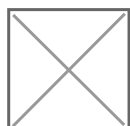


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## Being a bicycle delivery rider: passion or exploitation?



Submitted by Forum Vies Mobiles on Mon, 12/14/2020 - 15:51

Mots clés

cycling

Work

lifestyle

hypermobility

uberisation

État du projet

Finished research

Visuel

Being a bicycle delivery rider: passion or exploitation?

Activer

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Niveau de profondeur

Balise H2 + H3

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Désactivé

Date du début

Thu, 10/01/2020 - 12:00 - Tue, 06/01/2021 - 12:00

Présentation longue

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In recent years and especially since the start of the pandemic, the use of home meal delivery services has exploded. With the uberization of the economy, delivery

platforms (Uber, Deliveroo, Frichti, etc.) have recruited many delivery workers by promising them an easy income and independence. Do these advantages, advertised by the platforms, become reality? While bike delivery riders are now clearly visible in the public space, do we really know who they are? What are their working conditions? How much time do they spend roaming cities each day and for how much money? How do they experience this mobile profession? Being a bike delivery rider today: passion or exploitation?

The Mobile Lives Forum asked a group of students in the Master's programme in Planning and Urbanism at the University of Paris 1 to examine these questions. They conducted 53 in-depth interviews with delivery drivers working in the centre of Paris and in the outer suburbs (Mantes-la-Jolie), as well as making observations and holding a focus group resulting in a series of proposals to better understand the problems encountered by delivery workers.

## **From students to migrants: the growing precariousness of delivery riders**

In their early days, platforms that needed to recruit labour offered advantageous working conditions to attract delivery riders working mainly as micro-entrepreneurs: autonomous activity, flexible hours, well-paid and outdoor work, friendly events, etc.

Initially, there were relatively few delivery riders, mostly young French students, often cycling enthusiasts, working part-time in search of supplementary income. But new profiles have progressively emerged in the profession as the wage conditions have gotten stricter and platforms have increased their demands: pressuring workers to go faster, deteriorating working conditions, reducing the pay, etc. For example, in September 2020, delivery riders working for Uber Eats received a gross average of 8.7 euros per hour, compared to 9.9 euros six months earlier; by comparison, the hourly gross minimum wage in France is 10.15 euros. Some platforms (Deliveroo in 2017) have even gone from pay per hour to pay per delivery and pay per kilometre travelled. Before this measure was adopted, delivery drivers were paid 7.5 euros per hour and received between 2 and 4 euros per delivery. Now, Deliveroo riders are paid 2 euros when picking up the order, 1 euro when dropping it off and a supplement depending on the distance travelled. Pay per delivery responds to a gig economy in which waiting time is no longer remunerated, even though delivery workers

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**Download the full report (in French only)** <br /><br />

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<strong>Also check out the virtual exhibition GigWork, by researchers Cosmin Popan and Nathanael Sheehan, and artists Oana Lohan, Ionuț Dulămiță, José Sherwood González and Alin Tămășan, based on research carried out on bicycle delivery workers in Manchester, Cluj and Lyon: <a href="https://gigwork.city/">  
https://gigwork.city/</a></strong>

Chapô

With the general uberization of the economy and evolutions in consumer practices, meal delivery services have grown significantly in recent years. With the Covid pandemic driving the increase in the number of restaurants and clients using delivery services, many delivery riders have signed up, looking for an easy income and an autonomous and flexible job. They work for digital platforms such as Uber Eats or Deliveroo that now employ over ten thousand delivery drivers in France. As such, the drivers have truly become key players in urban logistics. How do they experience this mobile profession? Being a bike delivery rider today: passion or exploitation?

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