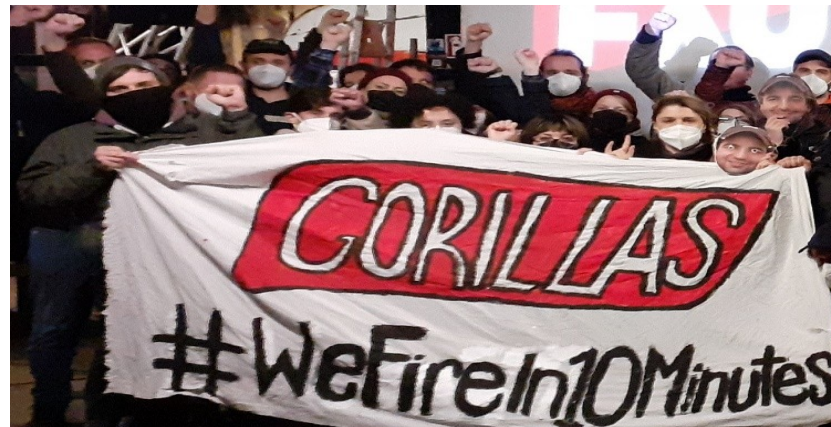


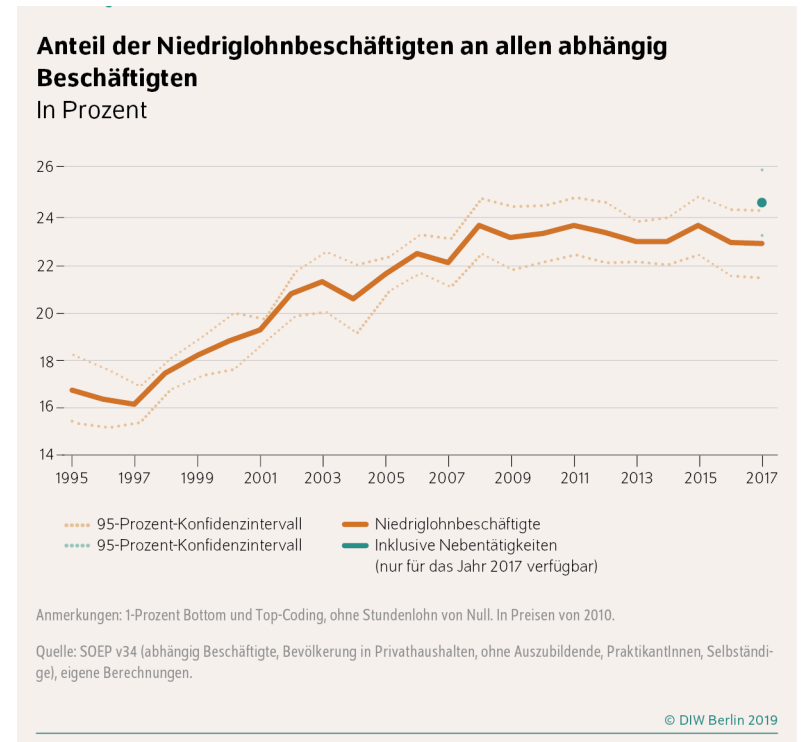
Platform struggles in Germany

Simon Schaupp



German labor market

- Germany has a big **low wage** sector since “Agenda 2010”, at the same time large middle class: attractive market.
- Especially precarious for migrants: about 70 percent of platform workers are non Germans.
- Phase of intense competition between Deliveroo, Foodora, Lieferando 2015-2019.
- Main grievances: very low wage (below minimum), intransparent shift allocations.
- Very early regulation forces platform companies to treat workers as employees.



Form of organization

- Platform labor as **deviation** from German model of industrial relations „social partnership“
- Platform companies **afraid of works councils** (co-determination of technology).
- High fluctuation and low pay makes **larger unions shy away** from the sector.
- First organization in **autonomous** collectives and **grassroots** union FAU.
- Wildcat **strikes** and direct actions in 2018: small pay raise, compensation for material damages.
- Centrality of **migrant organizations**: self-help groups.



Consolidation

- very strong media attention: **official unions** begin to address the sector.
- Successful collectives tend to formalize in **works councils** (de-radicalization).
- **Consolidation** of market.
- Deliveroo leaves **Germany** in 2019 in response to protests and attempts of regulation.
- Raises the question of possibility of decent work in the sector.
- Lieferando buys Foodora: quasi **monopolist**.
- More **leeway** for union: delivery does not have to be profitable: long term employment.



Newer conflicts

- Since pandemic new business model of **grocery** delivery: Gorillas, Flink.
- Challenges monopolist, **profitability** seems very problematic.
- **Wildcat strike** at Gorillas in 2021.
- Gorillas **fires** about 300 workers.
- New conflict around establishment of **works councils**: management tries to establish its own works councils.



Power resources and Challenges

- Large communicative autonomy, little ideological integration.
- Political will for **radical action**.
- **International** coordination.
- Works councils strong legal instruments.
- **Algorithmic management** makes workers easily replaceable.
- **Fluctuation** as problem for organizing.
- **Strike breaking**.
- Low capital fixation makes it easy for companies to **leave market** (Australia).



Thanks for your attention!

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