



The (new) moonlighting: between survival and self-realization at work. A look from the European experience


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ENG Abstract: Multiple jobholding is an emerging labour market phenomenon. While there is growing literature on the profiles and motivations of those who engage in this practice, few studies take a qualitative approach. This article aims to address this gap by analysing the way in which 101 workers, interviewed in five European countries, frame their condition as moonlighters. Our study provides evidence of the great diversity and complexity of these workers' overlapping motivations and identities as well as of their association with some recent trends in the labour market.

Keywords: multiple Jobholding, labour identities, atypical employment, platform work

^{ES} El (nuevo) pluriempleo: entre la supervivencia y la auto-realización en el trabajo. Una mirada desde la experiencia europea

Resumen: El pluriempleo constituye un fenómeno emergente en el mercado de trabajo. Si bien existe un volumen creciente de literatura sobre los perfiles y motivaciones de los pluriempleados, pocos estudios adoptan un enfoque cualitativo. Este artículo pretende abordar esta brecha analizando la forma en que 101 trabajadores, entrevistados en cinco países europeos, enmarcan su condición de pluriempleados. Nuestro estudio proporciona evidencia de la gran diversidad y complejidad de las motivaciones y de las identidades superpuestas de estos trabajadores y de su relación con algunas tendencias recientes en el mercado laboral.

Palabras clave: Pluriempleo, identidades laborales, empleo atípico, trabajo en plataformas

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1. Introduction

Moonlighting is back. “The act of working more than one job simultaneously, including working for employers and self-employment, wherein all tasks, or set of tasks, are performed in exchange for, or expectation of, compensation” (Campion et al., 2020:170)¹ is currently an emerging labour market phenomenon in most advanced economies (Dickey et al. 2011; Conen and Beer 2021). In the particular case of Europe, the EU-LFS shows that, although there are still few workers engaged in several jobs at the same time (around 4%), a significant upward trend can be observed (Eurofound, 2020).

However, moonlighting is different now from what occurred and was researched between the 1960s and 1980s (Gallino, 1985)². For moonlighters at the end of the 20th century -mainly men with a low educational level- doing more than one job simultaneously was a strategy to deal with economic deprivation in the context of structurally rigid labour markets (Willensky, 1963). In the 21st century, its scope and structure, the socio-demographic and occupational profiles of workers and their motivations have changed and diversified (Campion et al., 2020; Conen, 2020; Mori et al., 2022). Recent literature on the subject show that the profiles, positions and drivers of the new moonlighters reflect the combined effect -in varying degrees- of three contemporary labour market trends of different natures. First, the need to supplement income or seek greater security in an increasingly flexible and fragmented labour market (Henneckam, 2016; Conen, 2020; Conen and Stein, 2021). Second, the possibilities to diversify and multiply work activities offered by the development and extension of digital platforms (Doucette and Bradford, 2019; Ilsøe et al., 2021). Finally, the prioritization of personal fulfilment at work, linked to the emergence and expansion of what could be considered “new” labour subjectivities (Huws, 2013; Taylor and Luckman, 2018).

In line with the increasing importance of this phenomenon, in the last decade the MJH literature has expanded. One of the most frequently analysed issues is who works more than one job and why (Campion et al., 2020). Relying almost exclusively on a quantitative approach, this research draws the broad picture of the profiles and motivations of MJHs (among others, Atherton et al., 2016; Doucette and Bradford, 2019; Conen, 2020; Piasna et al., 2020). This article aims to contribute to this field of research by delving into the characterization of this new modality of MJH in the current labour context, based on the analysis of the way in which the 101 workers interviewed within the framework of the European project *SWIRL-Slash Workers and Industrial Relations*³ frame their condition as moonlighters. Therefore, our approach is qualitative. With the notable exceptions of Henneckam (2016), Lindstrom (2016) and Caza et al. (2018), this methodology, ideal for analysing the motivations and experiences of these workers in depth, as well as their possible conflicts and ambivalences in relation to their status as MJHs, has rarely been used to address this issue.

The article starts with a theoretical discussion on MJH drivers and profiles and continues with an analysis of official statistics. The following section describes our field research methods based

¹ This is the most widespread definition in international literature on this topic. To delve deeper into it, see, for example, Dickey et al. (2011), Conen and Beer (2021), Piasna et al. (2020) and Sliter and Boyd (2014).

² In fact, in current research the term moonlighting is no longer used, and has been replaced by dual or multiple jobholding, pluriactivity, and plural or hybrid employment (Conen and Stein, 2021). In this article, the most commonly used terms, multiple jobholding (hereinafter MJH) and multiple jobholders (hereinafter MJHs), will be adopted.

³ Funded by the European Commission under the grant reference VS/2019/0076. For additional information, see the project website: www.swirlproject.eu/. This work was also supported by the Ministry of Science and Innovation of Spain (grant reference: PID2022-138959NB-I00)

on qualitative interviews. Thereafter, we present our results regarding the diversity of positions and motivations among the MJHs interviewed. Based on these results, we end with some reflections that aim to provide greater knowledge about this emerging phenomenon and contribute to the literature on the new ways of understanding and performing work.

2. The analysis of multiple jobs: from the 80s to present day

The phenomenon of MJH has a long history and has been the subject of extensive scientific research. Mori et al. (2023) have identified four main strands of literature. The first line of research, mainly developed in reference to agricultural work, brings back multi-employment, undeclared work and the informal economy (Lass et al., 1991; Mishra e Goodwin, 1997). The second, developed specifically in Italy in the eighties, refers to a somewhat opposite profile, that of dual employment, wherein an individual works for two or more employers simultaneously, often in different capacities. In this scenario, the individual has a formal agreement or contract with each employer and may receive benefits from each. In this research, double work was considered a structural phenomenon, independent of economic situation (Gallino 1985). The structural rigidities of the labour market were considered the enabling factor of multiple employment in generations that had developed an acquisitive mentality pushing them to work more in order to access mass consumption and a new lifestyle (Reyneri 1984).

In addition to these first two research traditions, there are more recent studies on MJH as an effect of the reorganization of work times (Sliter and Boyd, 2014). In this case, there may even be more than two forms of employment and this is encouraged by the diffusion of part-time hourly schemes. The literature on moonlighting refers to this trend. A last line of increasingly relevant studies concentrates on the progressive development of pluri-occupation as a trend which characterizes the most qualified component of the labour market, such as portfolio workers, self-employed whose professionalism is made up of a patchwork of skills developed in different jobs and in multiple sectors or for multiple companies (Clinton et al., 2006), hybrid entrepreneurs (Schulz et al., 2017) and second-step entrepreneur (Folta et al., 2010).

After a season of widespread attention at the end of the last century, the topic lost its centrality in public debate and academic research and has recently resurfaced in a renewed context in which three recent trends of different signs stand out. The first of these is the proliferation of atypical forms of employment such as part-time employment, temporary employment, underemployment (Bamberry and Campbell, 2012), or the “renaissance” of self-employment (Conen, 2020), which requires many workers to supplement their income or seek greater security by resorting to a second -or third- work activity. MJH is part of a broader trend of “structuring instability”. In recent years, the more stable share of non-employee work has strengthened, with the growth of: alternative workers who work with longer-hour and longer-term contracts; fixed-term contracts lasting more than 6 months; temporary employment relationships, somewhat more structured than the new non-standard forms of work; workers with more than 20 hours per week as well as workers who do not exceed 10 hours per week, that suggests a growth in microjobs (Soru, 2022).

Related to this transformation in the labour market composition, the second trend concerns the emergence of what could be considered new labour subjectivities, characterized by prioritizing personal fulfilment, individual responsibility, creativity, autonomy, and flexibility at work. This trend has been identified and analysed by some scholars (Huws, 2013; Taylor and Luckman, 2018), who argue that the ongoing wide-ranging transformation in terms of the spread of non-standard forms of work and employment status goes hand in hand with the change of the expectations of what “normal” working behaviour should be. Even though standard employment remains the benchmark against which forms of flexible work are judged (Guest et al. 2006), there are more and more people who place themselves in a different “social imaginary” (Taylor, 2018) for work and working lives. These new work identities have been linked to the process of individualization, the extension of the entrepreneurial ideology and the normative discourses and conceptions that come with them (Serrano et al., 2012; Vallas and Christin, 2018) and are characterized by prioritizing self-fulfilment -the “labour of love” narrative (Demetry, 2017). This “flavour of

self-management” (Pérez Zapata et al., 2016:36) also involves the individualized acceptance of market risks. As Neff et al. (2005:309) put it, “the new economy’s cutting edge -and its true social innovation- is the production of a new labour force that is more ‘entrepreneurial’ than previous generations of workers”. Some researchers deem these new conceptions of the employment relation and work identities to represent the qualities required to survive in the current work and employment circumstances (Taylor, 2018; Vallas and Christin, 2018). Moreover, it has been suggested that the figure of the artist or creative maker constitutes the archetype of this new entrepreneurial ideal of work (Taylor, 2018); there has been a discursive drift through which work identities and practices in the arts and culture industries have become associated with contemporary work more generally, through the figure of the entrepreneur (Neff et al., 2005; Taylor and Luckman, 2018). Possibly because the precariousness of cultural and artistic careers has spread to other sectors, creative work practices have become a model of behaviour for freelancers or the self-employed, shaping working lives beyond the arts and culture industries. These practices would include the resource to combine several jobs to balance passion with economic sustainability, common in artistic careers (Bamberry and Campbell, 2012).

The third trend is the development of the platform economy (Casilli et al., 2019; Brodersen and Martínez, 2020; Eurofound, 2020; Piasna et al., 2020). Indeed, most of the literature finds that a majority of platform workers use their earnings to supplement other income sources. While it has been demonstrated that digital platforms increase casualization and help undermine the standard employment relationship (Huws, 2013; Wood et al. 2019), it can also be argued that in a labour context such as the current one, they allow many workers to find alternative work arrangements when traditional employment is not available. By acting as intermediaries for the supply and demand of fragmented work (Valenduc, 2019), offering a high degree of spatial and temporal flexibility (Wood et al., 2019), and applying relaxed personnel selection criteria (Vallas and Schor, 2020), platforms generate job opportunities that facilitate -and even encourage- workers to diversify and multiply their paid activities.

These three new trends open up new research questions regarding the motivations of people who combine multiple activities. The literature on these topics tends to link the motivations to the alternative between push/pull factors (McClelland, 1958; Hakim, 1989; Baruch and Altman, 2016), which contrasts push factors linked to insufficient economic resources or the search for employment stability with factors of attraction linked to an expressive sphere, the construction of a professional identity, the valorization of one’s skills and the search for autonomy. The analysis of the effects proposes a further dichotomy between depletion and enrichment (Campion et al., 2020; Conen and Stein, 2021), where the first concept mainly refers to the difficulties of managing multiple roles, particularly in terms of the relationship between life and work times and the possible damage to mental and physical health, while the enrichment identify the possibility of acquiring new skills, of demonstrating one’s aptitudes and of receiving gratifications from one’s work. The MJH literature tends to associate push motivations with depletion effects and pull factors with enrichment processes (Mori et al. 2022). In the light of the transformations of MJHs personal features, our research asks whether this has also led to a multiplication of the related motivational profiles.

3. Multiple Jobholding in numbers: the analysis of official statistics

The impact of these transformations on the phenomenon of MJH is evident from the analysis of official statistics, which show an increase in MJHs and a change in their profile. The first interesting figure concerns historical dynamics: in 1995 there were just 5 million people with double jobs in Europe, which became 7,846,000 in 2019⁴ (Labour Force Survey, EU-15 data). Within the European Union, there are significant differences between countries. Eurostat (2018 data)

⁴ The data reported refer to 2019 because, at the time of the analysis, it was the most recent data that allowed to make a comparative analysis between European countries.

estimates that people with double jobs represent 4.3% of employed people in the EU-15, a percentage that reaches its peak in Nordic Countries, while Mediterranean countries show lower values.

As regards the five countries that are the subject of our analysis, the 2019 Eurostat-Labor Force Survey microdata show the following distribution, which reflects the trends of their geographical areas: Bulgaria 0.4%, Italy 1.5%, Spain 2.5%, France 4.7%, Germany 5.4%. It can be hypothesized that this gap is to a large extent attributable to the structural relevance of informal work in Mediterranean and Eastern countries, which causes an underestimation of the phenomenon.

Statistics prove to be more useful for analysing the socio-demographic characteristics of MJHs. In fact, compared with the past, today these workers are educated (44.3% of the double-employed are university graduates, EU-28 average) and the share of double-employment is higher among women than men (4.5% of women vs 3.7% of men at the EU-28 level). The only figure that shows continuity is age, with a prevalence in the central class: at the EU-28 level, it goes from 3.5% of employed people in the 15-24 age range, to 4.2% in the 25-54 and 3.8% from 55 onwards.

Regarding the type of professional activity, the EU-15 shows a drop in dual work between 2005 and 2019 both among managers (from 7.7% to 5.9%) and office workers (from 10.4% to 8.7%) and in manual work, while it increases among professionals (intellectual and scientific professions from 21.4% to 28%; intermediate technical professions from 17.1% to 17.5%; professions in commercial activities and services from 13.8% to 17%). As for the ratio between employees and self-employed, on the EU-15 average, the double-employed for whom self-employment is their first job are 15.1%; this percentage rises to 36.7% if self-employment in the second job is considered (2019 data). The prevailing combination is of two dependent jobs and is quite stable (51.2% in 1995 and 56.3% in 2019), while the second option is dependent work as the first job and self-employment as the second (30.4% in 1995 and 28.6% in 2019).

Finally, the Labour Force Survey data (2019) allow for an analysis of working hours. On average, the commitment in the second job in the EU-27 is 11.3 hours per week; among women it is less (EU-27 average 10.4 vs 12.3 men), while the self-employed are engaged in second jobs for longer than employees (12.4 hours vs 10.5). It must be highlighted that the difference between those who work full-time or part-time in their first job has little effect on the duration of their second job: on the EU-27 average, full-time workers in their first job are engaged on average 11.4 hours in their second job vs 11.2 of those with a first part-time job.

In summary, the analysis of data on MJH in Europe confirms the growth of multiple jobs and the transformations in the profile of the MJHs (mostly adult, educated, childless women who work as professionals or in the personal services sector). At the same time, there are signs - including those coming from surveys on platform work - of the composition of several fragmented, often irregular activities that continue to escape official surveys. This requires both more refined tools for detecting multi-employment and a qualitative study of the different profiles of multi-employment, also in terms of motivation.

4. The research design

The empirical material analysed for this article emerged from the fieldwork of the *SWIRL-Slash Workers and Industrial Relations* project, which took place between March 2019 and April 2021 in five European countries, Italy, Bulgaria, France, Germany and Spain. One of the specific objectives was to conduct an in-depth analysis of the profiles, motivations, needs and aspirations of workers who combine more than one job. Following this objective and considering each country's diversity, the team designed a methodological guide for open-ended qualitative interviews with MJHs. These instructions aimed to guide and unify the analysis in the different countries by providing standard criteria for selecting interviewees, a grid for the interviews, and a proposal for the country reports' structure. According to the guide, the interviews should develop around different areas, two of them relevant to our research question:

- A) Socio-professional profiles and labour situations: worker's socio-professional profile; the reasons that explain their status as MJH; labour situation; companies/platform(s) where they work.
- B) Workers' self-perception and assessment of their situation: results and consequences of being an MJH; perception of strengths and weaknesses of being an MJH; self-perception; need/difficulty for work-life balance; perception of COVID-19 crisis.

The guide stipulated conducting at least 20 interviews per country with MJH aged 30 to 49 with secondary or higher education, as the above-mentioned statistics show that today's multiple jobholding is more frequent among educated workers. The guide recommended men/female parity even if we were aware that the share of MJH is higher among women than men. Moreover, it suggested that the sample included a variety of profiles following two axes: required skills (high, medium and unskilled jobs) and modality of the jobs (in order to reach platform workers): all online (virtual/remote services); all offline (physical/local services) and combined online/offline. Based on this criterion, the interviews were distributed as follows: 14 MJH online-remote; 47 offline- local MJH and 30 MJH combining online and offline work. The majority of them (73 vs 28) hold medium or high-skilled jobs, as the profiles required having secondary or higher education.

The fieldwork was completed between June and November 2020, that is, within the COVID-19 pandemic context with restrictive health-related measures and reduced social contact possibilities. Consequently, most interviews were held online or by phone and digitally recorded. The project team conducted a total of 101 interviews (52 with women and 49 with men) with the following distribution among the five European countries of the consortium: 20 interviews in Bulgaria, 17 interviews in France, 15 interviews in Germany, 28 interviews in Italy and 21 interviews in Spain⁵. Each partner developed a country-based content or discourse analysis of their country's interviews and prepared a national report.

The authors performed a secondary analysis of the interviews reported in the five national reports, identifying common patterns and divergences. The aim was not to make a comparative analysis. Being an exploratory study of an under-researched phenomenon, the priority was to achieve the greatest possible diversity of profiles and motivations that frame and characterize the condition of MJHs at the present time.

5. Contemporary Multiple Jobholding: Diverse and overlapping motivations and identities

The current MJHs are a heterogeneous category with many different circumstances, motivations, and work identities that encourage them to take up additional jobs. Among our interviewees, there is, for example, an immigrant woman in Germany who survives by combining an unregistered job as a kitchen assistant in a restaurant with cleaning tasks through a digital platform. At the other end, there is the case of a Bulgarian woman with a permanent job in a pharmaceutical company who, to develop her creative inclinations, works as a freelance designer of marketing campaigns.

As mentioned in the theoretical framework, most studies that have empirically addressed MJH have condensed this multifaceted phenomenon into two broad narratives about why people work several jobs, based on the push versus pull factors motivation framework (Campion et al., 2020; Conen and Buschoff, 2021; Dickey et al., 2011). Although this dichotomous classification has some limitations (see, for example, Bamberly and Campbell 2012), it provides a good analytical framework for a first approach to a phenomenon as complex and multidimensional as that of the MJH. Our qualitative analysis of the interview data also takes this classification as its starting point. We organize the motivations behind the decision to work multiple jobs into two distinct categories: financial reasons and what we have called "passionate" justifications. Based on this

⁵ The interviews codes follow this pattern: BG for Belgium, FR for FR, DE for Germany, IT for Italy and ES for Spain; m for male, f for female.

classification, we analyse the interpretative frameworks that MJHs use to legitimate or problematize their current job situation in each category, to capture the complexity of their labour identities and the way they are interwoven with the different meanings and implications that labour market flexibility and fragmentation have for these workers.

5.1. Financial reasons

“For me, being MJH is a matter of necessity” (IT_2. Male. Project manager /Translator).

The financial reasons stress the importance of economic factors as the main driver behind engaging in different paid activities. This category includes MJHs with very diverse circumstances and motivations which could be positioned on a continuum from the strict need to combine jobs to survive, to the desire to obtain extra income for hobbies or unpredictable expenses. In an intermediate position would be those for whom the additional paid employment constitutes a safety net if possible adverse circumstances arise in the main activity.

5.1.1. Survival strategy

For most interviewees who argue financial reasons for engaging in an extra job, becoming an MJH was not a choice; it is more of a survival strategy. It is driven by necessity, a strategy to tackle financial constraints to make ends meet. These MJHs are characterized by labour trajectories that follow the traditional scheme of stringing together jobs one by one and have only recently combined more than one job. They are, therefore, unexpected and involuntary MJHs, pushed by a necessity to compensate for the unpredictable or non-sufficient income provided by their main job. The following extracts, highlighting the involuntary nature of their status as MJHs, show the most common stance of the workers in this category:

Of course, you start that, you start out of necessity not because you want to... if you have all your needs covered with just one job, what need is there to have two? (ES_5. Male. Bicycle mechanic / Theatrical and artistic assemblies).

I do this solely because I have to (FR_2. Male. Food delivery rider)

I was just forced to find an option to have additional income with which to live in a normal way, although in reality – we’re still below normal (BG_1. Male. Musician / Bartender / Cook / Construction and repair work).

There seem to be two main situations that lead to working multiple jobs as a survival strategy. The first one is structural precariousness. As the last verbatim reflects, this circumstance forced some interviewees to get involved in a patchwork of jobs to make ends meet. The interviewee is a 45-year-old man with a Bachelor’s degree who currently works as a bagpiper and does construction and repair work. His main activity does not provide enough income to cover the family’s economic needs, since: *“my salary is a little above the minimum wage for the country, which is highly insufficient for the support of a family of four”* (BG_1). The structural precariousness also explains the condition of MJH to which IT_4 (female. Journalist / TV author / Video game design teacher / Video game consultant) has been pushed:

I’m a single mom because my daughter’s father died eight years ago. I no longer have parents. I don’t have a family network. I have to manage and support my daughter alone. I certainly couldn’t have done it with journalistic work alone, but this job wouldn’t have been enough to support me even without a daughter (IT_4. Female. Journalist / TV author / Video game design teacher / Video game consultant)

Finally, the case of DE_1 (female. Cleaner via Helpling.de platform / Kitchen assistant), an Argentine immigrant in Germany, shows how precariousness can overlap – and indeed be intensified – with other vulnerable situations, accentuating the need to engage in additional paid activities. Although trained as an actress and having a university degree in teaching theatre, her imperfect knowledge of the language made it difficult for her to find work. To support herself, she has to

take on several cleaning jobs through the platform Helpling and supplements this income with a job working as a kitchen assistant at a Spanish restaurant as a non-registered employee.

The 2007-2008 downturn's effect on employment was also cited by some interviewees as a trigger for their precarious situation and, therefore, their switch to MJH. The financial crisis fuelled the use of non-standard work and employment models by companies, causing the "fissuring" of the workplace (Weil, 2014) and fostering job insecurity. These circumstances have led many workers to need to engage in additional paid activities. This is the case of BG_5 (female. Freelance translator / Lecturer / Consultant), who used to work only as a consultant, but the crisis marked a turning point: *"The crisis in 2008 led to a reduction in the company's activities, the company which we established with friends in 2000. I had a lot of time. This made me start looking for an extra job. I had to find a way to increase my income so that we could at least survive"* (BG_5). She currently combines the job in this company with those of a lecturer and translator, both online and offline. Likewise, for FR_3 (female. Administrative secretary / Micro-worker), a 27-year-old woman who currently combines her part-time employment as an administrative secretary with tasks as online micro-worker: *"When my boss fired me, he said he wanted to keep me as a self-employed subcontractor (auto-entrepreneur). For him, it meant smaller payroll taxes and cheaper labour. He promised me a lot of contacts. In the end, he hired me for two days a week, as I still had unemployment benefits"* (FR_3. Female. Administrative secretary / Micro-worker).

The second type of circumstances that push people to resort to an extra job as a survival plan are usually temporary, and are due to changes in the family life cycle. Some interviewees, most of whom have a job that, under normal conditions, would allow them an almost adequate standard of living, relate their decision to become MJHs with specific family circumstances that require increasing their income during a certain period. ES_8 (male. Engineer / Translator via Upwork platform) has a full-time job as a software programmer with a salary that allows him to live adequately; however, *"everything kind of exploded when we bought the house, in 2016. We bought the house and I was in the red for the first time in my life, so I was looking for ways to earn extra money because we had a lot of expenses"* (ES_8. Male. Engineer / Translator via Upwork platform). The need to pay the mortgage on his house led him to register in the Upwork platform to carry out translations. As soon as he managed to overcome this specific need to increase income, he left the second job.

Becoming a parent and other family changes can also force the respondents to search for better financial options and thus underpin the need to carry out multiple activities:

The main motivation is financial - it is important for my child to be okay, not to be miserable and not make ends meet (...). The first job, as a public one, is safer (...). However, the income isn't enough, especially as a parent. The choice is completely different. It's one thing to be alone, a free electron; it's quite another to be responsible for another person. (BG_6. Female. Assistant director / Data entry)

In short, according to our informants, two main types of circumstances lead to holding multiple jobs as a survival strategy: extreme precariousness and a specific and temporary need to increase income. Even though the triggers are very different, both groups share a pressing financial need as the main reason for holding more than one job. In no case is a situation they have actively sought, but rather a temporary one. They begin out of necessity, and most of them intend to leave the multiple job scenario as soon as their economic resources allow for it. Even BG_1, whose case could be considered highly precarious, expects to improve his situation over time and thus avoid having to supplement his income, as illustrated by the following statement: *«I continue to combine work by profession (as a bagpiper) with coercive work (as a master) until times are better (note on int.: higher incomes) in the main job»* (BG_1 Male. Musician / Bartender / Cook / Construction and repair work).

5.1.2. Safety net

Among those who justify their status as MJHs on financial grounds, one group deems having more than one job as a sort of safety net. We can distinguish two reasons. For some interviewees, their secondary job is insurance against possible adverse circumstances in their main activity. The interviewees who fit this profile have a relatively stable first activity that provides them with sufficient income to make ends meet, but they are concerned about its continuity. Rather than looking

for extra income, what they seek is to guarantee the continuity of their income. This type of justification emerges mainly in interviews from Italy and Spain. In these countries, the precariousness and unemployment rates are high; therefore, protection against these contingencies is highly valued. The primary advantage highlighted by these workers is the economic security provided by having several sources of income. Cases IT_7 (female. E-commerce / Journalist / Copywriter) and ES_7 (male. Quality processes in the automotive industry / Psychologist via Psonrie platform) exemplify this rationale. IT_7 a 28-year-old e-commerce analyst, journalist and copywriter, considers her involvement in various jobs as a strategy to diversify risk:

In today's world, one must always have a plan B because the job is always uncertain: mine is indeed open-ended. Nothing may happen to you, but with the world we live now, it is very uncertain. One must always have a plan B and a Plan C to be able to play in case something goes wrong. In my opinion, it's too risky to know how to do just one thing; you need to know how to do more than one (IT_7. Female. E-commerce / Journalist / Copywriter).

ES_7 exhibits a similar rationale. Although he has an open-ended contract in the auto industry, he still feels his continuity in that job threatened by labour market insecurity. This motivates him to continue combining this job with another professional activity as a freelance psychologist through the Psonrie platform:

For me, the strength is that it gives me security. That's what I was saying before, it gives me that security so if one of them goes wrong, such as the economy is, at least the other one will continue to bring home some money and I won't be unemployed for a year and a half or a year. That does give me security, and I think that's the strong point and the one that motivates me to continue with both (ES_7. Male. Quality processes in the automotive industry / Psychologist via Psonrie platform).

The second reasoning related to MJH as a safety net is quite different. It is linked to what some authors (Folta et al., 2010; Atherton et al., 2016) have defined as hybrid entrepreneurship in reference to workers who seek to rely on primary employment's financial security and stability while they achieve the viability of another entrepreneurial activity that they have just started. To ensure a steady income, they retain their primary jobs, either as a transition strategy or as part of a longer-term plan. As Atherton et al. (2016) have observed, hybrid entrepreneurship does not have to be just a first step towards self-employment; it can also be a means to make it sustainable. An example is that of BG_7 (female. Financier / Yoga instructor / Essential Oil Representative), whose main job is in the financial sector with a permanent contract, while she tries to consolidate the two activities -yoga instructor and aromatherapist- that she does for pleasure as a business. Her description of how she is experiencing the transition reflects this account well:

It is risky, and I am afraid. I have to throw myself in like Alice in Wonderland - and say, ok, I'm ready to lose everything - let me try this. But I'm not prepared. At this stage, I prefer to have a stable job, which has a contract, with a salary every month - on a specific day and for this (note on the int. the two other professions) to be extra (BG_7. Female. Financier / Yoga instructor / Essential Oil Representative).

5.1.3. Pin money

There is a third financial driver that, although lesser, is worth considering. It is linked to the desire to add to the primary activity's income, defined as satisfactory and more than sufficient to live. The extra income is allocated to hobbies and unpredictable expenses. An example could be that of IT_8 (male. Finance analyst / English teacher). He holds a full-time, open-ended contract in a bank. He also works around 20 hours per week as an English teacher as a way to top up the monthly household income: *"The money and the stakes you're referring to, that is, if you had to stop out of the blue, you would have a sharp decline, yes, but on extra consumptions, on ancillary costs, from a tangible point of view"* (IT_8). MJHs who fit into this category highlight the usefulness of digital platforms to find small and flexible activities to top up the monthly income and defray extraordinary expenses. IT_1 (female. University student / Management of AirBnB apartments / Survey online) is registered on more than 20 platforms providing surveys online; her comment about someone else shows that she is enthusiastic about the possibilities they offer to earn extra income:

“there’s this lady in Naples, sorry for telling it in this way, who married two daughters with the money from online surveys!!” (IT_1. Female. University student / Management of AirBnB apartments / Survey online).

5.2. “Passionate” justifications

Somehow, I’m doing what I always wanted to do. (ES_2 male. Artist-Musician / Educational workshops / Part-time university lecturer).

This profile is the true reflection of the emergence of new norms, aspirations and expectations attached to work and working lives. The common element in this cluster of MJHs can be described as “passion”. They search for personal development at work through “occupational callings” (Berg et al. 2010), that is, jobs they feel are central to their identity and value as intrinsically enjoyable and meaningful. When questioned, these interviewees present their status of MJHs as a personal decision; they have chosen to combine several jobs to turn at least one into an outlet for fulfilment. Although the economic reason is always present, their primary motivation is not financial, but to enrich their work experience by developing their creativity, artistic concerns or vocational activity. The remuneration they seek is more in terms of identity than economic. Our interviews show two types of profiles.

5.2.1. “Double life”

The most widespread profile among the so-called “passionate” MJHs is that of those who try to find the balance between self-fulfilment at work and economic sustainability by adopting a “double life” as described by Taylor and Littleton (2012). It is a strategy of hedging risks, whereby workers seek to combine a primary job that pays the bills and guarantees adequate living conditions, with an additional meaningful activity that cannot provide them with sufficient income despite being their priority. Within this profile, three slightly different rationales can be distinguished from the role and meaning attributed to the second job.

In the first case, the priority is to satisfy the will to perform the work they like, the one that is a source of satisfaction and meaning for them. However, often the meaningful job does not guarantee adequate income or enough working hours. These circumstances necessitate getting involved in another work activity that usually becomes the main job regarding economic relevance. Economic motivation intersects with the pursuit of personal fulfilment, but according to our interviewees, the latter is the priority. As we will see, there is a notable presence in this profile of MJHs who perform at least one of their jobs in the arts, entertainment or culture industries. For example, IT_5 (female. Journalist / Pilates teacher) works as a Pilates teacher in a sports centre in order to supplement her income as a journalist. She considers journalism a central part of her identity, as she clearly states: *“...for me doing something I don’t like, I cope really badly: not a bit badly, really badly! [...] For me, my profession is as a journalist. The other one was a fall-back I ran into at some point!”* (IT_5. Female. Journalist / Pilates teacher).

Another interesting case that fits into this rationale is that of ES_2. When he finished his architecture degree, he started a studio with two other colleagues and combined it with performances with a musical group on weekends. For him, *“music was like an escape route”* (ES_2 male. Artist-Musician / Educational workshops / Part-time university lecturer). In 2008, coinciding with a sharp reduction in activity in the architecture studio due to the financial crisis, he began working as a part-time university lecturer. After the studio closed in 2012, he decided to focus on the activity that really satisfied him and started a musical production and performance project that has since become his main activity: *“for me, music’s no longer a liberation from the architecture. It’s already my main field of practice [...] I feel fortunate, I can work on what I like and have a fairly decent life economically”* (ES_2. Male. Artist-Musician / Educational workshops / Part-time university lecturer). To make this feasible, he currently combines his musical project with part-time university teaching, which allows him *“to pay for the self-employment (fee), pay the apartment, have basic*

expenses covered and then be able to develop artistic practice outside the university” (ES_2. Male. Artist-Musician / Educational workshops / Part-time university lecturer).

The priority of keeping the meaningful and enjoyable job also plays a crucial role in ES_6 (male. Electrician / DJ)'s decision to engage in more than one job. Besides, this case makes the importance of the dimension of change evident -in terms of stages of the life course and the current changing labour market conditions- to understand MJH. ES_6 has been combining his occupation as a DJ throughout his working life, which is the activity he feels identified with and enjoys, with various other jobs. The main reason that has always led him to get involved in other jobs is that a DJ's job must necessarily be done part-time and with atypical schedules (weekend evenings). At first, he could make a living from this job since it paid well, but as he explains: *“I was bored during the weekdays, and then I asked for a job at my sister's store”*. He ended up working long hours, which he could do because he still had no family: *“It was 65 hours a week or something like that. It was leaving one thing and running to the other [...] I lived alone because in another case it would have been impossible”* (ES_6. Male. Electrician / DJ). Nowadays, his situation has changed considerably: the job of a DJ is no longer well paid, so to make a living, he has to combine it with a full-time job as an electrician, as he is married and has two daughters. These changes have led him to evaluate his situation differently and even to question the viability of maintaining his vocational job:

If I had excellent working conditions that were well paid, then the most normal thing is that I would work from Monday to Friday, which most of us want. However, since it's not like that, then I'm forced to do extra. Nevertheless, that extra [...] I like, and it's actually the profession I'd like to practice, but logically a disc jockey doesn't have much to do on a Monday morning at eight o'clock, does he? Nor on a Tuesday at three o'clock in the afternoon, I say. So, you have to look for an extra something (ES 6. Male. Electrician / DJ).

As the previous excerpt shows, the double life strategy can be hindered if reconciling work and family is also necessary. In such cases, the autonomy and flexibility offered by platforms may enable all the activities to be compatible. IT_9 (female. Retail / Customer service / Chef for catering / Food blogger) exemplifies the benefits that many of our interviewees attribute to platform work. She takes advantage of the opportunity to combine several jobs and family life that working for Prontopro (a platform for finding professional services, leader in Italy and expanding internationally) provides:

The alternative provided by the catering service was really a liberation because I understood that I could thus reconcile my need and my passion for cooking for others and in any case to earn money with rhythms and schedules that were well reconciled with life as a full-time employee and with my family. In any case, I worked either on Saturdays and Sundays or during the holidays, so it didn't cause me any problems. Of course, I worked from Monday to Friday all day and Saturday and Sunday. Instead of resting, I was in the kitchen. Still, it's different tiredness because a) you do it for yourself and b) you do something you really like and always with the desire always to improve more (IT_9. Female. Retail / Customer service / Chef for catering / Food blogger).

The second variant is that of those for whom the trigger to become MJHs is a deep dissatisfaction with the main job. The majority of those who comprise this variant are people with mostly stable work, which provides them with an entire or partial livelihood but is not satisfying. Due to this, they have decided to undertake a second activity to seek to develop their creativity, interests, or vocation; they seek self-realization through this secondary activity. Often, it is this second activity that enables them to cope with an un motivating main job. As one of our interviewees expressed, *“it's true that there are times when we have to look for things that make us happy to endure coming in on Monday”* (ES_4. Female. Telecommunication company / Thematic events for children).

An interesting example is that of ES_1 (female. Delivery company fleet management / Yoga instructor). She has a vocational MJH profile, with a career path characterized by diversity (graphic design, digital marketing, waitress...). Her first activity (fleet management) helps pay the bills, but she is not passionate about it. As she explains: *“It's a stable activity for me, where I'm well, where I'm happy, where I don't develop professionally either in things that I would say that interest me a*

lot". Yoga classes, an activity that provides her with the fulfilment of core personal values and meaning, allow her to disconnect:

Well, it helps me a lot to switch the chip. I go out and have a hard day's work at [courier's name]. I arrive and sit down in the yoga class. It changes me quickly, I see the students, and I'm already in something else, and it helps me to finish the day in a different way (...) as if I were balancing one thing with the other (...) as if they were rescuing each other (ES_1. Female. Delivery company fleet management / Yoga instructor).

In some cases, the interviewees have been able to identify the trigger for their decision to get involved in their second activity. ES_4 decided to start a new business venture organizing parties for children with tepees, when she began to have problems in her main job in a large telecommunications company: "... *It was a hard moment at work [...] my job pays the mortgage, but it doesn't complement me, it doesn't make me feel fulfilled. It's a complicated job that requires a lot of concentration, but you have to see something emotional to stay motivated. And I ran out of everything at that moment; that's where tepees came from*" (ES_4. Female. Telecommunication company / Thematic events for children). The second job allows her to disconnect, organize herself and express her creativity: "...*tepees allow me to be creative, to do things the way I want, to adapt myself as I think I should... it gives me freedom in terms of schedule, organization, decision making..., it gives me... I don't know, creativity, everything. I have no limits; with the tepees, I can say yes or no to everything*" (ES_4. Female. Telecommunication company / Thematic events for children).

Finally, there is a third modality where the worker's agency plays a less relevant role. Some interviewees explain how their MJH status also responds to the undertaking of a leisure activity or one that, at first, was done for pleasure but eventually became financially viable, frequently by chance, without any prior intention of generating an additional source of income. BG_4 (male. Hairdresser / IT person) combines his usual position as a hairdresser with an old hobby that has ended up becoming paid employment. As he explains, this situation was never deliberately sought:

It simply came by accident, working in two places. I have a friend who ran a computer company and said there were no people to work for him. I started with the idea of helping him. Computers have always been my hobby, and I've always been interested. So, things went more professionally, and I stayed to work in the company. But I've never stopped hairdressing because I just really like it. (BG_4. Male. Hairdresser / IT person)

A very similar case is that of ES_9 (female. Shop assistant and make-up artist / Tourist apartments / Crochet craftswoman). She faces a radical reduction in activity in the tourist company where she works by turning an old hobby, creating handicraft dolls, into a business. She clearly expresses something that appears implicit in the comments of most of the MJHs included in this category: "*I would love to be able to live off it but..., I don't lose hope*" (ES_9. Female. Shop assistant and make-up artist / Tourist apartments / Crochet craftswoman). That is, the desire for a working future with only one activity, the one that currently plays a secondary role economically but that they find enjoyable and meaningful; the activity with which they feel identified.

5.2.2. Multi-interest

A second, smaller, profile is that of those who prioritize diversity in work tasks. This category is composed of vocational MJHs with a predominantly expressive conception of work. Their careers have always been marked by the permanent overlapping of several jobs in different fields. They do not just look for meaning and purpose in their work experience; they seek, above all, variety. As Caza et al. (2018) have also observed, some people have more than one core work identity and, to express their true selves through their careers, choose to hold multiple jobs. This allows them to develop their varied interests or passions. Thus, they frame their status as a choice, as an individual decision to make a biographical project of self-realization viable. Some of their arguments are: "*no day is the same as the other*" (IT_6. Female. Teacher/Therapist / Court consultant / Psychological counsellor); "*I like to do multiple things, discover new tools, learn and be able to do new stuff that*

way” (FR_1. Male. Food delivery rider), or “I’ll never be happy doing just one thing (ES_3. Female. Programmer / Artistic practices / Craftswoman). In short, according to their narratives, they feel happier dividing their time between two or more different jobs. In this category, highly qualified creative workers tend to be the most predominant.

The respondents BG_2 and ES_5 are good examples of this profile. BG_2 has always worked on many things simultaneously, but he has never had one single job. He declares that he hates routine and frames his situation in opposition to economic incentives. Doing several things simultaneously “*is definitely not just a matter of money*” (BG_2. Male. Sound engineer / DJ / Book restorer). His main jobs are as a freelance journalist, music editor and bookbinder, and he has recently started to restore books. He explains that he does it because he is interested and because of each job’s development opportunities. ES_5 owns a bicycle repair shop and also works as a freelancer in theatrical and artistic assemblies (lights, sound, scenery). Although expressed differently, his arguments are very similar to those of BG_2:

...those who are restless are more likely to enter into this dynamic, those who are not, or who aren’t interested in anything other than making it to the end of the week or ends meet, or whatever, will not look for alternatives other than what they have (...) However, if you’re a little restless, you’re restless about things, about... different areas, about anything, about activities, about working, about being active, well, it’s easier for you to be that cannon fodder (ES_5. Male. Bicycle mechanic / Theatrical and artistic assemblies).

Indeed, these two cases share some common features with other workers with this profile: they merge their status into their identity as a whole. Their narratives reflect that pluriactivity and entrepreneurial attitudes lie at the core of their self-perception as workers. They present themselves as restless people who like to be active and show a wide range of concerns and diverse skills:

My view of life is a little different – something always has to be done. Whether it be construction, repairs, carpentry, real estate transactions, catering - these are already nuances. One should not sit and do nothing (BG_3. Male. Food delivery / Work in car-washing centre).

I’m a very curious person, I like to learn many things, um... I’m not afraid to try new things, and that’s in my personality, and I think you can see that in all the things I do (ES_3. Female. Programmer / Artistic practices / Craftswoman).

There are some things that led to my work situation, in part suffered, in part sought. I don’t like whining; it’s unproductive. I define myself as autonomous, maybe not my own boss, but “subordinate to myself”. (IT_3. Male. Soccer coach / University researcher / Workers at Venice Biennale)

Moreover, as seen from the previous excerpts, these interviewees frequently use language that reproduces the rhetoric of the entrepreneurial subjectivity when they express their relationship with work. Thus, terms such as creativity, curiosity, work engagement, capacity to adapt, proactivity, or temperance are frequent when explaining their work situation, always based on personal traits.

6. Discussion and conclusion

Over the last few years, the reality of MJHs seems to be gaining some space in public debate and academic research as the number of people with two (or more) jobs increases in the European Union. This upward tendency (despite significant differences between countries) seems more prominent in young adults and middle age educated workers and, particularly, women (Labour Force Survey EU-15 data) and it may be connected to three trends: the increasing flexibility and fragmentation of employment, the extension of digital platforms and the emergence of new labour identities, as previously described. Despite this growing attention, there are still some important gaps in the MJH literature that need to be addressed to have a better understanding of these processes.

In this line, our article analyses a specific face of the contemporary MJH. Based on 101 in-depth interviews with a diversified sample of workers from five European countries, it focuses on

the motivations leading some people to hold more than one job in the current labour context. The use of this qualitative approach is an added value to the field as it has rarely been used, despite its richness, to analyse the motivations and experiences of these workers. As a result, this article's contribution to the literature on new ways of understanding and performing work is threefold.

First, we have observed that the complex mix of push and pull factors, revealed by the narratives of our interviewees, suggests the need to move forward from the dichotomous classification of the MJHs proposed by most of the literature on this phenomenon. With the exception of those in the "survival strategy" category, most of our interviewees could fit into both groups. Their reasons and justifications often mix together, with different degrees of importance and sometimes in unusual ways, the defining features of both categories. Consistent with Conen and Stein (2021), our findings confirm the relevance of economic factors in the decision to combine multiple paid activities. However, financial reasons are not always present, and when they are, they often overlap with other non-pecuniary motives. As Bamberly and Campbell (2021) put it, limiting the discussion to just two main categories makes it difficult to understand such a multidimensional phenomenon in depth.

Second, our study confirms that the analysis of MJH has to be contextualized in relation to platform economy. The fact that many of our interviewees (online and/or combining online and offline jobs) have accessed their additional job through platforms allowed us to analyse the relationship between digital economy and MJH, widely suggested by the literature (Casilli et al., 2019; Brodersen and Martínez, 2020; Eurofound, 2020; Piasna et al. 2020). Platforms generate job opportunities that allow workers to diversify their paid activities more easily, either due to financial necessity (Ilsoe et al. 2021) or to monetize passions and interests (Caza et al. 2018). Indeed, our results indicate that the use of digital platforms to find an additional job or make several jobs compatible is transversal to the motivations for holding multiple jobs. Among our interviewees, some have resorted to platforms to find additional jobs for financial reasons, either to come across small and flexible activities to top up their monthly income or to find a way out of unemployment. Other cases show that platforms are considered handy to undertake "occupational callings". Regardless of the reasons underpinning worker's decision to resort to platforms, the majority positively value the autonomy and flexibility offered by this labour modality. Indeed, most of our interviewees declare that the ability to self-manage time and work offered by platforms is what has enabled them to make the second or third activity compatible with the primary one.

And third, our findings highlight the importance of analysing MJH considering the combined effect of the degradation and hybridization of forms of employment and the emergence of new labour identities. In this sense, our research provides insights into an emerging labour market trend. Our interviewees' positions and motivations suggest that the increasingly widespread idea that traditional careers are becoming a vestige of the past makes people expect more from their work than financial rewards and promotions (Berg et al., 2010). In this sense, we can think about MJHs as "the manifestation of a deep cultural change that is affecting both employment forms and the ways workers interpret their experiences and shape their subjectivity" (Murgia and Pulignano, 2021:1355). On the one hand, we have provided evidence that the motivations and reasonings of most of our interviewees represent, to a greater or lesser extent, the "new mystique" attached to work (Taylor, 2015), traditionally typical of the arts, entertainment, or culture industries, which now affects a growing number of workers in all sectors. On the other hand, their narratives and labour practices connect this "new mystique" to the extension of non-standard forms of employment and, consequently, to the increase in precariousness (Piasna et al., 2020). In this regard, as Conen (2020) has also argued, we have observed that income insufficiency and insecurity, employment uncertainty, and the increasing deterioration of the conditions in which work is carried out, frame the experiences and reasonings of the new MJH. Given these trends, the number of workers who have to juggle multiple jobs is expected to increase significantly in the coming years. (Henneckam, 2016).

Based on a very large qualitative sample of interviewees, our study's main contribution has been to provide evidence of the great diversity and complexity of the motivations that lead to working in multiple jobs simultaneously, and of its association with some recent trends in the

labour market. Further research focused on a cross-national perspective may help to delve into this phenomenon, by assessing the influence of the institutional context and specific features of the labour market on the characteristics and dynamics of MJH in different national contexts. Future investigation is also needed to explore the gender dimension of this phenomenon.

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