



► **TO OUR FELLOW COURIERS,
WHO WORK AT *Wolt***

April 2021



Our union's address: Skylitsi 10 Exarcheia, we are open every Tuesday 18:00-20:00

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DELIVERATION

In recent years, the delivery of products has become quite massive in the country. More and more people who own a motorbike are choosing to work in delivery. Either as extra work, as wages are not enough, or because unemployment has increased. And the job offer in delivery is huge, unlike any other profession. Meanwhile, the delivery services seem very important for the country's economy, even more in times of lockdown. At the same time more and more companies are opening up to delivery services, new working models are emerging and new ways of exploitation are to be established.

The example of Wolt, a child of evolution and new forms of exploitation, is a working condition, relatively recent in our country, but not at all new worldwide. It is based on sharing economy (gig economy) and the operation of all services, provided by the company, through an electronic platform.

This Finnish company appeared in the country in 2018 and offered "free choice of hours" and a salary with big bonuses. Therefore, it easily managed to attract employees of a country, in which the net basic salary is at € 558.

In 2019, we, the workers with motorcycle, gained with struggles the law 4611/2019. This law institutionalizes that costs will be borne by the employer instead of the worker: the maintenance of the vehicle, the gasoline required and the protecting equipment we use. The problem is that in cases where we work under the title of "partner", all of the above does not matter. Under the title of partner, we have to put the expenses for the motorbike out of our own pockets, pay for our social contribution ourselves and not be covered by anyone in case of an accident at work.



Gradually the provision of bonuses given by Wolt changed, the requirements of the job increased and the "terms of cooperation" took a strange turn, with rating systems and various sanctions against the "employee-partner". The foggy work environment that is constantly changing is becoming even more ambiguous by colleagues who confuse salary with turnover. They believe that the expenses of work are covered by the money that goes into their pocket every month. They consider that the «partner» is superior to the employee.

But is that so?

PARTNER vs EMPLOYEE

in 5 days 8 hours

In the five-day eight-hour work, besides a € 3.84 net salary, a courier is entitled :

- | | |
|---|---|
| ▶ A company motorbike or at least 97,5 € each month's expenses for use and maintenance of his motorbike | ▶ Compensation claims in case of dismissal and the right to claim unemployment benefit. |
| ▶ All the gasoline required for working time (estimated 70-100 € per month depending on the kilometers) | ▶ Compensation for accident at work covering possible hospital/medical expenses |
| ▶ Plus 25% wage increase every time we work from 22:00 to 06:00 | ▶ Sickleave |
| ▶ Plus 75% wage increase on Sundays | ▶ Christmas bonus (about 1 salary) |
| ▶ Plus 75% wage increase during holidays | ▶ Easter bonus (about half salary) |
| ▶ Full insurance coverage | ▶ Summer bonus (about half salary) |
| | ▶ Paid annual leave or compensation for unpaid leave |

So to compare what works best for us,

we need to see if the Wolt distributor actually has a higher salary. If his earnings are indeed higher than those of an employee. In order to form a greater picture, there are a few more crucial things:

- the expenses for maintenance , mechanical damage, gasoline,
- the fact that he does not receive Christmas/Easter bonus and allowances
- zero insurance rights.

We must also always keep in mind that the wage offered by Wolt is not regulated like the basic salary. It can be changed at any time, whenever the company wants.

At the same time, reality itself raises a number of reasonable questions. Are there any companies that have stopped being interested in reducing labor costs, that have stopped organizing their profit-oriented strategy and decided to share their profits with us? On the other hand, for those who can see the trap, for those who do not believe that the boss has gone crazy and distributes money, is it in our interest as employees to support a company that, taking advantage of legislative gaps at national and European level, tries to make labor relationships worse?

As a union we declare unequivocally that Wolt's employment relationship, which names the salaried "self-employed" and "associate", conceals dependent employment. In this Finnish-inspired, artistically advertised, falsely philanthropic framework, the salary depends on the employee's willingness to adapt to the company's requirements according to rush hours. At the same time, we work without medical insurance / coverage in case of an accident, without the right to Christmas/Eastern bonus, licenses and allowances, while the concept of dismissal does not even exist. The company simply terminates its cooperation with us, without having to justify its termination, without being entitled

to severance and consequently joining the unemployment fund.

And this working condition, in which we have no real independence, is the most rotten case of the neoliberal restructuring of labor for the benefit of business. It is an employment relationship that while seeking to tear down the conquests of the working class is projected as the cornerstone of a new and modern edifice.

We will repeat it as many times as needed.

Working at Wolt is a dependent employment relationship. In fact, in November 2020, the Ministry of Labor itself published circular 45628/414/2020 with clarifications regarding the type of employment relationship and the insurance of couriers employed in platform companies. We quote the entire circular in this address <https://sveod.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/45628.pdf> and below we will refer briefly to the most important points:

THE WORK STATUS OF "PARTNER" IN WOLT

So regarding the circular there is a dependent employment relationship*

1. When we are obliged to provide our work in person.
2. When we have no further responsibilities for achieving the work that is assigned.
3. When the employer determines the place, time, manner, object and extent of employment, giving us the necessary orders and instructions that we are obliged to follow.
4. When the employer has the right to exercise supervision and control to verify our compliance.

5. Even when we develop initiatives, as long as we follow the instructions of the employer in terms of time and place.
6. Even when it is not our main profession.
7. When our work is provided in person, exclusively or primarily to the same employer for nine consecutive months.
8. When our work is not provided on an occasional but on a systematic basis.
9. When we are required to wear the company's insignia or trademark while working.
10. As long as we have exclusive access and use of the platform through a mobile device, from which the provision of our service is controlled.

*work under an employment contract

Here we have to add:

11. It is clear that the company coordinates and organizes the provision of delivery services.

12. The courier has no right to have his own customers.

At the same time, the court of the European Union ruled on 22/4/20, that in order for employees to be considered as self-employed, among other things should be able to define working hours unilaterally, based on personal needs and not on the interests of the employer.

But Wolt, through e-mails and manuals, constantly forwards instructions on what hours and areas it would be good to work. Instructions that best meet the needs of the company “according to peak hours” and serve “the good of the fleet”.



HIDES DEPENDENT EMPLOYMENT

Finally, the circular concludes that:

“The type of employment contract of those engaged in the delivery of products (catering), resembles to the nature and characteristics of a dependent employment relationship and is not, however, compatible with the remuneration of such employees with a Services Document (former title deed), which is only appropriate in certain cases, of a completely occasional and circumstantial nature.”

And to end states that:

“The above legislative provision introduces a presumption in favor of paid work. [...] It does not convert the contracts for the provision of independent services or work into contracts of employment, but the burden of proving that it is not a contract of employment now rests with the employer, if he disputes the above presumption.”

“This type of partner contract has to be made illegal as soon as possible, not giving any time to these platforms to make it seems like normal or acceptable for the society.”

Platforms in Europe . In other European countries such as Italy, Spain and Germany, most delivery services are handled by platform companies. Until recently, the lawful working relationships of the partner, exploiting the legislative gaps of the European Union, defined the working model. The salaries of employees abroad, always in relation to the minimum wage of each country, are much lower than in Greece, while the regime of evaluation and sanctions is much stricter with minimal to zero awareness of the dangers of the profession.

In Italy, “Deliveroo”, when you refuse an order twice in a row (despite the fact that it gives you the opportunity to refuse it), throws you out of the application. Theoretically, as a “partner” and “self-employed” you have the right to refuse, but because you are essentially an employee, the platform throws you out to “calm down”.

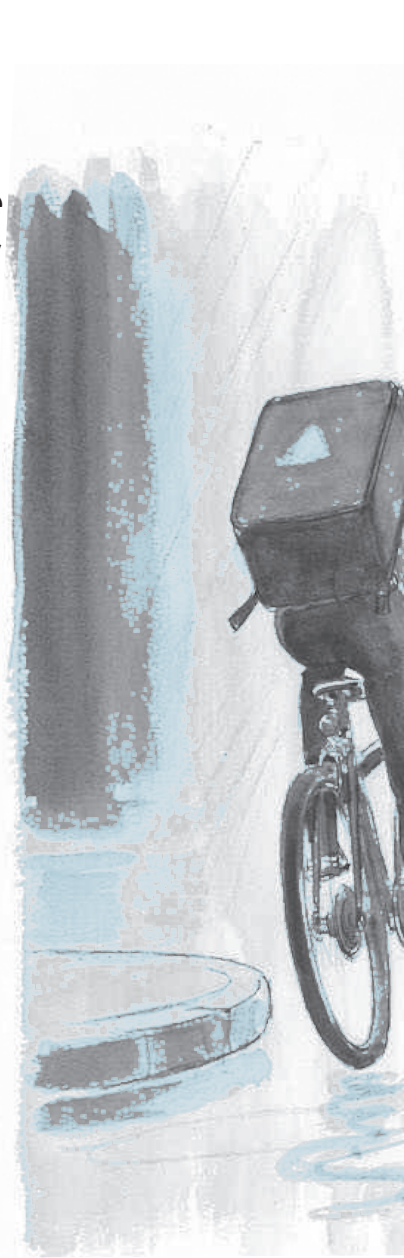
At the same time, every week you choose the hours you want to work and the company gives them to you only if your evaluation is at high levels. So the planning of daily life is adjusted according to the needs of the business software. The title of the freelancer is fake and the dependent employment relationship is evident.

Two-faced Janus . When platforms dominated the market, the bonuses and rewards they offered were at much higher levels than they are today. They invested in their temporary ability to hide the dependent employment relationship behind the false title of partner. That gave them, even temporarily, the opportunity to circumvent labor law and **gradually and unilaterally to change the agreement with employees for the worse.**

The circular 45628/414/2020 of the Ministry of Labor published in November 2020 on: clarifications regarding the type of employment relationship and the insurance of distributors employed in platform companies,

- in relation to general labor law and our enshrined constitutional rights ensures that
- those of us who work in companies that conceal dependent work (platforms), we have the opportunity
- to claim that our work is recognized as a dependent employment relationship and to demand full salary and insurance rights.

As a union we are explicit that in essence, these companies bypassed the labor law and we will help it to collapse under the weight of its contradictions as soon as possible, just as it does in the rest of Europe.



The victorious struggles of our colleagues abroad show us the way:

Couriers in Spain have won a lengthy trial against Deliveroo. On 12/01/2021 the court of Barcelona ruled that 748 couriers of Deliveroo were falsely declared as self-employed (falsos autonomos) while they should have a dependent employment relationship, without being considered «external partners». Deliveroo is now obliged to pay 1.3 million euros in insurance contributions for the period 2016-2018.



Two months after this victory, on 11/03/2021 in Spain, the working status of couriers providing their services in platform companies such as Deliveroo and UberEats changed. From now on they will be considered as employees.

In Italy, following a court ruling, 60,000 couriers will have to be hired as employees and sign an employment contract with the obligation of medical examinations, training and provision of adequate equipment.



Colleagues,

we work to live. We do not live to work. The request for eight hours of work, eight hours of leisure and eight hours of rest is always relevant. It started on May Day, 1886 in Chicago, reaches into today and it leads us . It reflects real needs. Five days of eight-hour work with full insurance and salary rights shouldn't consider as being in the past.

Colleagues,

whether we work in greenhouses, in the fields, in the factory, in a shop, in an office, at home, on the street or in the saddle of a two-wheeler motorbike or bicycle, our need for a life with dignity is shared. Platform companies offer jobs just like any other company. Instead of going through the door of a building, we go through the gate of a digital application. But again we provide work, we work for employers, we work for companies and we make profits. Work is work and we workers remain workers. It does not matter if we work three hours, four hours or eight hours. It does not matter when and how many hours we choose to work. It is important to work with full salary and insurance rights. To be able

to organize our time and not run behind the demands and constant mutations of a digital application.

Colleagues,

we do not only have obligations. We also have rights. Rights we have inherited from previous generations. The right to salary and insurance. The right to public health, public education. The right to go on strike. The right to join a union. Improving working conditions.

These are victories that concern each of us personally but at the same time concern the society as a whole. But conquests should never be considered as certain. They need guarding, they need enlargement. We understand that the period we are going through is difficult. But every era was difficult. And that is why each and every one of us should be wondering. Will I act for my interest or for the big picture that includes the others? Will I sacrifice the gains I inherited for temporary benefits or will I safeguard my rights?

Colleagues,

The ads, the slogans and the clever tricks are good, but there is not any employer, business or company sharing money. There

is no boss that intends to make us rich. We can see the trap. We understand that many do not want to see it. And we know we have different assessments, different approaches. But we have patience and faith in time. Because time solves differences. And time does not stop. It moves on. It matures the thoughts. It matures the conditions. And it highlights the reality. Naked. Because lies and illusions don't last long.

Colleagues,

we are not fortune tellers. We just analyze the facts, with common sense and make our own conclusions. We are not smarter than everyone but we carry the collective memory of the previous struggles. Because work was, is and will always be work. Whatever label you put. So, we look behind the label. Because it is a pity to let them take advantage of our good heart, our appetite for work, our need for a living and to give us only beads and mirrors.

“**N**either partners
nor freelancers.”

We, Base Assembly of Motorcycle Drivers (deliverers / distributors – couriers – outdoor office workers) consider Wolt employees to be our colleagues. It is with great pleasure that we saw you standing by our side in the strike on October 8, 2020. We are waiting for you at the union. To fight together. To declare all platform work as belonging to the relationship of dependent employment. We move forward steadily and every day we impose our rights step by step. **Because no one else will do it for us.**



Wolt uses algorithmic management practices in the allocation of labor, which allows automatic monitoring of the entire work process. The platform looks like a game. It provides us with a series of incentives (e.g. Bonus € 5 per 10 orders) and depending on our performance, it rewards or punishes us. Many colleagues, especially young employees of platform companies, like the flexibility of the working hours and this continuous achievement of goals with the reward of a high wage. However, the longer we work under this regime, the more it becomes clear that this high wage requires plenty of working hours. Everyday it becomes clearer working conditions become worse and the illusions about being partners are shattered. **Finally, it seems that the term WOLT PARTNER refers to a very special type of collaboration, in which the supposed collaborators:**

➤ **We work under evaluation and in fact with a score**, which must be maintained at 4.75/5. According to the manual provided by the company, after the completion of an order, the customer has the opportunity to rate the distribution. This rating evaluates us. Unfortunately, if we want to be honest, we have to admit that often for a high score we have to violate the traffic rules.

➤ **We are obliged to provide a money guarantee of € 200** to Wolt, in order to be able to take orders in cash.

➤ **We face penalties.** Mentioned as effects on the manual in case of a mistake, give the company the right to take us offline for 2-3 days or even to terminate the service.

➤ **We are being manipulated.** Wolt has included a number of instructions in its delivery manual that intends to manipulate our choices. Guidelines with goals of the company. However, we do not perceive our interests only in terms of profit and loss, but in combination with our health and safety, with how many hours we endure to work on the road and the intensity / pressure of work under the stress of constant evaluation.

**WORKING BY HAVING NO TIMEWORK
OPENS THE LIMITS TO WORK WITHOUT TIMEWORK**

**RECOGNIZE THE DEPENDENT EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP
WITH FULL PAY AND INSURANCE RIGHTS FOR ALL THE WORKERS WITH TWO WHEELER VEHICLES
IN PLATFORM COMPANIES**