

Algorithmic Management in Platform Work

A joint reading of Directive (EU) 2024/2831 and the EU Artificial Intelligence Act



What algorithmic management does

The operating system of work organisation

Platforms made it visible.

Traditional sectors are now adopting the same logic.

Allocate

who gets the task

Price

dynamic rates

Instruct

route, timing, conduct

Monitor

real-time performance

Score

ratings and rankings

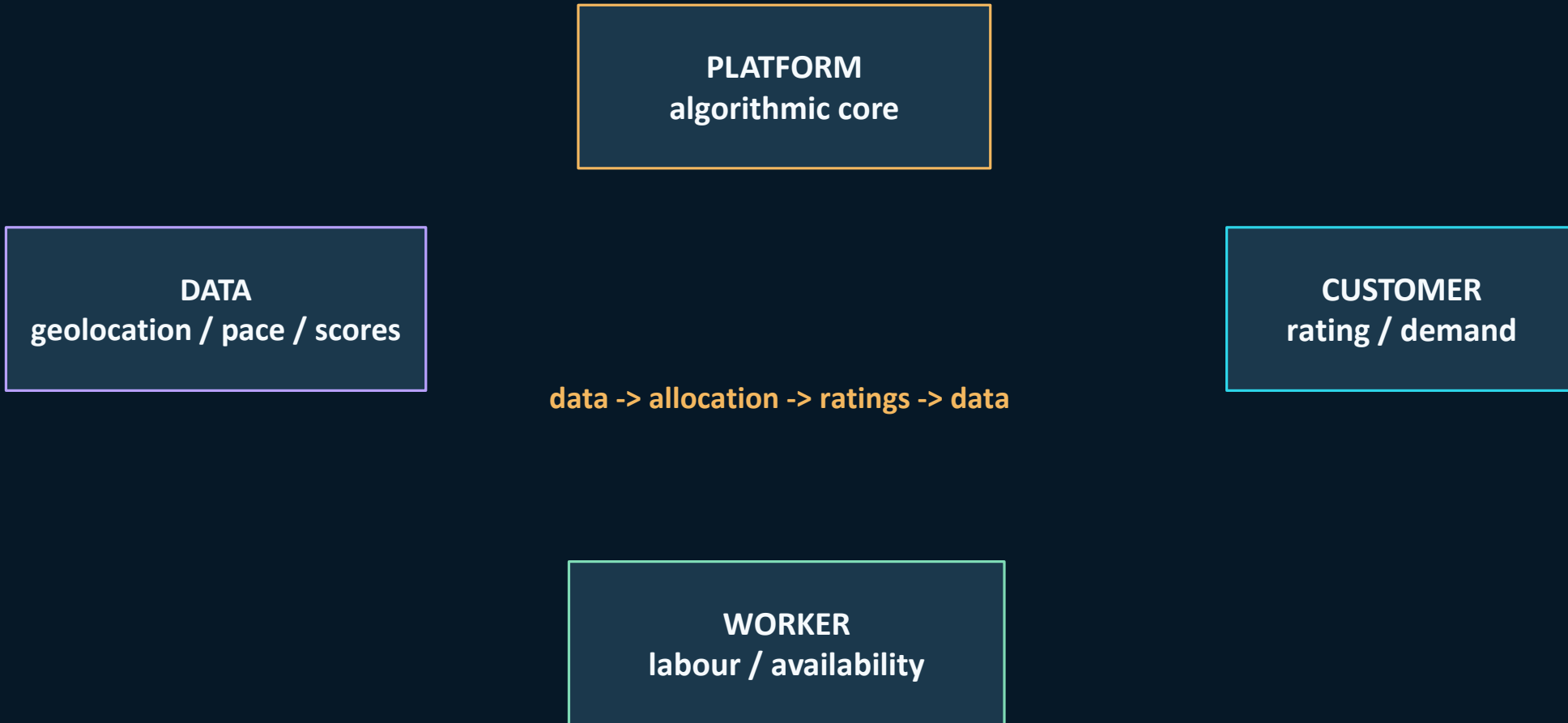
Discipline

restriction or deactivation

Legal effect without visible human mediation

Platform work: the laboratory of algorithmic control control

Control through design, data and incentives



The platform may deny being an employer, whilst exercising decisive organisational control over access to work, remuneration, standards and sanctions.

The risk map

Four pressure points for labour law and fundamental rights

Datafication

workers reduced to measurable
measurable indicators

Opacity

black-box criteria and hidden
weighting

Automation bias

human oversight becomes
symbolic

Technostress

continuous monitoring and
psychological load

These risks are structural, not accidental side-effects of innovation.

European multilevel regulation

Three instruments, three lenses, one workplace reality

GDPR

Workers as data subjects
Lawfulness, transparency,
minimisation, purpose
limitation, Article 22

AI Act

AI systems as risks
High-risk employment
systems, risk management,
data governance, human
oversight

Directive 2024/2831

Work as power relation
Information, explanation,
human review, collective
consultation

None is sufficient in isolation. Their combined effect is the governance model.

GDPR: necessary, but not sufficient

Data protection alone cannot carry the full labour-law burden

➤ Strengths

- Core principles: lawfulness, transparency, data minimisation and purpose limitation.
- Article 22: protection against solely automated decisions with significant effects.

➤ Limits

- Hybrid systems may avoid the “solely automated” threshold.
- Legitimate interest is fragile in asymmetrical employment relations.
- Enforcement is fragmented and often reactive.

The GDPR is individualistic and ex post. Algorithmic management is systemic and anticipatory.

ex ante audits

collective scrutiny

workplace prevention
prevention

The AI Act: risk-based governance

Employment and workforce management move into the high-risk universe

UNACCEPTABLE RISK

Prohibited uses, including emotion recognition at work except limited safety/medical cases

HIGH RISK

Recruitment, selection, task allocation, monitoring, evaluation, promotion or termination

SPECIFIC TRANSPARENCY

Systems interacting with natural persons or generating content

LOW / MINIMAL RISK

No specific high-risk obligations, but general legal duties still matter

For high-risk systems: risk management, data governance, technical documentation, logging, transparency, human oversight, accuracy, robustness and cybersecurity.

Directive (EU) 2024/2831

From data protection to labour protection

Automated monitoring

Systems that support or carry out monitoring, monitoring, supervision or performance performance assessment of people performing platform work.

Automated decision-making

Systems that make or support decisions significantly affecting working earnings, working time, training, status deactivation.

The Directive recognises that algorithms are not neutral technical tools; they are mechanisms shaping working conditions and power relations.

information

explanation

human review

collective consultation

Joint reading: a governance triangle

Each instrument answers a different legal question

GDPR
What data may be processed?

AI Act
How risky is the system?

Platform Work Directive
How does it affect working conditions?

joint reading

**effective protection
against invisible subordination**

The combined model moves from compliance checklists to accountable, participatory and preventive governance of AI at work.

Digital Omnibus: simplification or dilution?

Competitiveness cannot be built by hollowing out fundamental rights

The promise

Reduce administrative and reporting burdens; simplify digital legislation; support competitiveness, SMEs and innovation.

The legal anxiety

Weakening the concept of personal data, special-category data rules, widening decision-making and delaying AI Act duties.



smart simplification



rights dilution

The regulatory compass must remain fundamental rights-centred.

Conclusion

“It is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succour of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till.” - J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings. The Return of the King*, Part III, Book Five, Chapter IX, New York 1965, 190 – quoted by Pope Leon XIV in *Magnifica Humanitas* - 213

No worker should be governed by an algorithm they cannot understand, understand, challenge or have reviewed by a competent human being.



Thank you very much!
Muchas Gracias!