

Question in Project:

Pretesting of special module on ICT at work, working conditions & learning digital skills
(English Version)

Question Topic:

Digitalization/ Use of digital systems

Construct:

Usage of online services to obtain work

General Information:

Note: The item was tested both in English and German.

Question Text:

English version: In the last 12 months, have you used any internet platform/app (e.g. Upwork, TaskRabbit, Amazon Mechanical Turk. . .) as an intermediary for you to obtain regular or occasional paid work to carry out in a self-employed capacity?

German version: Haben Sie in den letzten 12 Monaten eine Internet-Plattform / App (z.B. Upwork, TaskRabbit, Amazon Mechanical Turk) als Vermittler genutzt, um für Sie selbst in einer selbstständigen Erwerbstätigkeit regelmäßig oder gelegentlich ausgeführte, bezahlte Arbeit zu erhalten?

Answer Categories:

English version:

Yes, as my main job

Yes, as a secondary or occasional job

No, never

German version:

Ja, in meiner Hauptbeschäftigung

Ja, als Neben- oder Gelegenheitsjob

Nein, nie

Cognitive Techniques:

Specific Probing.

Findings for Question:

Question 2 asked respondents whether they have used any internet platform/app (e.g. Upwork, TaskRabbit, Amazon Mechanical Turk) as an intermediary to obtain regular or occasional paid work to carry out in a self-employed capacity in the last 12 months. Respondents could choose between the answer categories "Yes, as my main job," "Yes, as a secondary or occasional job," and "No, never." All categories were exclusive categories and, therefore, percentages add up to 100 percent. The first answer category ("Yes, as my main job") was selected by 5.33 percent of the English speaking respondents and 2.86 percent of the German speaking respondents. The second answer category ("Yes, as a secondary or occasional job") was chosen by 13.33 of the English speaking respondents and by 4.29 percent of the German speaking respondents. However, most of the respondents in both countries indicated that they have not used any internet platform/app as an intermediary to obtain regular or occasional paid work to carry out in a self-employed capacity in the last 12 months (81.33 percent of English speaking respondents and 92.86 of German speaking respondents).

Only respondents that chose the answer categories "Yes, as my main job" or "Yes, as a secondary or occasional job" at question 2 received a specific probe that asked respondents what platforms or applications they had considered when answering this question. Respondents that chose the answer category "No, I have not." (n=126) did not receive this probe. As a consequence, 19 respondents (14 British and 5 German respondents) answered this probing question.

The intention of the probe was to verify whether the focus of the question on platforms distributing work orders is clear enough and whether the phrasing clearly excludes traditional placement agencies. The probe responses of the British respondents seem to indicate that this intention is met for the English version of this question. British respondents mentioned a variety of different platforms and apps to find work, such as "Upwork," "TaskRabbit," or "Glasdoor." Most of these platforms and apps were only mentioned by one respondent (with the exception of "Upwork" and "TaskRabbit." These platforms were indicated twice). More importantly, British respondents did not mention traditional placement agencies.

However, only a few German respondents received this probe (n=5) and only two websites are mentioned. This can mean two things: Either German respondents really do not obtain work through internet platforms or German respondents had problems with the question wording. Given the complex sentence structure of the German translation of the closed question, the latter interpretation (problems with the question) seems more likely.

For a more detailed breakdown of the respondents' answers please refer to the tables in the attached PDF document.

Recommendations:

Question: For the German version, we would recommend splitting the question in two separate questions because it is asking multiple questions: 1) Did the respondents use the internet? 2) For which type of job? In order to reduce the complexity of the question it is necessary to ask these questions separately in the German version:

Question 1: "Haben Sie in den letzten 12 Monaten eine Internet-Plattform / App (z.B. Upwork, TaskRabbit, Amazon Mechanical Turk) genutzt, um nach Arbeit zu suchen?"

Ja

Nein

Question 2 (if selected "Ja"): "Um was für eine Art der Beschäftigung handelte es sich dabei?"

Meine Hauptbeschäftigung

Einen Neben- oder Gelegenheitsjob

An alternative solution would be to simplify the sentence structure and to first ask the main question and then provide any definition or examples afterwards:

"Haben Sie in den letzten 12 Monaten eine Online-Vermittlungsplattform / App genutzt, um neben- oder hauptberuflich einer bezahlten Erwerbstätigkeit nachzugehen?"

Beispiele für Online-Vermittlungsplattformen sind Upwork, TaskRabbit oder Amazon Mechanical Turk."

In a similar vein, we recommend adapting the English version accordingly:

"In the last 12 months, have you used any internet platform/app as an intermediary for you to obtain regular or occasional paid work to carry out in a self-employed capacity?"

Examples for internet platforms/apps are Upwork, TaskRabbit, Amazon Mechanical Turk."

Answer categories: No changes recommended.