity, that will allow gig workers to be creative not only in performing their work but also in revising how they work and chasing new opportunities, discipline, that will allow gig workers to work on multiple projects at the same time, negotiation, that will allow gig workers to negotiate the terms of their assignments, communication, that will allow them to communicate both with their clients as well as with collaborators, although included in various sections of the Grid, may require more attention.

4.5   Greece
- More digital skills
- More financial skills
- Communication and collaboration skills as many times it is necessary to cooperate with individuals from different working fields
- Skills for spotting opportunities
- Handling and recognizing the risks.

5. Three elements that school never teaches young people

5.1   Germany

The educational system does not facilitate the development of critical thinking. This way it is also harder to become creative. Also, schools do not prepare young people for the labour market, mostly because they do not get the knowledge needed regarding their labour rights and obligations.

School services do not focus on providing young students with the appropriate skills that will benefit them in their future professional careers. For instance, schools should be teaching students digital skills, and how to emphasize and improve on them, since it constitutes a prerequisite for entrance into the job market. Besides the lessons, schools should teach students to constantly improve themselves regarding critical thinking, analytical/statistical skills, digital skills, communication/organizational skills, creativity, innovation, effective interaction, decision-making, and self-confidence to reach their personal and professional goals. In general, employees should have a respectful attitude towards both all of their co-workers and their managers/bosses accompanied by politeness, professionalism, and willingness to work.

Also, schools should consider teaching personal finance, a failure-positive mind-set, mental health in the workplace, self-awareness, self-assessment, and coping with harsh realities to students and preparing them for future professional positions.

5.2   Italy

During the focus group, a strong disappointment emerges with regard to school training to improve and facilitate the new generations to enter the job market. In particular, point out the erroneous principles upon which education has been based over the years. Specifically, the school "is not easy for young adults to be clear about their strengths, their distinctive characteristics, and to reinforce them until they become a competitive advantage. School is not built to bring out everyone's differences and potential as much as levelling peculiarities around basic notional knowledge".

However, during the discussion, skills and capabilities of the educational systems should be developed or improved to advantage the individual and professional growth of younger people before they enter the workplace. In particular, one of the fundamental aspects is the ability to solve a problem before it has occurred, a capability known as proactive behaviour. It refers to taking control of a situation, searching and elaborating information in uncertain environments with creativity, rather than adjusting to a situation or waiting for something to happen.

Some elements identified among the participants were:
- Initiative
- Self-management
- Critical thinking
- Labour market preparation.

5.3   Spain

Their economic duties as workers (both freelance and "normal"), how to look for a job and how to present yourself as a brand.

5.4   Cyprus

Many elements were discussed and from different perspectives. Common ground was established in socialising which is crucial for networking, self-improvement and coping with failure, maintaining a positive stance not only when things are rolling.

5.5   Greece

The data below figures the most predominant answers to this question from both groups.

- Management skills
- Digital skills
- Employability skills.

6. Least desirable attitudes in any employee

6.1   Germany

The participants declared with firmness that:

- passiveness
- laziness
- lack of curiosity
- Lack of collaboration skills
- Opinionated.

6.2   Italy

The participants identified the following least desirable attitudes in any employee:

- The lack of motivation and proactivity, poor attitude towards change and self-improvement
- The absence of recognition of their own mistake in order to find a quick solution on time if needed or just to ensure a good work environment
- The lack of willingness to cooperate with the rest of the company and learn new things to fulfil the greater purpose of the company thriving. Such attitude can create conflicts in one company
- The absence of flexibility: a person who is not flexible may have difficulty thinking outside the box, being creative, and being innovative, as well as having difficulty handling change and sudden situations

- The lack of emotional control can also lead to situations where someone's behaviour is unprofessional, causes conflicts, and negatively affects others and the environment.

6.3   Spain
- Tardiness
- Lack of respect
- Lack of professionalism.
- Speaking ill of co-workers
- Never accepting criticisms
- No ownership when making a mistake.

6.4   Cyprus
- Negativity
- Laziness
- Unwillingness to learn
- Rudeness
- Selfishness.

6.5   Greece
- Arrogance
- Lack of commitment
- Lack of communication skills
- Selfishness
- Not being punctual
- Lack of English language knowledge
- Lack of communication skills
- Impoliteness.

7. Most desirable attitudes in any employee

7.1   Germany
- Problem solving
- Team working
- Hard work attitude
- Self-management.

7.2   Italy
The participants identified the following most desirable attitudes in any employee:
- Growth mentality mind-set
- Ambition
- Proactiveness towards the greater good for the company

- Honesty helps trust to be built in the working environment, not only between colleagues but also with the clients, partners, etc.
- Commitment helps to stay focused, overcome difficulties, be productive, as well as have a good performance
- Showing respect is an important attitude for all employees. Respect can refer to other people but also to work ethics rules.

7.3 Spain

- Resilience
- Competitiveness
- Professionalism
- Integrity
- Responsible
- Willingness to learn.

7.4 Cyprus

- Positive thinking
- Team player
- Adaptability.

7.5 Greece

- Reliability
- Positive attitude
- Teamwork
- Responsibility
- Creativity.

8. Techniques to make temporary workers a part of the team

8.1 Germany

First of all, it is important to have a short meeting with the new employee both to get to know him/her better as well as to make sure that he/she completely understands the purpose of this work and how to deal with it. Afterward, should be sure that the new entry will be welcomed appropriately in the workplace by everyone to avoid discrimination or even exclusion. In the meantime, organizing some short office events (once per week) to strengthen the bond between all co-workers. But most importantly is to make sure that the new employee feels safe and good in the new working environment so that he/she can address any office issues that might be disturbing or annoying to him/her. In any case, it is important to create and maintain a friendly and respectful environment from the beginning so that the

new employee will take the risk/advantage to do more things. Finally, by acting so, his/her self-confidence will rise and so will the productivity of work.

8.2 Italy

During the discussion, the moderator underlined the needed aspects related to human resources and in particular with reference to the team work features. It has been asked by participants in case you hire a temporary employee – what method or technique would be important to be part of the team.

The question certainly animated the debate because some people were uncertain or not aware of the answer because they never went into human resources issues. The participants demonstrated uncertainties. However, we denoted agreement about the on boarding, known as organizational socialization. The focus was on mechanisms through which new employees acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviours in order to become effective members of a team.

These participants stressed that this socialization of employees may be a proportional measure of other variables such as greater job satisfaction, better job performance, greater organizational commitment, and reduction of stress situations. Among other elements detected, they identified the lack of communication about the process and in particular of the active listening. In addition, there were also the pro-active behaviour which may be triggering the job crafting practices, and co-participation in the strategic plan.

The participants identified as the most disruptive elements the loss of knowledge and the loss of reference points. If the structure is not solid and documentation is poor, losing one element with all the knowledge he/she has could be a big damage for the productivity.

Losing someone who is valuable to the team in terms of knowledge and experience and then training someone to replace him/her can be detrimental. This will consume resources and time.
In addition, the changes between teams could cause problems in terms of cooperation between colleagues and working relationships.

8.3 Spain

All participants agreed that there should be no techniques or intentions to involve temporary workers (speaking about gig workers) in the team and company, because that would be illegal and known in Spain as a false freelance worker.

8.4   Cyprus

- Prepare an induction course on what the company does
- Make them feel part of the company
- Engage temp employees with meaningful work
- Offer them learning opportunities.

8.5   Greece

The HR manager of this group shared techniques already applied. Collaboration of diverse individuals and their involvement in a project without knowing each other is challenging. The technique that is being used is to arrange frequent (online) meetings in order to be acquainted. Creation of group conversations in social media.

Gig workers feel part of the team when each member of the team introduces themselves, shares thoughts, are accepted and their opinion counts, and have the same rights as permanent workers.

9. Most disruptive elements during personnel turnover

9.1   Germany

Staff changes can lead to some problems. For instance, losing someone who is valuable to the team in terms of knowledge and experience and then training someone to replace him/her can be detrimental. This will consume resources and time. In addition, the changes between teams could cause problems in terms of cooperation between colleagues and working relationships.

Some of the most common disruptive changes due to personal turnover or staff changes issues are lack of growth, overworking to cover the missing gap in your staff, less risks to take, loss of valuable experienced staff, loss of morale, loss of team spirit, loss of belief in the team's competences and loss of the ability to perform in an appropriate way. All those negative effects can cause a chain of other effects with the recruitment and training of a new staff member.

So, loss of knowledge and information, discontinuity in ongoing processes, time needed for integration into the team, familiarization with processes and skill development are the main disadvantages of personal turnover.

9.2   Italy

The participants identified as the most disruptive elements the loss of knowledge and the loss of reference points. If the structure is not solid and documentation is poor, losing one element with all the knowledge he/she has could be a big damage for the productivity.

Losing someone who is valuable to the team in terms of knowledge and experience and then training someone to replace him/her can be detrimental. This will consume resources and time.
In addition, the changes between teams could cause problems in terms of cooperation between colleagues and working relationships.

About the personal turnover or staff changes, the discussion brought out for all participants the most disruptive elements, concerning the loss of on boarding practices for new hires and thus, the lack of communication on the processes or about the organizational culture which must be narrated all the time.

9.3   Spain

In general, all interviewees highlighted the halt in production that happens during personnel turnover, since new employees need to be updated on the pending tasks. It impacts productivity as there is a halt in production and a training period for new employees to join the company and get used to the work that they have to develop and the company.

9.4   Cyprus

Depending on the size and line of work of the company anything from the cost of retraining a new employee, losing competent staff to the competition, making customers unhappy during the learning process of a new recruit, can be defined as disruptive for organisations with high employee turnover.

9.5   Greece

The data below figures the most predominant answers to this question from both groups.

- Become acquainted with each individual
- Training in order to be aligned with the rest of the team/the policy of the employer
- Recruitment procedure for each new member.
- Adaptive period
- Lack of confidence in new personnel
- Dealing with additional expenses
- Low productivity.

10. Most important competences for a self-employed person to manage their work correctly

10.1 Germany

- Entrepreneurial/proactivity, teamwork, work ethics
- Awareness of needs of team members and of necessary work, honesty, commitment, open-mindedness, adaptability and flexibility, willingness to learn
- Fairness, innovation, organizational skills, time management
- Commitment, respect, creativity, cooperation, and willingness to work
- Critical thinking, analytical skills, communication skills, reliability, productivity, and effectiveness.

10.2 Italy

The experts identified as important competences for the self-employed to manage their work correctly: the ability to manage his own time and to work under stress, the ability to prioritize the jobs in a correct manner and be able to communicate extremely well with customers to understand the client's requests.

Self-employed people have to be highly motivated and goal-oriented. They have to be able to focus on their goals and vision and be able to create and follow a plan in order to achieve them.

In addition, they have to be responsible, with digital and organization skills, as they have to manage not only their time but also their finances. They also need to know how to solve problems and be able to cope with uncertainty, unexpected situations, or changes. It is also important to be creative and have innovative ideas.

With regard to self-employment, the participants suggested unanimously that the correct management is given by all self-management, self-discipline. Specifically, they promote the self-planning and self-motivation as determinants of:

- Time management
- Flexibility
- Continuous training
- Innovation.

10.3 Spain

It was a general agreement during the focus group session that the most important competencies for self-employed persons to manage their work correctly were: First of all, knowledge on contract legislation and documents needed for local authorities, especially the social security regimen and its fees and duties, then project management skills including management of deadlines, juggling different tasks at the same time, prioritisation skills and communication skills:

- Communicating with the client
- Understanding their needs
- Getting the most important information regarding the task.

10.4 Cyprus
- Creativity
- Resourcefulness
- Time management
- Discipline
- Goal oriented.

10.5 Greece
Participants gave almost the same answers according to their experience including:
- Credibility
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Problem solving
- Digital problem solving
- Digital sovereignty
- Willing to be trained/to learn
- Role clarity
- Goal alignment
- Strategic planning
- Priority-setting
- Self-awareness
- Emotional regulation
- Use of digital tools for time and project management.

11. Three most important challenges for gig workers

11.1 Germany
- Constantly growing digital and personal skills
- Financial management
- Time management
- Unsafe working conditions
- Insecurity of contracts
- Lack of social welfare
- Personal instability
- Long-term feeling of not belonging and less career satisfaction

- Financial insecurity
- Uncertainty of identity.

11.2 Italy

The most important challenges according to participants were:

- Listening and communicating with clients to well understand their requests and the job that is needed
- Management of time and prioritization of various requests
- Capability to deliver quality product/services in short time
- Constantly growing regarding their digital skills as well as personally.
- Gig workers have to find ways to improve their skills and the services they provide in order to survive in a competitive environment
- Management of resources as their income is not stable and they also have to look after the future
- Communication
- Legislation
- Organizational culture
- Insurance
- Self-management.

11.3 Spain

All participants agreed that the three most important challenges for gig workers were non-stable income, high fees to be a self-worker and selling your job as a valuable product (without being depreciated by companies.

11.4 Cyprus

- Setting the boundaries between personal and business life
- Giving a clear direction of what you do to customers and prospects,
- Persuading customers of your work quality and the ability to deliver the assignment.

11.5 Greece

- Remote working is not effective and productive for everyone
- They have (somehow) to ensure that they will receive their money
- Volume of work that they are not able to manage
- Deficient legislation regarding the insurance
- Demanding clients
- Unsuccessful time management
- Digital equipment needed for the implementation of each project.

12. SKILL GRID

The skills were selected by analysing the European Frameworks ENTRE-COMP and DIGCOMP, as well as the OECD classification. After this first analysis, partners conducted a focus group with experts in the labour market, HR managers and SMEs to validate the following grid:

SKILL	DESCRIPTION	WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT TO LEARN
MARKET ANALYSIS	You need to have a deep understanding of the industry; field or role you are interested in working in. For example, if you're interested in working on web development projects where you design websites for clients, it may be helpful to have educational training and even a professional certification if it's necessary	- Sectors in which gig workers can work - Platforms used in freelance: how to find gigs through online job boards; how to use online apps to join gig networks - How to design professional development strategies based on a clear understanding of my strengths and weaknesses, in relation to both current and future opportunities to create value - How to produce a 'roadmap' which matches the needs with the actions needed to deal with them and helps me create value - How to monitor relevant trends and see how they create threats and new opportunities to create value

		- How to combine my understanding of different contexts to transfer knowledge, ideas and solutions across different areas - How to identify challenges related to my vision, while respecting the different levels of the system and the variety of stakeholders affected - How to judge my strengths and weaknesses and those of others in relation to opportunities for creating value
PERSONAL BRANDING AND PITCHING	No matter what field you want to pursue gig work in, it's important that you have the means to provide evidence of your experience, skills and proficiency in your job. For instance, a freelance writer typically builds a portfolio of written content that displays their talent and skill. Similarly, gig workers who work in specialised fields such as construction or technology may also keep records of or otherwise document their work. In other industries, such as hospitality and transportation, customer ratings and employer feedback can fulfil the same purpose as a portfolio of work. Social	- How to create and manage profiles in digital environments for professional purposes - How to adopt information and communication practices in order to build a positive online identity - How to use tools and techniques to create accessible digital content following official standards and guidelines - How to check and understand the right to use and/or re-use digital content created by a third party

		Media Marketing is a must-have strategy for contemporary brands. There is no way a company can stay away from channels used for interaction all around the world and still succeed. That is why you need to know each platform well and develop plans to improve your results in each one of them	- Creation of a communication strategy to mobilise people in relation to my value-creating activity - Basics of personal branding - How to pitch to a client
COMMUNICATION		Get together and communicate with other professionals in your niche. This can help you build professional relationships that, in the future, could lead to more gig opportunities for you. Attend networking events. Think about attending regularly held networking events for gig workers. Job fairs, conferences and professional development workshops are excellent venues to meet potential clients. One of the biggest misconceptions about self-employment is that to be successful a business must be started by an entrepreneur with a big idea. Having the right skills, passion and business acumen	- Managing client communication in a professional way - How to team up with other workers to compensate for our weaknesses and add to our strengths - Understanding group dynamics and others' needs construct tactical or sustainable alliances - Strategies to actively listen to my end users and act on their needs - How to communicate the vision for my venture in a way that inspires and persuades external groups, such as funders, partner organisation, volunteers, new members and affiliate supporters - How to manage one's feelings when talking with other people

| | are more important factors for finding success.

Whenever you complete a project or a job for a client, ask them for a testimonial and future referral to their networks. The more you can use your past clients' (and even work partners' or colleagues') feedback and recommendations, the more opportunities you can find. Create norms around client communication. Determine what channels of communication you prefer to use with clients (such as Slack, or a designated email address instead of your personal email address or phone number) so clients know when and how to get a hold of you. Additionally, you may want to consider communicating to clients what a normal response time is (for example, making it clear that you respond to emails within 24 hours). | - How manage interactions and conversations in different socio-cultural contexts and domain-specific situations
- How to pull together information from a wide range of sources to understand my end users' needs |
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| **LEGISLATION IN MY COUNTRY AND THE EU** | The most important thing is legal protection. Companies who contract them out often exploit gig workers. This could be | - Legal protection
- Data rights
- Labour rights for freelancers |

	averted by clear legal protection and support. Also, a provision of framework and online documents which indicates to-dos and not-to-dos while going into the agreement.	- How to research the conditions and obligations of freelance workers is needed.
MANAGEMENT	Planning and building a stable routine increase productivity and concentration. Of course, there are some common procedures that can be set up – adherence to a schedule, compliance with a to-do list, and plans on how to start the day with the most challenging work, or a customer call. Others are more personal, for example, remembering to set up self-care habits (sleep, nutrition, exercise). Both common work routines and more personal options improve the sense of order and control in uncertain circumstances. A self-employed person can select their preferred work environment. They may rent an office, find a shared workplace, or work from home. It allows them to save a significant amount of time and money and improve productivity. Seeking a comfortable work environment	- Time-management procedures - How to take responsibility in seizing new opportunities and when facing unprecedented challenges in value-creating activities and how to delegate - Defining long-term goals arising from the vision for my value-creating activity - Develop and stick to a detailed project management plan, adjusting to changing circumstances to make sure goals are reached - Conflict management - Risk management - How to plan - How to design a strategy to achieve goals in line with my vision. - How to define priorities in uncertain circumstances, with partial or ambiguous information

	helps self-employed people avoid distractions and remain focused to achieve results.	- How to allocate enough resources to each step of my action plan and for the value-creating activity
PROJECT MANAGEMENT: HOW TO TACKLE PROBLEMS	How are you currently tracking how client or customer work is managed? With a project management system in place, your job as a self-employed worker will be easier and your clients and customers are likely to receive the same positive experience. You can use a tool such as Asana to help you manage your client projects and integrate it with your CRM. When you are your own boss, it can be tempting to feel like you need to work all of the time. In a traditional job, there are often set working hours or a physical space you go to and leave from each day to establish boundaries. When you work for yourself, you have to create those boundaries for yourself. Creating a designated workspace for yourself that is for work only — This establishes a boundary between recreational and professional space. When	- How to design a strategy to achieve goals in line with my vision - How to design managerial procedures to effectively deliver value in challenging circumstances - How to take my work to a higher level of performance based on the feedback collected and by learning lessons from achievements and failures - How to develop the performance indicators I need to monitor progress towards a successful outcome in changing circumstances - How to develop a network of flexible and responsive providers from outside the organisation who support my value-creating activity - How to delegate tasks within and outside my organisation to make the most value - How to judge my strengths and

	you are at your workspace, that is a time for work and focus	weaknesses and those of others in relation to opportunities for creating value - Discuss how realistic understanding and evaluation of my personal attitudes, skills and knowledge can influence my decision-making, relationships with other people and quality of life - How to design new processes to involve stakeholders in generating, developing and testing ideas that create value - How to initiate, develop, manage and complete a creative project
FINANCIAL SKILLS	Establishing a budget. When you're self-employed, you need a solid plan in place to help you manage your business finances. When you are managing your own pay (and the pay of your employees) it is imperative that you understand where your money is coming from. Separate accounts: Open a business account to make it easier to keep your business expenses separate from your personal expenses.	- How to apply the financial planning and forecasting concepts that I need to turn ideas into action. - How to judge the cash-flow needs of a complex project - How to use the internet to conduct transactions of goods and services of all kinds - How to use financial indicators to assess the financial health of a value-creating activity

	Save aggressively: When business is booming, put as much money into savings as possible, to help you weather a potential bust in the future. Keep expenses flexible: Arrange your finances so that you can cut back on services when needed. Delay large purchases: If you've just begun working for yourself, you might want to delay buying a new home or car so that you don't have a huge payment hanging over your head. Self-employed individual does not have retirement contributions automatically deducted from their pay check. It will be your role as a self-employed person to establish a retirement account and then put in place a plan to save for retirement. You may also want to open a taxable brokerage account to increase your savings potential, but keep in mind that your investments can	- How to choose the most appropriate sources of funding to start up or expand a value-creating activity - How to earn interest on your money - Understanding Loans - Understanding expected risk - Managing Financial Security and Growth - Establishing Liquid Savings

	generate taxable dividends, and, when sold, taxable capital gains. It's useful to talk to a financial adviser to learn exactly what you can do to make sure you save enough to reach your retirement goals.	
FINDING SUPPORT IN LOCAL ENTITIES	Introduction of youth workers' supporting schemes that look forward to the employability of those people. Such public or private services can be proved quite useful, based on each person's qualifications, standards, and vision.	- Where to go for support: local, regional, national; - Examples in each country
RESILIENCE, MENTAL HEALTH, COPING STRATEGIES FOR STRESS	According to this report, almost 500 respondents said that freelancing has had an impact on their mental health (half positively, half negatively. 60% said poor mental health has had a negative impact on their ability to work.	- Stress management - Resilience: what is it and how to cultivate it - How to take care of your mental health - Burnout - Adoption of self-care - Importance of mental health in the freelance world - Stressors: how to manage them (money, admin, workload, away from work, development and motivation, working in isolation, client relationships)

ENHANCING YOUR SKILLS: HOW TO STAY UPDATED	How to stay updated in relation to your needs and those of the labour market.	- How to stay updated in relation to your needs and the needs of the market - Where to find training opportunities - Online training - Subsidised training