

AAG 2021 virtual paper session 'The places and flows of labor:
essential work, fragmented life-worlds, constrained mobilities'
April 7, 2021

Delivery workers and operators in Paris: how has the pandemic transformed the way they work?

Laetitia Dablanc, Adeline Heitz



2020: demand for goods has changed in cities

- In France a strict lockdown (“first lockdown”) in March-May 2020 followed by curfews and partial lockdowns
- **+32% B2C products sold** in 2020 (growth rate twice as high as usual)
- Traditional retail has accelerated **omni-channel** take-up
- Huge increase in grocery and DIY click-and-collect

Le Monde

ÉCONOMIE

Favoris 

Covid-19 : la logistique, un secteur devenu incontournable

La pandémie a mis en exergue le rôle des chauffeurs et livreurs dans la bonne marche de l'économie.

Par Eric Béziat et Julien Bouissou

Objectives and methodology

- **Several surveys along the pandemic progress**
 - Getting first-hand knowledge on urban logistics operations and work challenges
 - Characterizing workers and operators' response to the challenges
- **Survey 1:** 'Barometer of urban logistics in times of lockdown' (Dablanc and Buldeo Rai) March 26-May 8, 2020
 - A daily survey with a panel of 11 delivery companies operating in Paris
 - A weekly survey among the four main freight business organizations
- **Survey 2:** Interviews with stakeholders during March-April 2020 (Heitz)
 - 17 semi-directive interviews with third-party logistics providers and shippers
 - 10 interviews with local public authorities
- **Survey 3:** Gig delivery workers interviewed in February 2021 (Dablanc)
 - Meetings on the field, random encounters, 500 interviewed

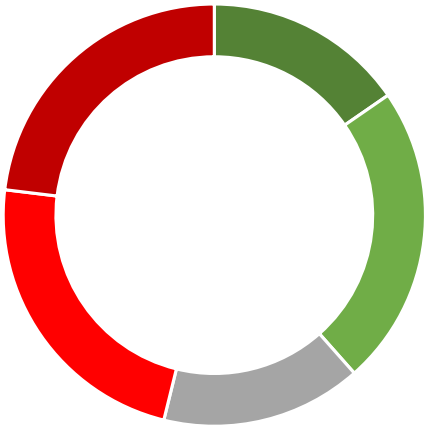
Doing surveys during a pandemic

- Many respondents happy to testify on their activity during these very unusual times
- An abundance of webinars further increased access to information on stakeholders' perceptions and data

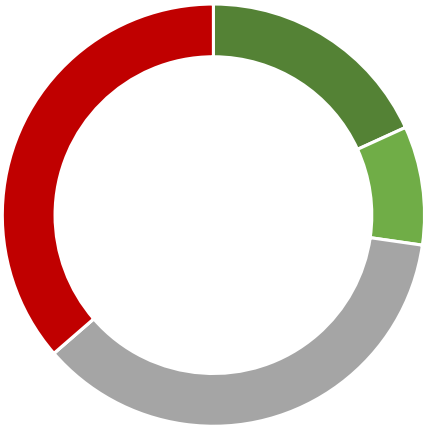


Delivery urban operators: extreme variability of orders and sectorial economic difficulties

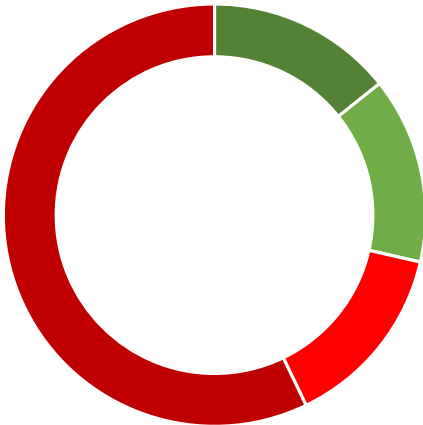
March 26 - April 2, 2020



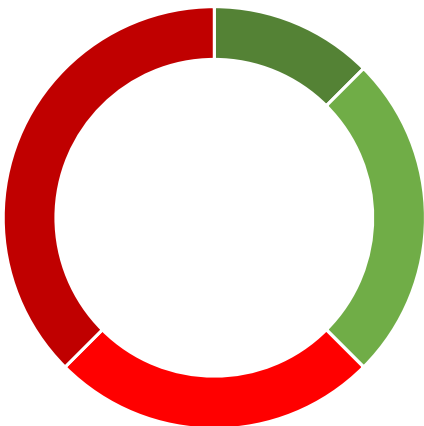
April 3 - April 9, 2020



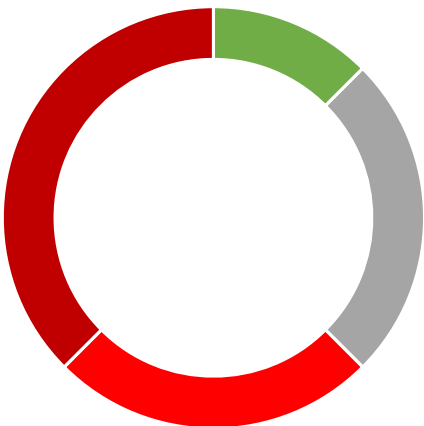
April 10 - April 16, 2020



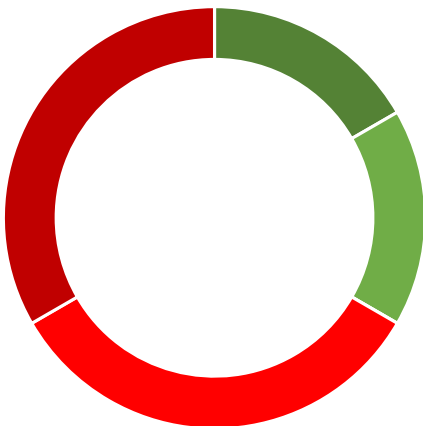
April 17 - April 23, 2020



April 24 - April 30, 2020



May 1 - May 8, 2020



■ A lot more ■ More ■ Same ■ Less ■ A lot less

Delivery and logistics workers during the pandemic

- An increase in temporary workers in parcel's delivery industry and mass retail sector
 - Many sick or absent workers (due to childcare)
 - Need to respond to the new demand
- A high rate of unemployment in industrial logistics compared with other sectors
- Change in warehouse organization to ensure health safety
 - And ... prevent social movements (Amazon had to shutdown its warehouses in April 2020 because of insufficient protective measures at the request of unions)
- Limited remote working in logistics and transport: high exposure to COVID19, risky jobs in times of pandemic
- Precarious working conditions increase the vulnerability of workers
 - Northern poor suburbs of Paris where a majority of delivery/logistics workers live: excess covid mortality

Policy response, short term

- Quick responses to urgency at the local level during lockdown
 - delivery time-windows were immediately relaxed in order to facilitate city logistics
 - Municipalities' websites identifying local stores proposing a home delivery service: Paris website has identified and mapped more than 1000 local retailers



<https://vivrep.paris.fr/paris-tous-les-commerces-qui-livrent-sur-une-carte-interactive/>

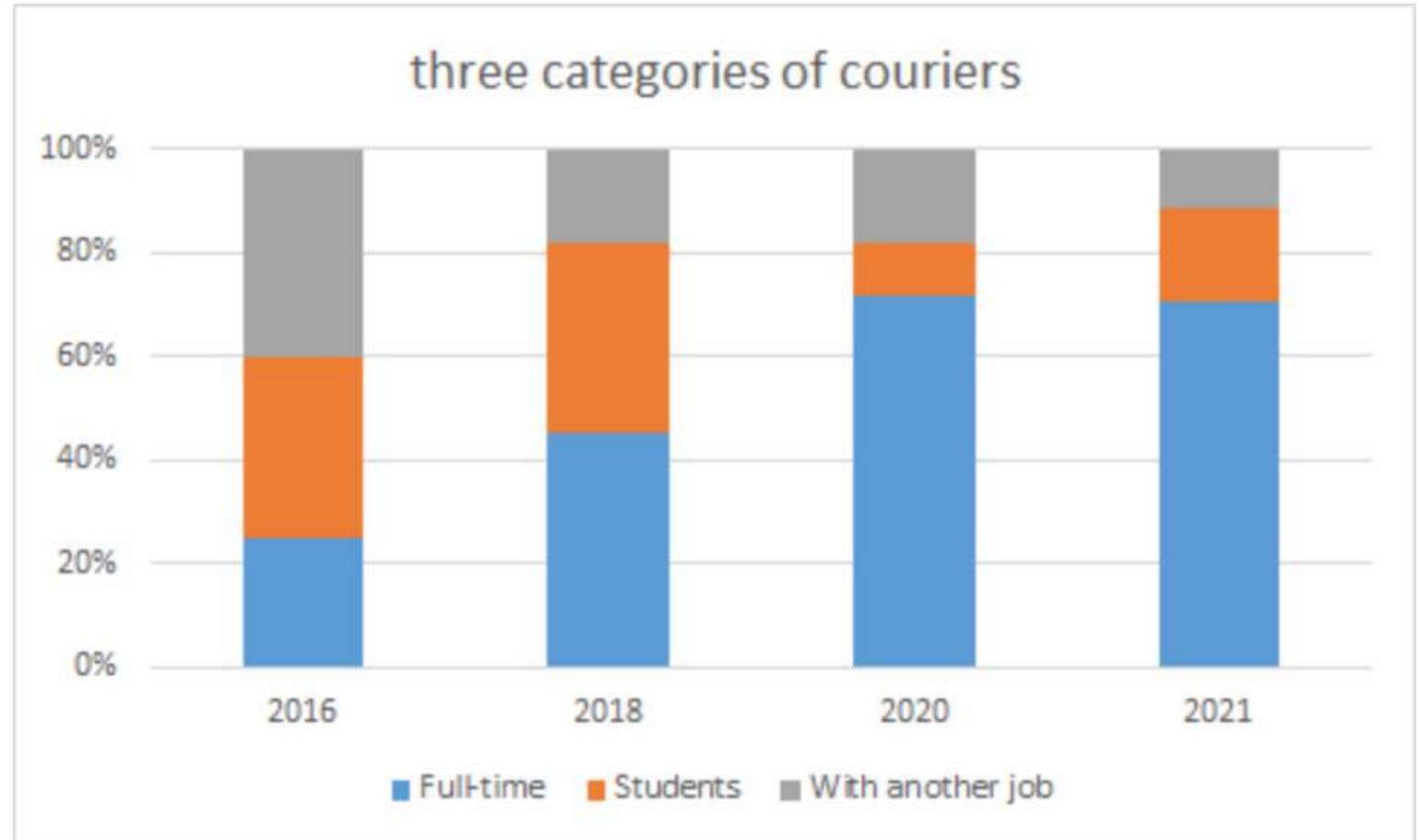
Policy response, longer term

- Logistics omitted from several initiatives
 - Reorganization of street space to invent a “different urban world” (Mayor of Grenoble)
 - “tactical urbanism”: change quickly, cheaply and temporarily the use of space in cities
 - Paris **50 kilometers of “corona-lanes”**: good for cargo-cycles, not so good for other freight vehicles
- A failure to accommodate logistics facilities’ development



Gig workers' surveys in Paris (2016, 2018, 2020, 2021)

- 2016-2020: from part time to full time workers
- 2021 = more students, impact of covid



Dablanc et al., 2021

2021 survey: who are UberEats and Deliveroo workers?

- 7% are women
- 10% are French
- 10% are subcontractors (illegal)
- 25% have had an accident
- 29% come to work in public transit, half of whom with bicycles in train
- 36% use a moped to make deliveries (illegal in France without a professional freight license), 47% use a bicycle (including 15% shared biking), 10% use a scooter
- 50% see themselves still making deliveries in one year
- 60% would be interested in being employees (as opposed to free lance)
- 66% have been on the job less than one year
- 70% think there is a high road safety risk in the job



Delivery vehicles

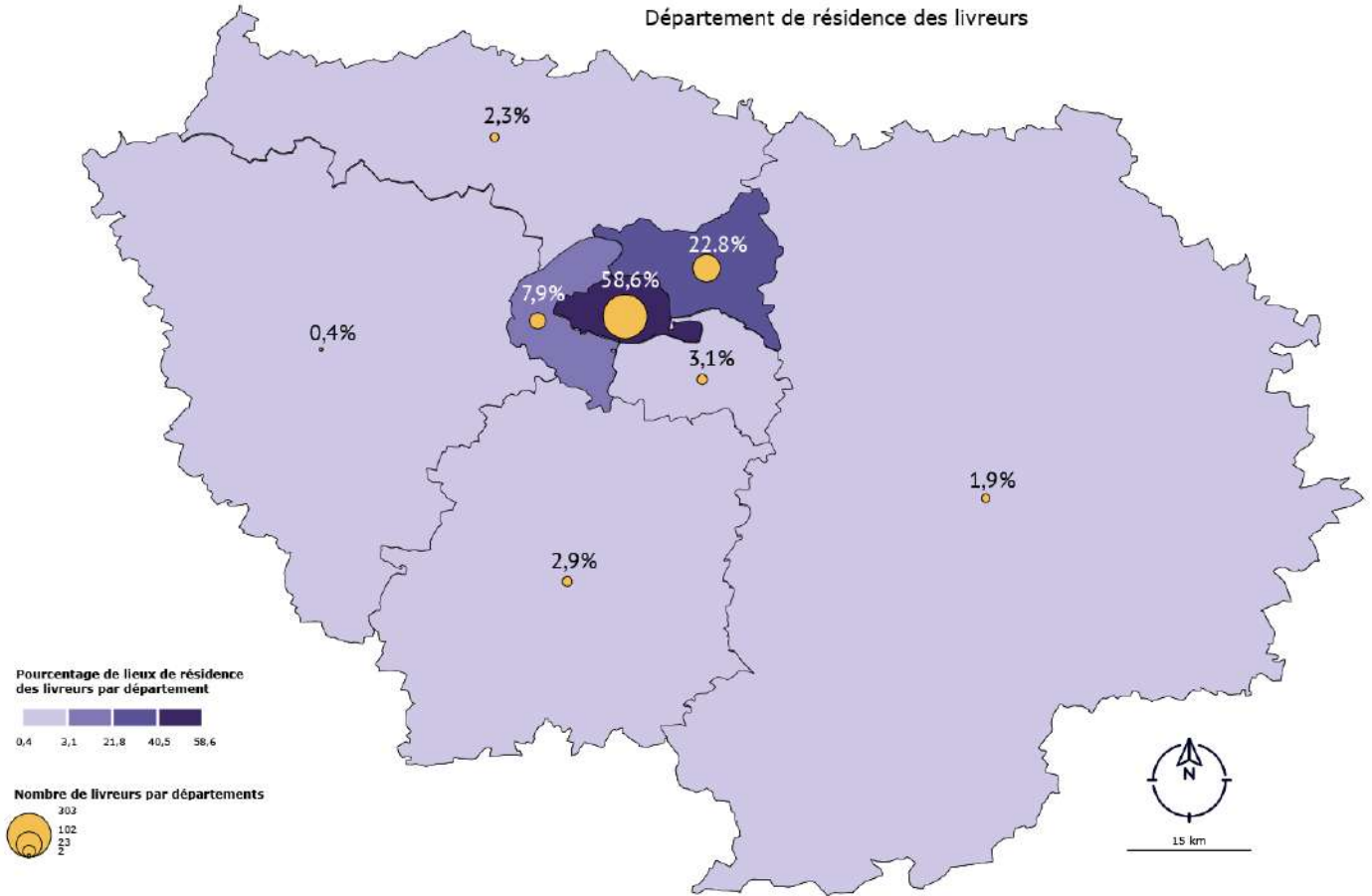
| 2016 | 2018 | 2020 | 2021 |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 87% | 65% | 60% | 47% |
| bicycle | bicycle | bicycle | bicycle |

- ⇒ Much higher use of mopeds (not allowed)
- ⇒ Cars are used in 2021, following extension of instant delivery service to suburban places
- ⇒ Increase in use of new modes: bike and scooter sharing (not allowed either)



Commuting to the work place (2021)

- 62% with vehicle used for deliveries (bike or moped or car)
- 16% in public transit, with bike
- 13% in public transit
- 9% other



Operational and financial indicators

- 18 deliveries a day in average and 42 km covered in average
- 40% work six days a week and 17% work seven days a week
- 28% work more than eight hours a day

- 40% are satisfied with their earning, 60% are not
 - 40% earn less than 1000 euros/month
 - 40% between 1000 and 1500 euros/month
 - 12% 1500 to 2000 euros/month
 - 4% more than 2000 euros/month

Challenges of the job

- 35% of respondents were motivated to become delivery worker **because of the pandemic**
- 48% find that there are **too many gig delivery workers** available compared with the number of delivery gigs
- 50% imagine themselves still delivery gig workers in one year
- 70% find that there are **high road safety risks** to their activity and 25% already have had an accident
- 77% enjoy the independence and working whenever they want

Road safety

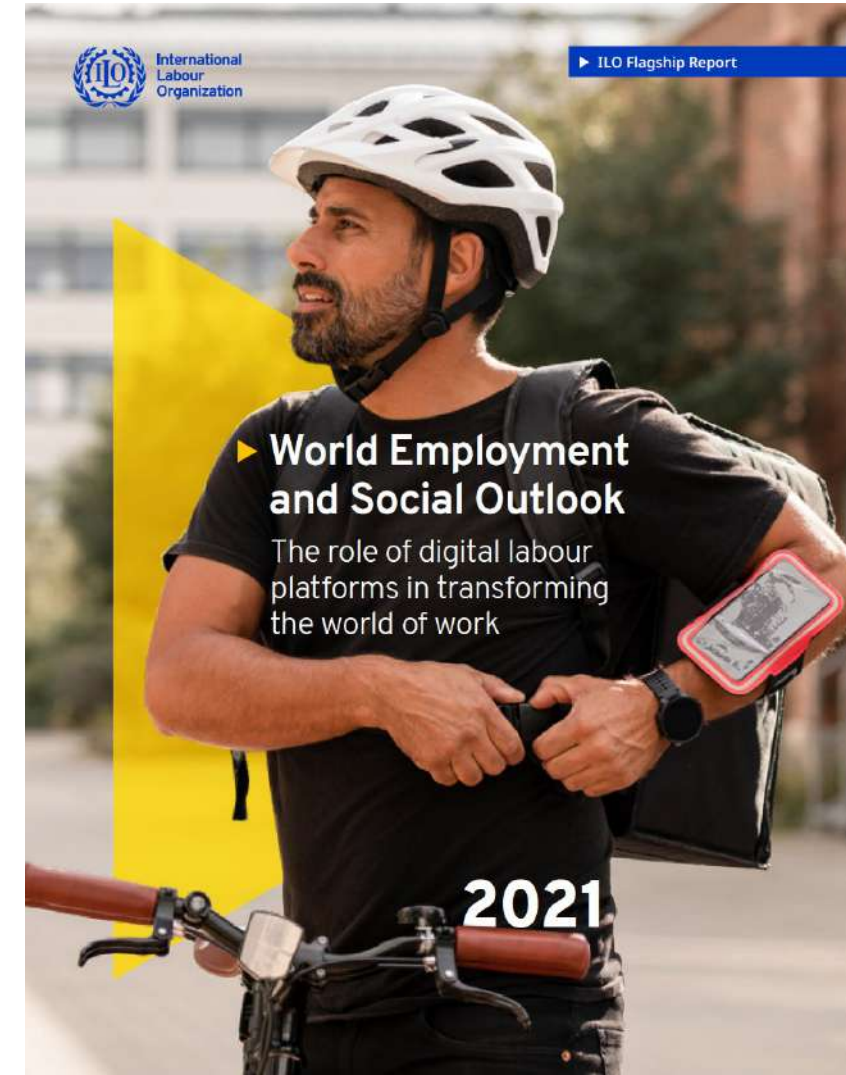
- A growing concern
- Paris major intersection:
 - 51% passenger cyclists did not stop at red light
 - 76% delivery cyclists did not stop at red light (Chebance, 2018)



Turns of events on the legal front

- Spain, **Tribunal Supremo**, 25 Sept 2020, a Glovo worker is actually an employee
- UK 2021 Uber gives workers' status to their drivers and delivery partners
- California AB5
 - 2019 State legislation AB5
 - Platforms' **proposition 22** reversing AB5
- France
 - Highest Court, March 4, 2020: Uber (and UberEats) workers are actually employees because of economic dependency to Uber
 - 400 cases in court at the moment

ILO, 2021



Changing urban logistics in a post-pandemic world

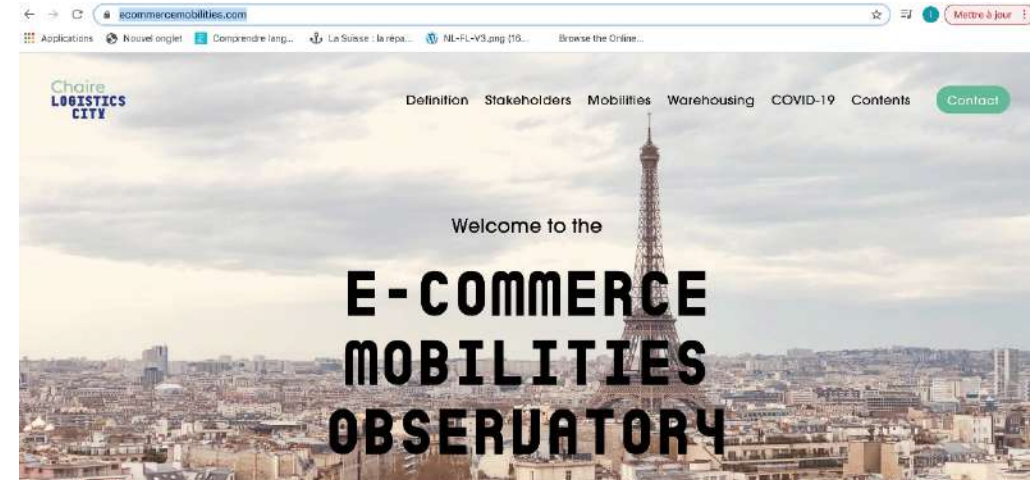
- **Cargo-cycles** in very high demand
- Improving the situation of gig workers for **on-demand instant delivery** platforms
- Accelerating the **use of some technologies**
 - easier to get authorizations for testing automated delivery vehicles such as robots and drones
 - New enforcement tools (plate-reading cameras) ready for deployment
 - Exploring new methods for urban freight data and data sharing
- Accelerated implementation of low and zero emission zones, with one issue now disputed between local decision-makers and freight operators: the **status of trucks** in the new traffic restrictions



- Research oriented Chair
- Warehouses, innovations, new trends in consumption and impacts on city logistics

Results available online:

- Observatory of ecommerce mobilities (<https://www.ecommercemobilities.com/>)
- Survey reports on gig workers for instant delivery platforms in Paris 2016, 2018, 2020, 2021
- Barometer of urban logistics under covid lockdown
- Logistics real estate and relationships with urban form in 74 large cities around the world



<https://www.lvmt.fr/en/chaires/logistics-city/>