


GIGGIN' POLICY


ENGAGING YOUTH IN POLICY MAKING

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POLICY CHALLENGES



Employment Status and Worker Rights

One of the primary challenges is how to determine the employment status of various gig economy workers. When gig workers are classified as independent contractors or self-employed, the result is that they have limited access to traditional employment benefits and protections, such as social security, paid leave, and collective bargaining rights. Addressing the issue of worker classification and ensuring adequate protection of gig economy workers' rights has become a big political issue across the EU. New laws have been passed in some member states (e.g. Spain) to ensure contracts of gig workers make provisions to cover sickness, holidays and pensions. In other jurisdictions (i.e. the UK) court challenges have confirmed that Uber drivers, for example, are employees. However, enforcement of protections is a major challenge.

Income Security and Financial Stability

Gig workers often experience income volatility and lack a stable source of income. They may face challenges in accessing financial services, such as loans or insurance, due to the irregularity of their earnings. Developing policies that address income security, provide access to financial products, and ensure fair compensation for gig work is essential for the well-being of gig workers. This will have to be done at the national government level and by the adoption of agreed EU-wide regulations.



Social Protection and Benefits

Gig workers often lack access to social protection schemes, such as unemployment benefits, sick leave, and pension schemes. Policymakers face the challenge of designing policies that provide gig workers with adequate social protection, given the nature of their work arrangements. Exploring innovative solutions, such as easily transferable or "portable" benefits or gig-specific social safety nets, is crucial in ensuring gig workers' well-being and security. Again this will be most effectively achieved if it is an EU-wide policy framework.

Health and Safety

Occupational health and safety regulations are often designed with traditional employment in mind and may not adequately address the risks and challenges faced by gig workers. Policies need to address the particular health and safety concerns associated with some kinds of gig work, such as personal safety during deliveries, or protection from exploitative working conditions. Ensuring that gig workers are protected and their well-being is prioritised is crucial if the EU is to address the risks to social cohesion presented by the unregulated adoption of AI by businesses, service providers and governments.



Access to Training and Skills Development

Gig workers can often be excluded from the sort of training and skill development opportunities that typically are part of a formal employment package. Policymakers need to find ways to facilitate access to training programmes, promote lifelong learning, and support gig workers who want to develop their skills and enhance their employability and career progression (through, for example, training programmes that offer flexible "conversion" opportunities, that are free of low cost and that can be accessed remotely, at any time and at the pace that suits an individual learner).



EXPLORING THE GIG ECONOMY IMPLICATIONS, PROS & CONS



Implications for Policymakers

The gig economy is a growing trend, and it is important to ensure that both traditional employees and gig workers are protected by employment policies. This video discusses the need for updates to existing employment laws to ensure that all workers have equal protection and support, regardless of their employment status. This includes protection from exploitation and safety issues, as well as access to sick leave, vacation pay, health care, and pensions.

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Employer Pros and Cons

The gig economy is a growing trend, and it offers both pros and cons for employers. The gig economy offers the ability to quickly access talent and skills without having to commit to full-time employees. This can be a cost-effective way to meet short-term needs or to supplement existing staff. However, there are also challenges, such as the need to manage a large number of contractors as well as the potential for liability issues.

[Click Here](#)



Gig Worker Pros and Cons

The gig economy offers flexibility and freedom, but it also comes with risks. Gig workers often move from one short-term project to another, have inconsistent income, and lack benefits such as paid holiday and sick leave. Whether or not the gig economy is right for an individual depends on their individual needs and circumstances. Before deciding to become a gig worker people should weigh the pros and cons carefully and consider their financial needs, risk tolerance, skills and experience, and carry out research on the experience of those already doing the gig economy jobs that they are interested in. If one does decide to work in the gig economy, there are a few things that can be done to protect oneself, such as setting realistic expectations, building a diversified portfolio, getting organised, and saving for the future.

[Click Here](#)



REALITY CHECK

ECONOMIC REALITIES

Discuss the economic challenges and opportunities within the Gig Economy, such as income volatility, lack of benefits, and the potential for entrepreneurship. Offer insights on how policymakers, businesses, and workers can navigate these economic realities to ensure fair compensation and financial stability for freelancers.

ENVIRONMENTAL REALITIES

Explore the environmental implications of the Gig Economy, such as the environmental footprint of gig work, remote work trends, and sustainability practices among freelancers. Share examples of freelancers who embrace eco-friendly approaches to their work.

SOCIAL REALITIES

Highlight the social aspects of gig work, including issues related to job security, work-life balance, and mental health. Examine the role of freelancers in fostering diversity and inclusivity, and discuss initiatives that support the well-being of gig workers.

HEALTH REALITIES

Address the health-related challenges faced by freelance workers, particularly in terms of access to healthcare and workplace safety. Discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on gig workers and the importance of health protection measures.

TECHNOLOGICAL REALITIES

Analyse the role of technology in the Gig Economy, from digital platforms connecting freelancers to the challenges of cybersecurity and data privacy. Explore how freelancers can adapt to rapid technological advancements and harness digital tools for success.

POLITICAL REALITIES

Examine the political landscape surrounding gig work, including regulatory changes, labor rights, and policy debates. Feature interviews with policymakers and advocates who are working to create a supportive legal framework for freelancers.

POLICY PACTS

Gig Economy Policy Pacts

Bringing together gig workers and those with the power to shape policy.



Spain Giggin' Policy Pact

The session, co-organised by the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce and Educem II, aimed to delve into the regional implications of the Gig Economy. It commenced with a presentation outlining the objectives of the Giggin' Policy project, emphasising its commitment to shaping effective policy responses to the evolving gig labour landscape.

Attendees were divided into groups tasked with conducting SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analyses focused on the regional Gig Economy. A total of 25 participants, including 10 young students in training and 14 representatives from various political groups, organisations, and councils, engaged in this interactive workshop.

Group discussions uncovered key insights. Weaknesses and threats identified included job insecurity, the need for continuous skill development, and the transient nature of gig worker incomes. Challenges encompassed intrusion, unfair competition, limited access to information on incentives, and complexities in gig worker taxation. Notably, the struggles faced by young gig workers, such as accessing bank credit or securing rental apartments, were highlighted. Conversely, the discussions revealed opportunities in gig work, including its accessibility during economic downturns, flexibility for job exploration, and personal growth benefits. Strengths identified included work flexibility, remote work options, and the opportunity for self-discipline and self-esteem building.

In summary, this session provided a dynamic platform for attendees to examine the Gig Economy's regional nuances, offering insights into the challenges and opportunities it presents to gig workers and the broader community.



Ireland Giggin' Policy Pact

The second WP7 PACT event in the Giggin' Policy project took place on May 16, 2023, at Clermont House in Rathnew, Co. Wicklow, Ireland, the future home of the Clermont content creation hub for film and TV production. This event was organised collaboratively by the Irish project partners: Meath County Council, Dundalk Institute of Technology, and Newry & Mourne Enterprise Agency.

Attendees included students, young gig economy workers, youth association representatives, SMEs, academics, workers' unions, financial institutions, policymakers, enterprise support organisations, and skills development forums.

The event's origins trace back to the Policy Innovation Co-Design labs in late 2022. The manager of the Mid East Regional Skills Forum recognised financial insecurity among GIG workers, especially in the film and screen industries, leading to the formation of a task force.

This task force, led by the Forum Manager and the Meath project partner, collaborated with core organisations in the film and screen industries, addressing financial challenges in online meetings using materials from the Giggin' Policy Project. A Policy Pact meeting was scheduled for May 16th in Wicklow, Ireland, focusing on educating, discussing, and proposing solutions for GIG workers in the film and screen sector, with financial service providers also invited.

In conclusion, the event was deemed successful, providing a platform for GIG worker concerns. Financial institutions gained insights into the industry and pledged to continue dialogue for future cooperation with GIG workers.



Netherlands Giggin' Policy Pact

The Giggin' Policy project participated in the "Speed Date" event during the Tienskip project day at De Elfstedehal in Leeuwarden.

At the event, 800 students gathered in groups to discuss various topics, including street harassment, stress among young people, environmental concerns, and more.

Tienskip, an organisation formed six years ago, aims to bridge the gap between young people and democracy, fostering active citizenship among all citizens, not just a select few. They strive to raise awareness of the role citizens can play in shaping their community and participating in politics.

Several organisations, including Giggin' Policy partners the Learning Hub Friesland, Gemeente Leeuwarden, Friesland College, and Friese Poort, participated in the event.

They set up information booths where students could learn about the Giggin' Policy Project, sign the Policy Pact to support youth involvement in policy-making for the Gig Economy and stay updated on project activities.

This event served as an excellent opportunity to raise awareness among young students about policies which impact them and engage them in decision-making processes.

Tienskip's goals align closely with the Giggin' Policy project, both aiming to increase youth participation in democracy and policymaking.



Lithuania Giggin' Policy Pact

The inaugural WP7 PACT event in Lithuania, held on April 20, 2023, was conducted seamlessly via Microsoft Teams. The event unfolded as follows:

1. Introduction to the Gig Economy: Led by Mr. L. Kižė, Head of Kautech Development, this segment provided an insightful overview of the Gig Economy.
2. Awareness of the Gig Economy: The Kautech Project coordinator, Mr. T. Vilčinskas, delved into the nuances of raising awareness about the Gig Economy, shedding light on its relevance and impact.
3. Interactive Q&A Session: An engaging question-and-answer session allowed participants to seek clarifications and deepen their understanding of the Gig Economy.

The event boasted a diverse audience, with representation from various sectors:

- 10 students
- 4 teachers
- 3 administrative professionals
- 9 entrepreneurs from esteemed organisations, including UAB "Kauno renovacija," IĮ "Mokymo sistema," MB "Tobulejimo sprendimai," "KvadratuLT," UAB "OLMITA ir KO," UAB "Midlita," UAB "Arinija," UAB "HELLA Lithuania," and MB "Mfurniture."
- The Kaunas Chamber of Commerce, Industry, and Crafts also lent its presence to enrich the discussion.

The event fostered a productive exchange of ideas and insights, marking a promising beginning for the Lithuanian leg of the Giggin' Policy Project.