ORIGAMI

Work Package 3 – Deliverable 3

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CASE STUDY 1

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Hilfr and other platforms for cleaning in private homes in Denmark

This case study is one of two comprising the third deliverable from the Danish team to the ORIGAMI project, WP3. It examines Hilfr, one of the few domestic cleaning platforms in Denmark. While Happy Helper is the largest platform in the Danish domestic cleaning market, Hilfr has attracted the most public attention, as it became the first cleaning platform to sign a collective agreement with a union in 2018. The collective agreement will be examined in detail in the next deliverable from the Danish team (WP4). In this study, we focus on the workers and how the platform shape work practices, professional competencies, and work environment. To enrich this analysis, we will also incorporate insights from a different type of platform in the domestic cleaning sector.

This case study is based on interviews with Hilfr's management, Hilfr cleaners, a cleaner from Happy Helper, a Hilfr customer, and a representative from the trade union 3F (see also section 5 on Research design).

1. Hilfr – History and characteristics

Hilfr made its entry at the Danish platform market in 2017 – two years after the care platform Care.com was launched in Denmark, and one year after the cleaning platforms Happy Helper and Cleady[1]. Hilfr was founded by a group of Danish entrepreneurs who recognized the need for a reliable and fair platform for domestic cleaning services. The founders aimed to create a platform that not only connected customers with cleaners but also ensured fair working conditions for the cleaners. According to Hilf's website under 'About Hilfr': "*Hilfr aims to provide decent working conditions for providers of cleaning services on our platform. As the first cleaning platform in Europe we have negotiated a collective agreement with a trade union (3F)*" (Hilfr 2024).

Since its beginning, Hilfr has undergone significant changes. Initially, it facilitated freelance cleaners known as 'Freelance Hilfrs.' However, after the first agreement with the trade union 3F in 2018, Hilfrs began as self-employed but automatically gained employee status after completing 100 hours of work (called 'Super Hilfr' status), unless they opted out. In 2024, following a management change, the new leadership

[1] Cleady went bankrupt in 2019 and was bought by Happy Helper. In 2024, Happy Helper was acquired by Handyhand (formerly Pinploy) after experiencing financial difficulties and entering reconstruction due to liquidity issues.

signed the Hilfr2 agreement with the trade union 3F, which now ensures all Hilfrs are classified as employees.

Hilfr is the second-largest domestic cleaning platform in Denmark, following Happy Helper (Ilsøe, 2020: 3). However, it remains relatively small[2]. According to the management, in the summer of 2024, Hilfr had around 60–70 active Hilfrs and fewer than 500 active customers, after recently 'hiding'[3] 4,000–5,000 inactive worker accounts (interview with management). The new management's focus is on improving Hilfr before expanding. This includes increasing the booking acceptance rate and ensuring a positive experience for new and existing customers. According to the managers, Hilfr's main competition is not other domestic cleaning platforms but undeclared work in the black economy (*'sort arbejde'*) (interview with management).

Hilfr operates as a private company, with its revenue model based on service fees charged to customers for each booking. According to its website, Hilfr charges the *"by far lowest fee in the market – only 6 percent"* (Hilfr 2025). The platform currently operates primarily in Copenhagen, but also in Aarhus (the second largest city in Denmark).

The platform allows customers to book cleaning services online, choose their preferred cleaner, and schedule appointments at their convenience. Upon visiting the website, users are immediately met with the tagline "Cleaning made easy," followed by the prompt "book cleaning in less than 2 minutes".

The booking process goes as follows: It begins with entering a postal code. In the next step, you are brought to an overview of the profiles of available Hilfrs in your area. You can specify the date and time, the number of hours of cleaning required, and how often you would like cleaning (once, weekly, biweekly, or every fourth month). You can also search for a specific cleaner by name. You will then see a list of cleaners. In the profile overview, each cleaner's profile includes their picture, name, rating (with stars from 1 to 5 and the number of reviews, e.g., "4.3 based on 30 reviews"), hourly price, and the price before tax deductions. There are also symbols indicating if they are a 'Super Hilfr', a 'Top Performer' (without further explanation), or a 'New Hilfr' (which offers a 15% discount). At the bottom of each profile, you can either 'Book Now' or 'Show Calendar'. You can filter search results by 'Super Hilfrs', 'Top Performers', or 'New Hilfrs', but not by e.g. price. When you click on a profile, you will see a personal description and the cleaner's availability for the relevant week. Some profiles include brief descriptions of e.g work experience, while others provide more detailed information, including background, hobbies, and languages spoken. You can also read all reviews by clicking on them. All profiles display an 'ID Approved' label in the corner. After selecting a

[2] Estimating the size of Denmark's housecleaning platform market is challenging. However, based on the number of profiles on major platforms – while accounting for a significant proportion of inactive accounts – Floros (2024: 76) provides a 'guestimate' of between 1,200 and 1,600 active profiles in 2022.
[3] The inactive account were set to not show up in searches.

cleaner and clicking 'Book Now', you will see a price breakdown that includes base pay, social expenses (with a dropdown menu for pension, health insurance, holiday pay, and sick pay), fees, insurance, VAT, total cost, and the total after tax deduction. You can then send a booking request, which will be automatically deleted if not answered within 12 hours of the scheduled start time. Alternatively, you can select an alternative time between 1 and 24 hours. If you are not already a customer, you will need to create an account. This requires providing your name, address, email, phone number, number of bedrooms and bathrooms, total square footage, and payment information. After the booking has been completed, you will receive an email with your booking overview and a request to give feedback on your cleaning experience (rating and a comment).
Hilfr is recognized for its commitment to fair working conditions. On the Hilfr website, under 'Why choose Hilfr' it states: "*Hilfr is a company that aims to raise the bar for the platform economy. Therefore, the provider is at the center of Hilfr, which also makes the platform attractive to the customer.*" (Hilfr 2025). The platform's transparent pricing structure can also be seen as a reflection of its social responsibility, which is important to users. An interview with one of Hilfr's users revealed that this was her main reason for choosing Hilfr over other cleaning platforms. When asked why she had opted for private cleaning through Hilfr, she explained: *"It's because they promoted themselves on a collective agreement, so I was sure that those who are hired have proper conditions and receive fair wages. That was the main thing. I'm not in favor of undeclared work, so I didn't want to find someone through that route. It was very important for me to know that they [the Hilfrs] were being treated properly."* (Interview with Sofie, Hilfr user).

2. Platform governance

Hilfr underwent a management change in 2024. Since March 2024, the company has had a new managing director. As of July 1, 2024, the company is owned by a former board member, who also serves as the current chair of the board. The current management has great expertise in the field as expressed by a trade union representative: *"The people behind Hilfr have professional insight into the cleaning industry and the sector they are part of. These are people who truly understand this profession"*.
In addition to the managing director, the Hilfr team includes a finance director and a freelancer. A significant part of the managing director's role currently involves ensuring that workers feel secure and aligning expectations regarding the availability of work. However, this focus may evolve as the platform grows (interview with management).

The majority of Hilfr's operations relies on traditional management, such as customer support and worker assistance. The platform's primary function is to connect customers with cleaners by showing a list of available cleaners in their area. Part of this process is managed by an algorithm. The algorithm that determines which profiles appear at the top for customers plays a crucial role, as it can influence who gets work and who does not. The criteria for displaying profiles are largely based on the availability shown in the cleaners' calendars (interview with management). Algorithmic management is governed by the collective agreement with the trade union 3F (read more about this in the next deliverable from the Danish team).

3. Platform workers

3.1. Migrant labor: Easy access to flexible work with good working conditions (often for a shorter term)

The cleaners working on the Hilfr platform are predominantly women from Argentina. According to Hilfr's management, men face more challenges in securing work on the platform (interview with Hilfr's management), which may be related to gender norms and perceptions of gendered skills. Hilfr's management attributes this in part to customers' perceptions of safety, noting that many customers feel less comfortable having a man in their home. Public discussions have linked work on cleaning and food delivery platforms to the Working Holiday agreements[4] Denmark has with Chile and Argentina (Scheel, 2019). As a result, an annual quota of 150 permits was introduced in 2021 for Chile and in 2022 for Argentina (Scheel, 2019). The workers we interviewed were also from Argentina. Both had left work and/or studies behind to go travel the world. While they both reside in Denmark with European citizenship, one initially arrived in Denmark on a working holiday visa, later discovering the possibility of dual citizenship when she found out that she could not continue to stay on a working holiday visa. Recruitment often seems to occur through strong national networks, such as Facebook and WhatsApp groups for Argentinians in Denmark. As one of the Hilfrs, Ines, puts it: "*We have WhatsApp groups and recommend jobs*". Both workers we interviewed were introduced to Hilfr through Argentinian friends.

There may be multiple reasons for choosing to work in the gig economy in the cleaning sector in a small Scandinavian country, but in both interviews, the main motivations for choosing Hilfr were easy access combined with favorable working conditions. The barriers to entry in the Danish cleaning sector are low, making it an accessible job opportunity for migrants (Rasmussen 2024: 59). Both Hilfrs had prior experience in

[4] These agreements allow young citizens from these countries to stay in Denmark for up to one year. During their stay, individuals can work for up to six months (Chile) or nine months (Argentina) in non-permanent jobs. They are also permitted to stay in the Schengen area for up to 180 days, divided into two periods of 90 days each.

cleaning (and one in other low-skilled jobs) in Denmark, where working conditions were poorer. As Hilfr worker Isabelle explained: *"I don't know how old Hilfr is, but it was not famous at all. And as soon as I signed up, which was pretty easy, you know, you just need to have your bank account ready, CPR [Danish personal identification number] and just the basics. We didn't have interview by phone, nothing. Everything was online. And I have really nice experiences with customers there. There is a big difference from Happy Helper to Hilfr"*. The differences between Hilfr and the platform Happy Helper will be discussed below. What is important to highlight here is the emphasis on Hilfr's favorable working conditions, including the presence of 'nice customers'. The specific rights associated with being a Super Hilfr (which, at the time the workers we interviewed joined the platform, were exclusive but have since become available to all) were a priority for one of the workers, but not for the other. Nevertheless, the Super Hilfr status appeared to attract workers to the platform through word of mouth. As Isabelle explained when asked about her awareness of the Super Hilfr status: *"I was not aware. I didn't even know what a super Hilfer is. I realized the benefit when I started to have more customers. And then when many Argentinians arrived, they were all asking for it. So, I think now most of them are Super Hilfrs."*. But then she concludes her stream of thought with: *"It's not a big difference"*, suggesting that, for her, the rights associated with employees status does not make a significant difference in practice.

However, the collective agreement may have considerable effects on the broader working environment beyond the rights and benefits it formally regulates, as we will discuss further below.

Workers also mentioned several other advantages, such as flexibility – the ability to choose their own working hours and, if needed, reschedule work for a different day. Additional benefits include employee status with access to a pension (both cleaners interviewed were Super Hilfrs before the Hilfr2 agreement), the ability to set their own hourly wage (above the minimum specified in the collective agreement), and the work's accessibility, even for those with limited Danish or English proficiency. Additionally, they appreciated the variety of workplaces and the fact that cleaning work is done indoors, making it independent of weather conditions (contrary to e.g. work via food delivery platforms or work experiences in Argentina, where one of the interviewees had worked in farming).

The workers we interviewed varied in skill levels and prior work experience, but they shared a common ambition for their (work) life outside of the cleaning sector. For them, working as a cleaner on Hilfr is a temporary job rather than a defining part of their identity: *"I know what I'm doing doesn't define me as a person"*, as Isabelle expresses it. This finding is echoed in the literature on platform housecleaners in Denmark (Floros 2024: 187). Both interviewees view themselves as 'travelers', uninterested in a regular full-time job, and none of them planned to stay in Denmark long term, although one

now has a Danish boyfriend. That many workers on Hilfr are on the platform for a limited amount of time, is also evident from the user interview. Sofie, a Hilfr user, has been using the platform for 2–3 years and has had four different cleaners during this time. She stopped using one due to dissatisfaction, while the others left because they moved abroad (interview with Hilfr user Sofie). This challenge is also reflected in Hilfr profile descriptions, where several cleaners highlight how long they have stayed or emphasize their intention to remain for an extended period to signal reliability and commitment to potential customers. It is unclear whether frequently finding a new cleaner is a concern for users – at least, Sofie does not seem to find it problematic. However, the temporary nature of many workers on the platform suggests that Hilfr operates within a non-standard labor market, where many workers may not seek long-term full-time positions. Long-term work can, however, still become a reality, as seen in the case of Isabelle, who has been cleaning for five years now – across different companies and platforms.

3.2. Hilfr +: Combining multiple platforms for financial sustainability

As part of the sign-up process, Hilfrs select the postal codes they are willing to work in, set their hourly wage, and indicate their availability in a calendar. One worker we interviewed described how she gradually adjusted her preferences, reducing the geographical area she was willing to cover and increasing her hourly rate after receiving a high volume of requests. However, according to Hilfr's management, labor supply tends to exceed demand. The number of hours worked by cleaners on Hilfr varies significantly. Only a few work more than 25 hours per week – and few express interest in working that much. About a quarter of cleaners do fewer than one cleaning per week. The remaining cleaners typically work between 1 and 20 hours per week (interview with Hilfr's management). The two Hilfrs we interviewed worked part time, and both worked on multiple platforms. In addition to Hilfr, both were active on the cleaning platform Happy Helper, and one also worked for the food delivery platform Wolt. Workers may engage with multiple platforms for various reasons, but for some – particularly those with fewer requests – financial sustainability seems to be a key factor. For example, Ines would prefer to work exclusively on Hilfr but currently earns just enough to cover her rent. As she explains, in order to afford other expenses, such as food or holidays, she supplements her income by working for Wolt: *"Like buying food or going on holidays or that things, I do Wolt."*

3.3. The benefit of Hilfr's wage system – hourly pay vs piecework

Like other cleaning and care platforms, reviews play a key role in the matching process on Hilfr, attracting attention from both customers and cleaners. Hilfr user Sofie mentioned ratings as one of the factors she considers when choosing which Hilfr to contact, alongside price and personal descriptions. However, we have not observed

any instances where ratings directly influence working conditions, in contrast to experiences reported on the cleaning platform Happy Helper (Rasmussen 2024: 68). The wage system of the platforms may explain this.

On Hilfr, customers book a cleaning for a specific number of hours with a designated cleaner. They are instructed to align their expectations and coordinate the details of the cleaning task. However, it is clear to all parties that once the agreed-upon hours are completed, the task is considered finished. In this setup, the responsibility for matching the time required to the cleaning task falls on the customer, and the cleaner is paid for the hours worked.

When customers book a cleaning on Happy Helper, an algorithm calculates the cleaning duration based solely on the square meters, without considering factors like how messy the space is, the number of small items to move, or the number of bathrooms (Rasmussen 2024: 65). This system operates a piecework-like wage setting, rather than hourly pay, as cleaners are compensated based on the size of the area cleaned, only indirectly on the time spent. While cleaners can negotiate with customers, research show that they may be reluctant to do so due to their reliance on positive reviews (Rasmussen 2024: 68). Anne, a cleaner on Happy Helper, whom we interviewed, shared her experience with this system: *"They [Happy Helper] set you up to fail because... I guess psychologically it's hard to accept something else after you've seen this nice little calculator. You enter your area code and square meters, but very often people lie and enter less. This whole experience... I worked there almost four years, but by the end, I started disliking people. It was very isolating. I was disappointed that people could treat others like that. You're essentially being cheated out of your labor, because if you don't do a good job or work extra hours to make up for it, you have the threat of a bad review hanging over you"*.

Although all workers rely on receiving positive ratings, some 'Helpers' on Happy Helper may be able to negotiate with customers, whereas other 'Hilfrs' – unlike the workers we interviewed – may struggle to meet customer expectations within the given time. The wage structure on Hilfr, however, is designed to reduce the risk of 'dishonesty' in bookings. Unlike Happy Helper, where cleaners may face pressure to complete tasks within an under-estimated period, Hilfr operates on a model where customers pay for a specific amount of cleaning time rather than a fixed task. This setup helps alleviate pressure on workers to rush or exceed the estimated time.

On the other hand, if you are very efficient, there is also the chance of not receiving the benefits of working fast and thoroughly. This is true for both wage models, as the time spent is a factor in Happy Helper's system as well. While one Hilfr mentions that she might intentionally slow down her pace if she is 'ahead' of time, the other shared that if she finishes early at one of her regular customers' homes, she simply leaves.

3.4. The benefits of the collective agreement: nice customers and customer care

The most recent collective agreement between Hilfr and the trade union 3F, the so-called Hilfr2 agreement, establishes that all workers are employed as employees, as previously mentioned. According to Hilfr's management, none of the workers were union members at the time of the interview. However, the workers appeared to be aware of the agreement – at least of its existence – though they seemed less familiar with its specific provisions and implications.

The interviews with workers revealed that at least the two we talked to were unaware of the specificities of the agreement. They had received information from Hilfr, but did not familiarize themselves with the content, potentially due to a lack of resources (and interest). As explained by Isabelle: "*Respecting the union thing [referring to the Hilfr2 agreement], it was a long article. And of course, just like this, I said, I will read it later. And then you never do*". They were aware that their working conditions on Hilfr were better than on other platforms and generally described their experiences as positive, as mentioned above. However, they lacked knowledge about specific employment rights, such as paid sick leave, and one worker was unaware of her entitlement to a pension. Moreover, they did not express a strong sense of needing these rights. One possible explanation is that they viewed their stay in Denmark as temporary, which may have influenced how relevant or important they perceived these benefits to be.

The collective agreement also sets a minimum wage of 175 DKK per hour (approximately €23.50). However, most Hilfr workers already charge more than this. According to Hilfr's management, only a small number of cleaners charged below 175 DKK per hour prior to the Hilfr2 agreement, while the majority earn over 200 DKK per hour.

In addition to the hourly rate, Hilfr adds several extra costs including social expenses, a platform fee and insurance. Happy Helper charges a service fee of between 15% and 35% on top of the hourly rate (Rasmussen 2024: 65). Based on experiences from the cleaners, on Hilfr, customers end up paying significantly more for the same number of cleaning hours than those using Happy Helper.

Since Hilfr is still a relatively small platform compared to Happy Helper, choosing Hilfr – and the higher pay rate – appears to be a deliberate decision, as was the case for Hilfr user Sofie. In addition to attracting customers who prioritize workers' rights and fair working conditions, this may also appeal to a certain socio-demographic group that can afford this type of cleaning service. According to Hilfr's management, their typical customers are families with children living in Copenhagen or elderly people, whose children arrange the cleaning services for them.

Within the Hilfr platform, Isabelle explains how her customer base changed after she raised her hourly rate. Previously, she encountered "weird" clients, such as people who were overly obsessive about cleanliness and booked her to clean homes that were

already clean, or places with trash on the floor. However, she no longer has these experiences since she began 'filtering customers by her hourly rate' (Interview with Isabelle). Thus, the group of "weird" customers is likely to have descreased in size after the Hilfr2 agreement, due to the introduction of the minimum wage of 175 DKK.

Although not directly related to the collective agreement, a potential consequence of Hilfr's overall commitment to fair working conditions is its focus on worker care. This may not be true for all workers, but Isabelle, who has experience working on both Happy Helper and Hilfr, describes different experiences regarding the service levels of the two platforms. For example, she recounts situations on both platforms, where customers were not at home during scheduled appointments, and the different level of service she received: On Happy Helper, the service team asked her to wait but ultimately did not compensate her for the time spent. In contrast, the Hilfr team ensured she was paid immediately. Isabelle explains: *"They seem to be good. You know, always on our side. That's great. Something that in Happy Helper we don't have. If something happens, then it is "I'm so sorry. Maybe next time you come..." I don't know. But they say something, making us feel like we are the ones to blame"*(interview with Isabelle).

The platform's commitment to social responsibility appears to positively impact working conditions, extending beyond fair wages and entitlements. It helps attract 'nice customers' (as reflected in the workers' reasons for choosing to work on Hilfr) and provides support to workers when needed.

4. Conclusion – the happy Hilfr (for now)

Overall, the 'Hilfrs' we interviewed are satisfied with their work and working conditions. This satisfaction can be partly attributed to Hilfr's position in the market as a socially responsible domestic cleaning platform, which attracts socially responsible customers. Another factor is the decent working conditions ensured by the collective agreement with 3F, along with its 'side effects', such as benefits and the presence of 'nice customers'. A third explanation lies in Hilfr's wage structure, which ensures fair pay for the work delivered, thus acknowledging the cleaners' efforts. Additionally, a broader explanation may involve the workers' expectations and prior experiences from their home countries or other low-skilled jobs in Denmark. As illustrated by the following quotes from Hilfrs Ines and Isabelle:

> *"And comparing to the other places that I work, this one [Hilfr] is like the best. The conditions, the clients, the customer service. It is supergood. I also didn't work at, I thought, proper Danish places. So maybe that's why my experience, in Denmark, haven't been, like, so great. Maybe one day when I get into like the*

real Danish system, I will see the benefits. But for now, comparing to the ones that I had experienced, Hilfr is paradise." (Interviews with Isabelle)

When asked about whether she thinks it is important that Hilfrs are covered by the collective agreement, Ines answers: *"Yes. Of course. But I have to learn this... My new condition in this country because when I was in Argentina the things are different. And always you have bad conditions. And you are used to it, and you say 'okay'."* (interview with Ines).

Compared to other platform or low-skilled jobs in Denmark, or working in Argentina (both skilled and unskilled), cleaning on Hilfr is considered 'great'. However, over time, the frame of reference may shift. When platform work is no longer just a temporary job, and the new reference point becomes the new condition – life in Denmark – the perspective on working conditions can change. In addition to the platform's frequent inability to provide full-time work, there may be long-term side effects. Isabelle, who has been working in cleaning for five years, starts to feel the loneliness of not having co-workers, and her body gradually begins to ache from the physical demands of the work. Yet, as she puts it, *"But for now, yeah, it's fine"*.

5. Research design

The analysis is based on a qualitative approach that combines interviews with Hilfr's management, cleaners working through the platform, and platform users, along with desk research drawing on the Hilfr website and relevant news articles. Access to both Hilfr cleaners and users was facilitated by the company's management. The only selection criterion for participation for workers and users was prior experience either working on the platform or booking cleaners through it.

The management was approached through personal contacts. Information about participation in the research project was distributed by Hilfr's management to all workers on the platform. As this did not result in any interviews, we decided to include an incentive in the form of two tickets to the cinema. To maintain the voluntariness of consent among the workers, we clearly explained the purpose of the research, the nature of the tasks, and the incentives offered. This transparency is crucial for participants to understand that their participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any time without any negative consequences. Additionally, the level of incentives were set at a level that compensates for time and effort without being coercive, aiming to offer a fair reward that does not unduly influence the decision to participate. In the consent process, we provided detailed information about the study, potential risks, and benefits, and gave the participants the opportunity to ask questions. We also emphasized that participation is entirely voluntary and that

declining to participate will not affect their standing or future opportunities on the platform, reinforcing this through both written and verbal communication.

Offering cinema tickets did not seem to have a direct effect on recruitment, as it still did not result in any interviews with people working on Hilfr. Instead, what turned out to be a successful strategy, was getting the contact information from Hilfr's management, and contacting individuals directly (after they had accepting that their contact information was shared). This resulted in two interviews with cleaners and one interview with a user (they were also all offered cinema tickets).

In addition, we employed a targeted recruitment strategy that included both snowball sampling and outreach via Facebook. To recruit workers, we posted in specific Facebook groups where we believed Hilfr workers might be active – for example, 'Argentinos en Dinamarca' [Argentinians in Denmark]. This approach resulted in one additional interview, with a cleaner who had experience working for Happy Helper. Given the relatively small number of active 'Hilfrs' (around 60–70 at the time where we began recruitment), reaching potential interviewees outside the platform was akin to finding a needle in a haystack. This likely explains why we only managed to recruit cleaners working through Happy Helper, which has a significantly larger workforce of approximately 4,500 'Helpers' (Rasmussen 2024). Without the assistance of Hilfr's management, it is highly unlikely that we would have been able to recruit any Hilfr cleaners for interviews.

According to the Hilfr cleaners we interviewed, other workers were hesitant to participate due to limited English proficiency. Unfortunately, we were unable to offer interviews in Spanish due to resource constraints and the lack of Spanish language skills within the research team. To recruit users of the platform, we also posted in Facebook groups where we expected there might be interest in private cleaning services. This assumption was based on two factors: the financial means of group members and the normalization of such services in their home countries, where private domestic help is more common. Specifically, we posted in the group 'Expats in Copenhagen', but this did not yield any additional interviews.

The interviews were conducted by one or two members of the project team between June 2024 and January 2025. The interviews with workers and users after the Hilfr2 agreement. The interviews were carried out in either English (for all non-Danish participants) or Danish, depending on the interviewee's language preference. To ensure participants felt comfortable and to build trust, interviews were held either in person at a location chosen by the interviewee or online via video call. This resulted in three in-person interviews and two conducted online. In line with existing research suggesting that the quality of responses in face-to-face and online interviews is comparable (Nehls, Brandy & Holly 2015: 146), both types of interviews were treated equally in the analysis. Interview locations included a university meeting room and a local coffee shop.

The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide tailored to each type of respondent. The interview with Hilfr's management focused on the following themes: the history and characteristics of the platform; platform governance and social dialogue; human resource management; division of labour and task complexity; technologies and data processes; occupational safety and health; the collective agreement with the trade union 3F; and the broader regulatory context.

Interviews with platform workers explored a range of themes, including their professional background, motivations for engaging in platform work and for choosing Hilfr, their use of the platform, visibility and control mechanisms, professional identity, client matching and relationships, working conditions, development of new and existing skills, interactions with trade unions and other forms of worker representation, as well as perceived risks and needs for social protection. The interview guide for Hilfr users mirrored that of the workers but was adapted to reflect the user perspective – for instance, questions addressed their motivations for using the platform and their experiences with the feedback and rating system. The interview with the representative from the trade union focused on domestic cleaning within the gig economy and the role of collective agreements and legislative tools in regulating platform-based cleaning and care work.

Two interviews were documented through written notes during the conversations, while the remaining interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. All material was analysed exploratorily using NVivo. Names and other identifying details have been changed or omitted to ensure the anonymity of interview participants.

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