

## Degrees of Outsiderness Among Food Delivery Riders in Denmark & Germany

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### Abstract:

This paper seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the developing complexities of working conditions and rights protection in one of the platform economy's typical sectors: food delivery. Based on a structured, focused comparative case study, we zoom in on the variability of employment-based disadvantages faced by riders on three major food delivery platforms active in Germany and Denmark: subsidiaries of Just Eat Takeaway, Wolt, and Gorillas.

Using dualisation theory, we categorise riders as (labour market) 'outsiders' but seek to highlight differences in employment-based disadvantages (dualisms) depending on national institutional context and sectoral dynamics, including company affiliation. Our analysis of elite and expert interviews, working contracts, collective bargaining agreements and relevant income statistics shows, that riders constitute a heterogenous group of workers characterized by varying 'degrees of outsiderness'. We define the latter as variances in employment-based disadvantages on three levels: labour market vulnerability, access to social protection, and political representation. We argue that riders' degrees of outsiderness vary not only across countries, but equally across (and to some extent, within) companies.

Our paper thereby contributes to dualisation literature by demonstrating that outsiders' rights coverage varies and is not only bound to national institutional context, but to sectoral dynamics and companies' discretion. By calling attention to different degrees of outsiderness among food delivery riders, this paper adds to previous research that questions the dichotomous insider-outsider divide between non-standard and standard employees based on employment status alone. Instead, it complements approaches that consider outsiderness as a continuum, showcasing a more nuanced view on labour market division processes and different aspects of precariousness among non-standard employees.