



Fairwork

# Looking ahead after Covid-19: *Fair work* *in the gig economy*

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# The *gig economy*

- Economic transactions that happen through, via, and on **digital platforms**
- Distinction b/w platforms where **commodities** are sold, and where **labour** is sold.
- “**Digital labour platforms**”
- Two types: **Cloudwork** and **Geographically-tethered platform work**

# *The scale of the* Platform Economy

- Varied estimates - no one knows how big it is...
- Approximately **90 million people in the global South** - that's 60 million cloud workers and 30 million local platform workers (Heeks, 2017; 2019).
- It's predicted that by 2025, **one third of all labour transactions** will be mediated by digital platforms (Standing, 2016).
- Across jurisdictions, most gig workers are treated as **independent contractors**, and therefore do not have **employment rights and protections**.

 News ▶ Liverpool News ▶ Liverpool City Centre

**Deliveroo riders strike after influx of workers means they could make 'only a few pounds' a night**

**Survey shows uber eats drivers struggle with bankruptcy & homelessness**

The New York Times

*One More Way to Die: Delivering Food in Cape Town's Gig Economy*

# Our *Activities*

- Co-develop a set of **fair work principles**.
- Carry out **research** to evaluate platforms against those principles.
- **Score** platforms.
- **Change** working conditions.

2019 scores in **India** and **South Africa**; 2020 scores in **Germany, UK, Indonesia, Chile, Ecuador**; and global Cloudwork ratings; Additional countries for 2021, incl. **Bangladesh, Brazil, Egypt, Hong Kong, Pakistan, Ghana** and **Ukraine**.

# Our *Principles*

## **Fair *Pay***

Workers, irrespective of their employment classification, should earn a decent income in their home jurisdiction after taking account of work-related costs.

## **Fair *Conditions***

Platforms should have policies in place to protect workers from foundational risks arising from the processes of work and should take proactive measures to protect and promote the health and safety of workers.

## **Fair *Contracts***

Platforms provide clear and transparent terms and conditions and they do not impose unfair contract terms.

## **Fair *Management***

There should be a documented process through which workers can be heard, can appeal decisions affecting them, and be informed of the reasons behind those decisions. There must be a clear channel of communication to workers involving the ability to appeal management decisions or deactivation. The use of algorithms is transparent and results in equitable outcomes for workers. There should be an identifiable and documented policy that ensures equity in the way workers are managed on a platform (for example, in the hiring, disciplining, or firing of workers).

## **Fair *Representation***

Platforms should provide a documented process through which worker voice can be expressed. Irrespective of their employment classification, workers should have the right to organise in collective bodies, and platforms should be prepared to cooperate and negotiate with them.



*[fair.work](https://www.fair.work) | [@TowardsFairWork](https://twitter.com/TowardsFairWork)*

# Fairwork *Covid-19 Report*

- Our first report in April 2020 covered 120 platforms in 23 countries across Europe, North America, South America, Asia and Africa.
- As of September 2020, our second report covered 191 platforms in 43 countries across Europe, North America, South America, Asia and Africa.
- We have categorised platform responses according to the five 'Fairwork Principles' that our ongoing action research uses to rate platforms against decent work standards.

# Fairwork *Covid-19 Report*

**Fair Pay:** By far the most important for workers, yet only 10 percent of platforms surveyed provided pay loss compensation.

**Fair Conditions:** Contactless delivery, hygiene guidance and PPE policies were common [though there continues to be reports of workers not being able to access these free-of-charge]

Sick leave policies were common, but most were hard to access and/or they paid less than minimum wage

**Fair Contracts:** Only a few platforms - asked their workers to undersign that sick leave would not entail a change in their terms of work.

**Fair Management:** Few platforms guaranteed no loss of ratings, incentives - despite low levels of work. Few pledged to anti-discrimination policies.

**Fair Representation:** No positive policy despite growing worker action.







# Fairwork Covid-19 Report

	Policy Category	1. Fair Pay		2a. Fair Conditions (Prevention)				2b. Fair Conditions (Illness)			3. Fair Contracts	4. Fair Management		5. Fair Representation
		Pay Loss Compensation	Financial Deferral	Physical Protection	Personal Protection	Virus Safety Knowledge	Healthcare Assistance	Sick Pay	Insurance	Death Benefits	No Policies	Penalty Protection	Anti-Discrimination	No Policies
Russia	Yandex taxi			●	●	●	●	●						
	InDriver			●	●									
	Maxim				●									
	YouDo				●									
	Delivery Club	●												
Ukraine	Bolt				●									
	Raketa			●	●									
	Uber			●	●	●	●							
	Bolt			●	●									
Serbia	Glovo			●	●	●	●							
	Car.Go			●	●									
	alideda			●										
	Donesi			●										
Bangladesh	Bolt				●									
	Wolt			●	●	●	●							
	Uber	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●		
	Sheba.xyz			●	●	●	●							
Sri Lanka	Truck Lagbe			●	●	●	●							
	Uber	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●		
	PickMe			●	●	●	●							
Ghana	Uber	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●		
	Bolt			●	●									
	Jumia Food			●	●		●							
Brazil	Uber		●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●		
	Cabify			●	●	●	●							
	iFood			●	●	●	●	●	●					

# Fairwork *Covid-19 Report*

## Findings

- What workers want and need—is to maintain their income. But platforms continue to leave this to governments. Furthermore, as the pandemic continues competition in the sector has grown and driven down pay.
- More platforms begun to offer hygiene guidance and protective equipment to workers as many of these measures became compulsory by governments.
- Platform responses, like expanding services, to a large extent have prioritised serving shareholders, investors and customers before workers.
- Health and safety measures have encouraged more intense forms of worker surveillance, collecting more (personal) forms of data on their workers without consent.
- Despite offering some benefits to workers, platforms have made clear these are temporary measures ignoring the worker's need for continuous support post-COVID-19 as the pandemic continues.
- An increase in worker strikes taking place across the world, but no examples of platforms actively engaging with the demands of worker's unions and associations.

# Fairwork *Covid-19 Report*

**Fair Pay:** Rapid access to a minimum income

**Fair Conditions:**

- Regular, adequate, free provision of PPE: disinfectants, gloves and masks
- Installation of physical barriers between driver and passengers in all ride-hailing cars
- Fully contact-free supply chains (both collection and delivery) for delivery workers
- Accessible sick pay

**Fair Contracts:** No temporary or permanent alteration of contracts during the period of the pandemic to the detriment of workers

**Fair Management:** Set up an accessible communications channel for workers for all issues relating to Covid-19

**Fair Representation:** Formal receipt of, engagement with, and action on Covid-19- related demands from worker representatives



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