The Gig Economy and Covid-19:

Fairwork Report on Platform Policies

April 2020

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Executive Summary

The estimated 50 million gig workers worldwide have been particularly hard-hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. Reports indicate half have lost their jobs; those still working have lost two-thirds of their income on average; and many face the impossible choice between destitution and infection, as summed up by one worker: "either I'm starving or I'm dying of coronavirus". While those still in work perform functions essential to society, the pandemic has opened up fracture lines of inequality: not just between gig workers and others who are currently better served by government support schemes, but also by placing added pressures on women, immigrants, and minority-ethnic groups who form a core part of the gig workforce. So how are platforms responding?

To investigate this further, the research team at the Fairwork Foundation undertook a survey of platform response policies; as of April 2020 covering 120 platforms in 23 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:

- **Fair Pay:** By far the most important issue for workers; yet only five platforms had direct policies to increase pay for those in work; more common were actions to maintain levels of business, like client fee waivers or expanded scope of services.
- **Fair Conditions 1 (Prevention):** Cut-and-paste hygiene guidance and contactless delivery (though not contactless collection) were the most widespread policies. Just over half of the platforms we checked said they were providing personal protection equipment (disinfectant or, less often, masks); workers report they often failed to receive this.
- **Fair Conditions 2 (Illness):** Around half of the platforms said they were providing some payment for workers who were ill, but workers reported it could be hard to access and payments often fell well below national minimum wage equivalents.
- **Fair Contracts:** The only response here, by a few platforms, has been to try to create a firewall around their current actions; still asserting an arm's-length relation to workers as 'independent contractors'.
- **Fair Management:** A few companies are guaranteeing no loss of bonus or incentive levels despite temporary deactivation of workers, or are issuing statements against any attempt by clients to discriminate against certain worker groups.

- **Fair Representation:** We found no evidence yet of any platform engagement with worker associations, despite a number of such groups setting out demands and even organising strikes.

Overall, we find widespread responses by platforms to the current pandemic with occasional examples of comprehensive and enlightened policies. But there are a number of issues in most platforms' responses to date. First, there is a gap between rhetoric and reality: platforms have been far better at publicising responses than at actually delivering them to workers. Second, there is a skew in stakeholder focus: platform responses have served shareholders, investors and customers before workers, even though it is workers who form the foundation of all value for the platform. There is also a timidity: while governments have torn up ideologies and rulebooks, platforms have generally been only incremental in their response and have too often used the language of the get-out clause rather than that of the guarantee. Platforms have loaded risks and responsibilities onto others: too many platforms interpret "wash your hands" less in terms of the virus and more in terms of their responsibilities to their workers; throwing that responsibility onto governments for financial support and onto individual workers for their own protection from coronavirus.

Finally, there is a gap between needs and policies: between what workers require in order to stay safe—free from poverty and free from infection—and what platforms are currently providing. This report therefore ends with a summary of policy recommendations, reproduced here:

Fairwork Principle	Recommended Platform Action
1. Fair Pay	• Rapid access to a minimum income (equivalent to at least the local living wage) for those unable to work due to fall-off in demand, legislative restrictions, or to pre-existing health vulnerabilities • Reduction in costs (e.g. platform commission/fees) or increase in per-gig payments for those still working but with reduced earnings • Additional hazard pay for those facing additional risks while working during the pandemic • Waiver (not deferral) of work-related costs such as loan repayments • Facilitated access to interest-free emergency loans • Plan for post-lockdown income recovery measures which may include higher per-gig payments or lower commission fees • Inclusion in income compensation and financial deferral schemes of all those who have worked for the platform during the past three months

Fairwork Principle	Recommended Platform Action
2a. Fair Conditions (Prevention)	• 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 • Daily sanitisation of vehicles and upstream locations: warehouses, hubs, etc. • Free Covid-19 check-ups for workers and their families
2b. Fair Conditions (Illness)	• Accessible sick pay from platforms that applies universally to all those unable to work while ill or quarantined or while providing essential care for sick family members, and which relates to pre-pandemic average earnings • Sick pay policies that specify precisely and openly how much workers will be paid, with simple application processes which do not impose onerous health documentation requirements that sick workers cannot meet • Extended sick pay for those workers hospitalised by Covid-19 infection • Provision of general medical insurance cover • Provision of life insurance cover or other death-in-service benefits
3. Fair Contracts	• No temporary or permanent alteration of contracts during the period of the pandemic to the detriment of workers
4. Fair Management	• Ensure all Covid-19-related communications are in a form that can be readily accessed and understood by all workers • Set up an accessible communications channel for workers for all issues relating to Covid-19; adequately staffed for rapid resolution of issues • Transparent reporting of policies, actions and funds initiated by platforms during the pandemic • Adhere to data privacy standards in collecting and sharing data about workers • No loss of incentives, bonus levels or future availability of jobs for those temporarily deactivated as a result of Covid-19 • Public statements to customers and others that discrimination against certain worker groups during the pandemic will not be tolerated
5. Fair Representation	• Formal receipt of, engagement with, and action on Covid-19-related demands from worker representatives

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Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has infected millions of people across the world, resulting in more than 200,000 deaths to date. While some countries have started to discuss an easing of their lockdown measures, the infections are just starting to spread in other parts of the world. In this report, we review the circumstances of those already in precarious, vulnerable employment[1]—the estimated 50 million gig workers around the world[2]—and the responses from platforms they work for.

Gig workers maintain essential public services during the pandemic—delivering food and household essentials to those self-isolating or practicing social distancing, and providing much-needed care services to those in need. Yet, the majority of them do not have access to employment protections such as health insurance and sick pay, and since they generally work hand-to-mouth, they may not have savings to fall back on. Government bailout schemes rarely cover them or even when they do, their conditions are too stringent for gig workers to qualify. Amidst this uncertainty, gig workers find themselves making a dangerous calculation: Stay at home and face financial ruin or continue working but risk getting ill.

At the same time, due to lockdowns, the demand for some services offered in the gig economy has declined or become impossible to offer due to rules for social distancing. While some platforms have stepped up their offered services to make up for their loss of business, workers still face important pressures and uncertainties as they can no longer be certain that they will have enough work, or that it will be sufficient to meet their needs.

Against this background, we have conducted a systematic study and comparison of platform responses during Covid-19.

Some platforms initially claimed that they were not going to provide any benefits to workers because their status on those platforms was that of "independent contractors". Many of these responses have changed significantly over the course of the pandemic. To understand this shift, we have created a database of Covid-19-related policies from platforms. We have relied on published policies of platforms, responses from trade unions and other worker groups, news and analytical reports that include worker experiences, and worker surveys.[3] This report is based on the database we have built with this documentation and the collaboration of the seven Fairwork country teams and our network of collaborators and partners. We have analysed the responses of 120 platforms across 23 countries (for details, see Appendix 1). The list of platforms within our survey is not representative of any particular country or sector. We were guided instead by links to companies which had publicly released information about protections offered to their workers. Our intention is to update this report

as more platforms adopt such policies. To do that, we invite readers to share corrections and new or updated policies with us: https://fair.work/contact/.

The five Fairwork principles[4] (Fair Pay, Fair Conditions, Fair Contracts, Fair Management, Fair Representation) have been used to categorise the measures uncovered (see Appendix 2). We have divided the Fair Conditions category into two sub-categories: one relating to the preventive measures platforms have taken to protect their workers from getting infected, and one relating to the measures in case workers get ill with coronavirus. For Fair Contracts and Fair Representation, we have not yet identified any policies that directly provide protection to workers. Indeed, as we shall discuss in this report, some companies have taken measures in those categories to actually make jobs less fair.

Findings

The Impacts of Covid-19

Evidence on the impacts of Covid-19 on gig workers is so far limited, fragmented and uneven. However, the reports that do exist reveal worrying outcomes. Half of platform workers report having stopped work either due to lack of demand for their services or because the platforms they work on have suspended their operations during the pandemic.[5] Reports on workers who continue to work during Covid-19 lockdowns illustrate that on average their earnings have dropped to around one-third of their pre-pandemic levels.[6] For instance, in Indonesia, Gojek moto-taxi drivers have reported a 70 percent loss of income and in the US, drivers who work for ride-hailing platforms such as Uber and Lyft have indicated a 65 percent drop in their income levels. For workers who worked on platforms that stopped their services entirely (such as some domestic work, personal grooming and beauty services), the fall in their earnings has been even sharper—unless the platform or their governments offered some kind of financial assistance.

The picture, however, is differentiated. Not all the demand for the services offered through the gig economy has declined: food, parcel and grocery deliveries being notable exceptions. In response to this demand, some platforms have expanded their services, particularly focusing on grocery deliveries (examples include Deliveroo in the UK, and Uber in the US, India and South Africa).

Although maintenance of work opportunities during Covid-19 has been welcomed, it has also significantly increased the risks workers are exposed to. There are several reports that reveal

the difficulties workers face in adhering to social distancing guidelines. Even though the majority of platforms have rolled out contact-free (and cash-free) delivery policies to minimise workers' contact with customers, these policies do not allow workers to fully-distance themselves. Delivery workers still have to come into contact with restaurant workers as they are picking up orders, with other platform workers as they are waiting for orders, and with other supermarket workers and customers as they are collecting groceries. Ride-hailing drivers and cleaning and care workers, by necessity, must also come into proximity with people outside of their immediate circle, thus exposing them to risk. Around the world, there have been stories of these workers becoming sick and tragically passing away due to the nature of their job.

Despite this, platform responses, as we will show in further detail in the next section, have been sporadic at best. Many policies seem to do a good job of protecting businesses and customers, but few are fully tailored to the needs of workers. This means that some workers report that they feel they have to continue working, even if they develop symptoms, simply because they do not have savings, sick leave or any other financial assistance to fall back on. For workers with caring responsibilities, this means that unless they work, they cannot provide for their families. And if they work, they expose them to further risks of contracting the virus.

Covid-19 has also magnified the lines of social stratification among workers. A substantial proportion of women work for platforms that offer care work, domestic work and beauty services. They report being unable to work either because platforms have suspended their services or because they have to remain at home to take care of their own families. Others report having to combine caring for their own children with care work or domestic work, including taking their children with them to workplaces—exposing both themselves and their children to the risk of contracting the virus. The sick leave policies extended by the platforms rarely include family members, and they do not provide assistance to workers who are unable to work due to caring responsibilities.

Migration background also plays a prominent role in whether or not workers are able to seek health care assistance or report poor health to their platforms. In the UK, for instance, most workers from outside the European Union have no recourse to public funds and need to pay a surcharge to access the National Health Service. Not being entitled to government benefits means that workers feel particularly pressured to work, even when they are ill, and they do not seek medical help, for fear of their visa status or hospital expenses. In London, an Uber driver from Bangalore, India, who contracted the virus sadly passed away having avoided

contacting the National Health Service for fear that his landlord would evict him on learning he was infected.[7]

In the following section, we will provide a more detailed analysis of the platform responses to Covid-19. As explained previously, we have structured these responses along the five principles of fair work: Fair Pay, Fair Conditions, Fair Contracts, Fair Management, and Fair Representation.

Platform Responses to Covid-19

Fair Pay

We found little evidence of attempts by platforms to compensate workers for the loss of earnings arising from Covid-19-related impacts, despite 20 percent of gig workers reporting a decrease in income and nearly 70 percent reporting complete loss of income.[8] Out of our sample of 120, we found only five examples of platforms that had any direct policies to increase pay rates or compensate for lost pay. Indian shopping platform Flipkart announced that they would provide double pay to their temporary workers.[9] Amazon has announced that across the world, including two countries which we surveyed (US and India), they would increase the hourly pay of all their workers (including part-time and delivery workers) by US$2 throughout April.[10] Getir from Turkey announced that they would provide payments to their delivery riders even on days when there is a nationwide curfew and they are unable to work.[11] Turkish ride-hailing platform Bitaksi temporarily reduced to zero the commission paid by drivers to the platform.[12] Other measures to compensate workers were also seen only very rarely and included encouraging clients to donate fees to workers where jobs were cancelled,[13] or provision of 'essential goods' to workers.[14]

Some platform workers loan or rent their vehicles either directly from the platforms or from other companies with which they have set up vehicle financing deals. With a reduction in the availability of jobs, workers can struggle to meet these costs. We found very little evidence of platforms seeking to mitigate workers' costs through offering deferral of loan or rental costs. Only seven platforms, in the ride-hailing and delivery sectors, were found to offer policies along these lines: DPD in the UK, Ola in India, Gojek in Indonesia and Didi Chuxing in China, Grab in Singapore and the Philippines, and Uber Eats in Egypt (through third party loans). Some of these platforms have also rolled out financial loans for workers, should they need any assistance with health care or other payments.[15]

More common were policies that sought to maintain the level of business running through the platform. 18 out of 120 platforms we surveyed offered such policies. Of those platforms,

roughly half waived or deferred client fees, such as delivery services and sign-up fees for restaurants, and the other half deferred fees for existing clients (typically restaurants) on their platforms. The other strategic measures rolled out by platforms were to increase the scope of the services offered. Ride-hailing platforms such as Uber, Grab and Lyft added food or parcel delivery services to their offering, and food delivery platforms such as Deliveroo added grocery delivery services. Uber in India, for instance, has partnered with two other platforms, Big Basket and Flipkart, to provide last-mile essential deliveries. Similarly, Grab in Singapore has partnered with third parties for GrabFood marketing programmes for various restaurants and grocery shops to help them reach more customers and generate additional sales. While primarily beneficial for the platforms, these measures can also help maintain levels of work, and hence workers' earnings.

Fair Conditions

At the beginning of the crisis, some platforms maintained that it was not their role to provide any protection to workers. It was rather claimed that workers should take responsibility in protecting themselves. For instance, when they closed down their hub (physical contact centre for workers) and provided basic advice about the virus and preventive measures, ride-hailing platform Bolt in the UK also initially announced that:

> *Bolt drivers are independent service providers who use our platform. Therefore, we cannot offer provisions for drivers who have to take time off sick.*[16]

Disinfectants were made available to workers "if they wanted them", and their statement on masks was that they are "ineffective, so it makes no sense to distribute them".[17] One week later, however, Bolt's response evolved and they started offering financial assistance.[18]

As shifts in policy have occurred, many of the changes implemented by platforms have related to improving the conditions of work. We have divided these responses into two, as some were directly aimed at preventing workers catching Covid-19 through physical and personal protection measures, whereas others offered supportive measures for workers, if they become ill (e.g. financial assistance and health insurance).

Preventive Measures

The most common response, by far, has been the preventive measures introduced by platforms, which have largely aimed to decrease the risk of workers contracting the virus. One of the most common platform policies has been to introduce "contact-free services" (58 percent of surveyed platforms have implemented some version of this). Some platforms have also rolled out cash-free services in order to limit physical exchange between platform

workers and customers. In Egypt, where cash continues to be the most popular form of payment, food delivery platforms such as Uber Eats and Otlob have started cash-free payment options. But it should be noted that "contact-free services" are mostly only contact-free for customers rather than workers. Delivery workers on many platforms cannot avoid coming into proximity with the restaurant workers from whom they pick up orders, nor can they refuse service to customers who still prefer to pay by cash. For other types of gig work, such as care work and domestic work, contact-free simply is not an option. In the ride-hailing sector, only three platforms (Bolt in South Africa, Grab in the Philippines and CleverShuttle in Germany) were reported to have implemented a policy to install plastic barriers in between drivers and passengers.

Another common response has been to distribute disinfectants (e.g. sanitising gels and sprays; 53 percent of platforms) and masks (28 percent of platforms) to workers. However, several worker accounts revealed that not all workers were able to access these provisions. There is evidence that some workers at platforms such as Uber, Uber Eats, Deliveroo, Rappi and Ola have either not been receiving promised supplies or have not been reimbursed for purchases made.[19] Nineteen percent of the platforms in our study indicated that they provided additional sanitisation measures to protect workers, such as disinfection of vehicles, warehouses and hubs. A smaller proportion of platforms decided to close their hubs entirely; mainly to protect their full-time management and worker liaison staff but also protecting workers. Others have ordered temporary closures: grocery delivery firm Getir, in Turkey, for instance, after discovering that some of its workers had been infected, announced that it would disinfect the warehouse that workers had been using, provide 14 days of paid sick leave to all workers who were working in that warehouse, and would only re-start their operations with a new team.[20]

Nearly half of platforms offered workers guidance on good hygiene practices and social distancing. While some claimed to be monitoring worker hygiene practices, in most cases what was offered by platforms rarely went beyond standard public health advice being issued by governments, with little cost incurred by the platform, or value added. For some workers, advice to avoid physical proximity and to wash hands was not particularly practical given the need to be in contact with clients or with other workers for deliveries, or the lack of access to bathrooms. Of course, it is important to emphasise that almost all of the above measures also serve to protect customers of platforms. We did, however, discover policies that were designed to protect customers without safeguarding workers. Some platforms measured the temperatures of the workers and shared this data with customers; a practice which is questionable on both medical efficacy and data privacy grounds. Other platforms (29 in total) announced that they would be temporarily suspending the accounts of workers

diagnosed with Covid-19. Doing so is likely a necessary step to prevent contagion. However, doing so without offering any financial support for workers during the period under which the account is suspended could have severe impacts on the livelihoods of workers in already precarious situations.

Illness-related Measures

Just over half of the platforms we surveyed instituted some form of sick pay for workers. The amounts paid differ substantially across countries but have typically been relatively limited. For example, Uber Eats in the UK has a policy of providing deliverers £30 per day plus an additional payment of up to £100 per week based on average earnings in the prior six months, for up to 15 days of illness.[21] Based on an eight-hour working day, this is at best around two-thirds of what a worker would earn even at the national minimum wage.

Ride-hailing platform Bolt has also issued a similar policy in the UK. They provide a flat rate of £100 per week to drivers for up to 14 days, if they meet the conditions of the policy, which include:

- Having completed 150 trips in the last six weeks before making the claim
- Having an active driver account in the last six weeks
- Having informed Bolt about contracting the virus or being required to self-isolate (and by whom)
- Having included one of the following documents: a signed doctor's note, a letter/ email from Public Health England, or a signed self-certification in the appropriate Bolt format.[22]

Assuming a five-day working week and eight-hour working day (and many drivers work much longer than this), this equates to less than one-third the national minimum wage equivalent.

Scheme accessibility has been a major topic of contention. Deliveroo riders[23] in the UK and Amazon workers in the US[24] have pointed out that even though the platforms rolled out financial assistance policies, they have not been able to access them. Some platforms required a medical sick note for workers to be able to access financial assistance: something that was impossible to obtain for anyone who was isolating (the UK has now started issuing isolation notes online). Some of those working for Instacart in the US have provided documentation but then found themselves locked in a cycle of challenges and arguments about what has been provided, at the end of which their claim has been rejected.[25] Finally, those who manage to surmount the barriers often find the rewards scant in practice: some Postmates delivery drivers in the US report receiving only US$30 in sick pay.[26]

Among the 120 platforms surveyed, 53 provided a flat-rate payment to workers for up to 14 days and only 16 of them pledged to pay workers at their usual rate. Two platforms extended this financial assistance to the families of the workers. Didi Chuxing in China, a ride-hailing platform, offered a one-time 5000 yuan (ca. US$700) subsidy to all drivers and their families who tested positive for the virus, in addition to other forms of financial assistance provided to the workers.[27] Another ride-hailing platform, Ola in India, announced that their "health cover" would provide both eligible drivers and their spouses with a sum of Rs 30,000 (ca. US$400) for up to 21 days.[28]

A further 15 platforms have set up financial support funds. Some, such as those from Ola in India, have clear goals, but in other cases it was unclear how workers would be supported and how workers could access these funds. Gojek, which provides on-demand services such as transport and food delivery in Indonesia, set up a US$6 million dollar fund for workers.[29] The executive team of the platform pledged 25 percent of their salaries over the next year to support the fund and forwent any salary increases. But the platform did not specify how exactly the money would be spent, how much would be available to workers, and how they could access the funds.

In terms of other illness-related benefits, only UrbanClap in India provided a clear policy that they would help with payments on health insurance or health savings schemes. There were also no examples of platforms adding a death-in-service payment for workers' families.

Fair Contracts

We have so far found no evidence of any platforms making beneficial changes to workers' terms and conditions or contracts during the Covid-19 outbreak. Quite to the contrary, some platforms have explicitly stated that any payments made during illness did not imply any change in a worker's employment status, and they conditioned the payments on workers signing statements to that effect. For instance, in the US, one Uber driver stated that in order to upload his doctor's note to the platform, he first had to agree to "onerous conditions", such as letting Uber collect personal information and acknowledging that the payments would not change his status as an independent contractor.[30] Conversely, in Germany where gig workers are already contractually-recognised as employees, workers have been able to access a number of benefits—particularly from government—such as formal pay loss compensation.

Fair Management

A limited number of platforms have adopted Covid-19-specific fair management policies. The first of these, seen in 25 platforms, did not guarantee income but instead guaranteed workers no loss of bonuses and incentives, even if they are unable to work during the pandemic lockdown period. Many platforms incentivise workers to commit to high levels of activity on the platforms. Through their continued engagement, they reach certain levels or categories (e.g. 'Uber Pro') and in return they receive additional bonus payments or they benefit from lower commission fees. However, if workers are inactive for a certain period of time—as is occurring during lockdowns—they risk losing their incentive levels. Examples of platforms acting on this include Uber, which is maintaining Uber Pro status for workers; Hermes in the UK which is guaranteeing existing delivery rounds for those returning from periods of sickness; and Amazon in the US, which announced that they would offer unlimited unpaid time off to their workers, without any penalties or loss of status.

The other key policy, seen only from Lyft, Uber and Uber Eats, was public issuing of statements that discrimination against particular worker groups by customers would not be tolerated. Such statements have been necessary where workers from particular ethnic or religious groups have been spuriously blamed for being responsible for spreading the virus, and where some customers have reportedly refused to be served by them.

Alongside these public communications, communication with workers has sometimes been problematic, with workers finding it difficult to get responses from platforms, especially given the closure of physical hub offices. Some, for example in the US,[31] report that it can take days to get a reply.

Fair Representation

We have so far found no evidence of platforms engaging with independent worker associations or any other groups representing the interests of workers. As summarised below, a number of trade unions and worker associations have collected evidence and published summaries of worker needs. To our knowledge, no platform has collaborated with any of these groups or even formally taken receipt of worker demands from them. Indeed there are claimed instances of platforms trying to suppress attempts by workers to organise and communicate their concerns to management.[32]

During Covid-19, we have seen thousands of workers walking out due to poor working conditions. More than 100 Amazon workers went on strike in New York City after reports emerged that several employees had tested positive and that they were still lacking

protective gear against the virus.[33] Similarly, workers at Instacart, the grocery shopping and delivery service in the US, engaged in a nationwide walkout in March to protest the platform not doing enough to protect them against contracting the virus or providing financial assistance, if and when they become ill.[34]

Scorecard: Platforms

	Policy Category	1. Fair Pay		2a. Fair Conditions (Prevention)				2b. Fair Conditions (Illness)			3. Fair Contracts	4. Fair Management		5. Fair Representation
	Sub-Category	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
UK	Deliveroo			◉		◉		◉						
	Uber Eats			◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	JustEat			◉										
	Uber		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	DPD		◉	◉				◉						
	Hermes			◉		◉		◉				◉		
	Kapten					◉								
	Syft				◉		◉							
	Bolt				◉	◉		◉						
Spain	Glovo			◉	◉			◉						
	Deliveroo			◉				◉						
	Just Eat			◉	◉									
	Uber Eats			◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Uber		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
Italy	Glovo			◉	◉									
	Deliveroo			◉	◉			◉						
	Just Eat			◉	◉									
	Uber Eats			◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Uber		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Domino's			◉										
Germany	Uber		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Clevershuttle			◉	◉		◉	◉						
	Lieferando			◉	◉									
DK	Wolt			◉	◉	◉	◉	◉						
	Hungry.dk			◉										

	Policy Category	1. Fair Pay		2a. Fair Conditions (Prevention)				2b. Fair Conditions (Illness)			3. Fair Contracts	4. Fair Management		5. Fair Representation
	Sub-Category	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
France	UberEats			◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Uber			◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Deliveroo			◉	◉		◉	◉						
	Frichti			◉	◉									
	Just Eat			◉	◉									
US	Amazon	◉		◉	◉		◉	◉				◉		
	Uber Eats			◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Uber		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Lyft		◉	◉	◉	◉		◉					◉	
	Postmates			◉		◉		◉						
	Doordash			◉		◉		◉						
	Instacart			◉	◉			◉						
	Grubhub			◉	◉	◉		◉				◉		
Australia	Uber		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Uber Eats			◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Deliveroo			◉				◉						
	Menulog			◉										
	Domino's			◉										
	Coles			◉	◉									
Chile	Uber		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Uber Eats			◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Didi				◉			◉						
	Cornershop													
	Papa John's			◉										
Turkey	Yemeksepeti			◉	◉									
	Banabi			◉										
	Bitaksi	◉												
	Migros Hemen			◉										
	Istegelsin			◉	◉									
	Getir	◉		◉	◉		◉	◉						

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	Sub-Category	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
Egypt	Uber		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Uber Eats			◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Careem			◉	◉			◉						
	Otlob			◉	◉	◉		◉						
	Swvl			◉	◉	◉		◉						
	Jumia													
UAE	Uber		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Uber Eats			◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Deliveroo			◉	◉	◉	◉							
	Talabat			◉	◉			◉						
	Careem			◉	◉									
	Zomato			◉	◉	◉								
Morocco	Careem			◉	◉			◉						
	Yassir													
	Jumia				◉	◉	◉							
	Jumia Food				◉	◉	◉							
Lebanon	Careem			◉				◉						
	Zomato				◉		◉							
	Toters			◉	◉									
Algeria	Temtem													
	Yassir			◉	◉									
	Wesselni													
	Careem			◉				◉						
Tunisia	Yassir													
	Founa			◉	◉									
	IntiGo			◉	◉									
	Jumia			◉										
	Jumia Food			◉										
Jordan	Careem			◉	◉			◉						
	Uber		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Talabat			◉	◉									
	Basket			◉	◉									

	Policy Category	1. Fair Pay		2a. Fair Conditions (Prevention)				2b. Fair Conditions (Illness)			3. Fair Contracts	4. Fair Management		5. Fair Representation
	Sub-Category	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
India	Amazon	◉		◉	◉		◉	◉				◉		
	Uber		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Ola		◉		◉		◉	◉						
	Zomato			◉		◉	◉	◉						
	Swiggy			◉	◉	◉	◉	◉						
	BigBasket			◉	◉									
	Grofers			◉	◉	◉	◉	◉						
	HouseJoy				◉	◉								
	Dunzo			◉	◉	◉								
	UrbanClap			◉	◉	◉	◉	◉	◉					
	Flipkart	◉		◉	◉	◉	◉	◉						
China	Didi Chuxing		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉						
	Meituan Peisong			◉	◉		◉	◉						
	Ele (Fengniao Peisong)			◉	◉		◉	◉						
	FlashEx			◉	◉		◉	◉						
	Dianwoda				◉									
	DADA Kuaisong			◉	◉		◉	◉						
South Africa	Uber		◉	◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Uber Eats			◉	◉		◉	◉				◉	◉	
	Bolt			◉	◉	◉								
	SweepSouth					◉	◉	◉						
	OrderIn													
	MrD			◉										
	getTod				◉									
	NoSweat													
	M4Jam					◉								
	Picup			◉	◉									
ID	Grab			◉										
	Gojek		◉					◉						
PH	Grab		◉	◉			◉	◉						

	Policy Category	1. Fair Pay		2a. Fair Conditions (Prevention)				2b. Fair Conditions (Illness)			3. Fair Contracts	4. Fair Management		5. Fair Representation
	Sub-Category	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
SG	Grab		◉					◉						
	Deliveroo			◉	◉	◉	◉	◉				◉		

Inclusion of a platform under one of the 'fair' policy categories does not mean we regard its current response as meeting fair work standards. For a full list of fair policies, please refer to the Policy Recommendations section.

This scorecard—which specifically highlights pay-related policies given their importance to workers—represents an interim assessment conducted up to 17 April 2020. We would welcome details of updates to existing platform policies, and addition of platforms and countries. Please provide links to online sources or analysed tabulation of platforms for assessment via our contact form: https://fair.work/contact/.

Analysis and Conclusions

Overall, what workers want and need—as reflected in union requests and individual workers' testimony—is primarily pay-related, i.e. to maintain their income. Platforms have largely, with the exception of some which are providing some level of sick pay, left this to governments. Instead, platforms have focused mainly on preventive measures which are predominantly aimed at protecting and reassuring customers; although they also happen to protect workers to some extent.

While governments have often torn up their ideologies and rulebooks in order to respond to an unprecedented threat, platforms have not. Except, perhaps, for the introduction of sick pay, they have been incremental rather than radical in their responses. We see this incremental approach across the board, in the choices being made by some platforms: offering loans rather than grants to workers with financial difficulties; deferring rather than waiving loan repayments; simply telling workers to disinfect rather than monitoring that they do so; providing general health and safety guidance information rather than bespoke

personal advice; paying minimum sick pay rather than maintaining past earnings during illness.

Despite calls from prominent politicians[35] to do so, platforms have not altered contracts to reclassify workers as employees or dependent contractors, and have been keen to avoid a ratchet effect, whereby measures taken now could later be interpreted as equating workers with employees. This is notable in the language being used with sick pay: platforms typically do not label the financial support provided as 'sick pay' but instead describe it as "a one-time pay adjustment" or as "a support payment". Nor is there evidence of any significant engagement with worker associations and representatives. Many of the measures taken by platforms can be seen as beneficial primarily to the platform and/or its customers, for example in seeking to maintain its level of business, with the benefits to workers being only a side effect. It was therefore relatively rare for any measure introduced by platforms to be solely for the benefit of workers.

It is early to accuse platforms of "fair-washing": of making well-publicised public statements about their actions to help workers, and then deliberately failing to deliver on those. However, policies often use the language of the get-out clause rather than the language of the guarantee: "We are actively working to provide…" rather than "We will provide…"; "You can apply for …" rather than "You will receive …"; or that personal protection equipment will only be provided at "select locations". The evidence of the next few weeks will therefore be important: to see whether the majority of workers truly start to benefit from provision of personal protection equipment, sick pay, and other measures.

Platforms are undoubtedly worried about their businesses during Covid-19. A number are struggling and there is little evidence of so-called "disaster capitalism" whereby platforms would seek to use Covid-19 as an opportunity for extraction of additional profit. However, "compassionate capitalism" has also been in rather short supply. There have been public-spirited responses from platforms, including making substantial donations to healthcare and relief efforts, and offering free services to healthcare workers. But there have also been mean-spirited responses: making workers pay for the personal protection products necessary to reduce risk of infection while doing their job, denying sick pay to workers who have fallen ill, raising technical barriers to claiming sick pay, and allegedly dismissing those trying to organise for better pay and safety for workers whose lives and livelihoods are endangered.

Some platforms have stepped up to provide sick pay for workers but, as yet, too many of these responses are falling into a gap between rhetoric and reality. Others have opted for buck-passing: their strategy of financial support for workers is simply a set of online links to

government-provided schemes; their strategy of worker protection is a set of online links to government-provided public health information. They interpret "wash your hands" less in terms of the virus and more in terms of their responsibilities to their workers; throwing that responsibility onto government for financial support and onto individual workers for their own protection from coronavirus.

Gig work has always involved a risk asymmetry between the worker and the platform, with the worker bearing most of the risk burden.[36] It is easy to see that simply by following the visible trail of gig workers robbed or murdered, killed and injured in traffic accidents, or taking their own lives when unable to keep up with loan repayments. But those asymmetries are sharpened during the Covid-19 pandemic: it is workers who bear the risk of losing their jobs; it is workers who bear the risk and serious potential consequences of infection and loss of income, while simultaneously providing essential services for societies in lockdown.

Of course, platforms face demands from—and are accountable to—multiple stakeholders: investors, shareholders, customers and governments, as well as workers. But workers are the foundation of the pyramid without which no value can be delivered to any other stakeholder. At present, too many find themselves in the no-win situation summed up by one worker from Chile: "either I'm starving or I'm dying of coronavirus".[37]

Policy Recommendations

In this section we look at what ideal platform responses would be, against each of the five Fairwork principles. In doing this, we draw on published statements from gig worker unions and associations of the actions they are seeking. To date this includes statements from nine groups, drawn from the UK (Independent Workers of Great Britain[38], United Private Hire Drivers[39]), US (Rideshare Drivers United[40], Silicon Valley Rising[41], Gig Workers Collective[42]), Italy (Riders Union and Deliverance[43]), India (Indian Federation of App Based Transport Workers[44], OTU Drivers and Owners Association[45]) and Indonesia (Two-Wheel Movement Union - GARDA, Online Driver Association - ADO[46]). We also draw on the charter of recommendations recently coordinated by the Centre for Internet and Society and Tandem Research in India[47], and on discussions with representatives of United Private Hire Drivers (UK), Gig Workers Matter (US), and Rideshare Drivers United (US).

Although we list recommendations against all five principles, it must be noted that far and away the top priority across all groups and all countries is the need for action on loss of income: through full loss of jobs; through partial loss of pay from declining demand; and

through loss of pay during illness, enforced quarantine or requirement to care for family members.

In setting out these recommendations, it is recognised that workers vary in their level of dependency on platform work. Recommendations on fair conditions (prevention), fair contracts, fair management, and fair representation should apply to all workers, regardless of level of work. Those on fair pay and fair conditions (illness) would be targeted at those workers who are significantly dependent on earnings from the platform for their livelihood and/or would be provided in proportion to the extent of earnings derived from a platform.

We also recognise differentiation of policies by national context. For example, that provision of healthcare insurance is of limited value in countries like the UK with free, universal access to healthcare (though this does not apply to migrant workers). Or, for example, that pay loss compensation by platforms in Germany may be unnecessary given gig workers' contractual status affords them access to government financial assistance.

Fairwork Principle	Recommended Platform Action
1. Fair Pay	• Rapid access to a minimum income (equivalent to at least the local living wage) for those unable to work due to fall-off in demand, legislative restrictions, or to pre-existing health vulnerabilities • Reduction in costs (e.g. platform commission/fees) or increase in per-gig payments for those still working but with reduced earnings • Additional hazard pay for those facing additional risks while working during the pandemic • Waiver (not deferral) of work-related costs such as loan repayments • Facilitated access to interest-free emergency loans • Plan for post-lockdown income recovery measures which may include higher per-gig payments or lower commission fees • Inclusion in income compensation and financial deferral schemes of all those who have worked for the platform during the past three months
2a. Fair Conditions (Prevention)	• 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 • Daily sanitisation of vehicles and upstream locations: warehouses, hubs, etc. • Free Covid-19 check-ups for workers and their families

Fairwork Principle	Recommended Platform Action
2b. Fair Conditions (Illness)	• Accessible sick pay from platforms that applies universally to all those unable to work while ill or quarantined or while providing essential care for sick family members, and which relates to pre-pandemic average earnings • Sick pay policies that specify precisely and openly how much workers will be paid, with simple application processes which do not impose onerous health documentation requirements that sick workers cannot meet • Extended sick pay for those workers hospitalised by Covid-19 infection • Provision of general medical insurance cover • Provision of life insurance cover or other death-in-service benefits
3. Fair Contracts	• No temporary or permanent alteration of contracts during the period of the pandemic to the detriment of workers
4. Fair Management	• Ensure all Covid-19-related communications are in a form that can be readily accessed and understood by all workers • Set up an accessible communications channel for workers for all issues relating to Covid-19; adequately staffed for rapid resolution of issues • Transparent reporting of policies, actions and funds initiated by platforms during the pandemic • Adhere to data privacy standards in collecting and sharing data about workers • No loss of incentives, bonus levels or future availability of jobs for those temporarily deactivated as a result of Covid-19 • Public statements to customers and others that discrimination against certain worker groups during the pandemic will not be tolerated
5. Fair Representation	• Formal receipt of, engagement with, and action on Covid-19-related demands from worker representatives

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Appendix 1: List of Platforms Analysed

Country	Platforms
UK	Deliveroo, Uber, Uber Eats, Just Eat, DPD, Hermes, Kapten, Syft, Bolt
Spain	Glovo, Deliveroo, Just Eat, Uber, Uber Eats
Italy	Glovo, Deliveroo, Just Eat, Uber, Uber Eats, Domino's
Denmark	Wolt, Hungry.dk
Germany	Uber, Clevershuttle, Lieferando
France	Uber, Uber Eats, Deliveroo, Frichti, Just Eat
US	Amazon, Uber, Uber Eats, Lyft, Postmates, Doordash, Instacart, Grubhub
Chile	Uber, Uber Eats, Rappi, Didi, Cornershop, Papa John's
Turkey	Yemeksepeti, Banabi, Migros Hemen, Bitaksi, Istegelsin, Getir
Egypt	Uber, Uber Eats, Careem, Otlob, Swvl, Jumia
UAE	Uber, Uber Eats, Deliveroo, Talabat, Careem, Zomato
Morocco	Careem, Yassir, Jumia, Jumia Food
Lebanon	Careem, Zomato, Toters
Algeria	TemTem, Yassir, Wesselni, Careem
Tunisia	Yassir, Founa, IntiGo, Jumia, Jumia Food
Jordan	Careem, Uber, Talabat, Basket
India	Amazon, Uber, Ola, Zomato, Swiggy, BigBasket, Grofers, HouseJoy, Dunzo, Flipkart, UrbanClap
Indonesia	Grab, Gojek
Philippines	Grab
Singapore	Grab, Deliveroo
China	Didi Chuxing, Meituan Peisong, Ele（Fengniao Peisong), FlashEx, Dianwoda, DADA Kuaisong
South Africa	SweepSouth, Uber Eats, Uber, Bolt, OrderIn, Mr D, getTOD, NoSweat, M4Jam, Picup
Australia	Uber, Uber Eats, Deliveroo, Menulog, Domino's, Coles

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Appendix 2: List of Covid-19-Related Platform Policies

Policy Category	Sub-Category	Platform Action
1. Fair Pay	Pay Loss Compensation	Additional payments to compensate for loss of income, including increase in pay rates
	Financial Deferral	Emergency loan facility
		Asking renters to reduce vehicle / other rental costs
		Loan repayment suspension
		Deferral of loan/rental costs
	Income Opportunity Attempted Compensation	Expansion of scope of service to try to increase business for platform and workers (e.g. ride-hailing adding delivery; meal delivery adding grocery delivery)
		Waiver of customer fees to try to maintain level of business
		Stopping onboarding of new workers to preserve income for existing workers
2a. Fair Conditions (Prevention)	Physical Protection (Workers)	Contact-free delivery, including no signature and no cash payment for delivery
		Physical barriers installed in vehicles
		Suspend accounts of customers diagnosed with Covid-19
		Additional sanitisation by platform, e.g. of vehicles, warehouses, hubs, etc.
		Contact-free management via closure of physical hubs
		Destroying all unpackaged goods, against contamination
		Social distancing / other measures in upstream supply chain (e.g. food preparation and grocery picking / packing)
	Physical Protection (Consumers / General Population)	Suspend accounts of drivers diagnosed with Covid-19
		Travel ban policy in line with the latest guidelines given by local / national authorities
		Suspension of some services
	Personal Protection	Provision of disinfectant (gel, spray) to workers

Policy Category	Sub-Category	Platform Action
		Provision of masks for workers
		Instruction to follow best hygiene practices
		Mandatory use of PPE, including monitoring of worker hygiene practices
	Virus Safety Knowledge	Provision of standard virus health practice information
		Provision of virus safety training
	Healthcare Assistance	Medical checkups, including temperature scans
		Access to general health advice
		Access to personal health advice (paid / provided by platform)
2b. Fair Conditions (Illness)	Sick Pay	Sick pay for workers who are ill or in mandatory quarantine (14 days)
		Usual pay rate for workers who are ill or in mandatory quarantine (14 days)
		Financial support fund (use to be clarified but usually for sick pay)
		Workers made to sign agreements that sick pay was pandemic-specific and does not change employment status
	Insurance	Platform provision of health insurance, or credit on health savings account
	Death Benefits	Provision of death benefits
3. Fair Contracts	[No example policies found]	[Beneficial changes to worker T&Cs / contracts / status as a result of Covid-19]
4. Fair Management	Algorithmic Penalty Protection	No loss of incentive level despite lower level of work
		Unlimited unpaid time off without penalty
	Anti-Discrimination	Platform statement to customers that discrimination against certain worker groups during Covid-19 (e.g. on spurious hygiene grounds) will not be tolerated
5. Fair Representation	[No example policies found]	[Formal receipt of, engagement with, and action on Covid-19-related demands from worker representatives]
		Dismissal of workers if they engage in organisation of workers during Covid-19

Policy Category	Sub-Category	Platform Action
Other	Donation	Substantial donation or other assistance (e.g. free services) to national health services, community funds or similar
	Hiring	Hiring initiative for unemployed workers (does not benefit current workers)
	Service Contraction	Contraction of scope of services, e.g. to emergency provision only

Key: items in blue text appear to be particularly for the benefit of the platform but with some potential benefit for workers; items in orange text are likely negative for workers; items in red text are negative for workers.

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Credits and Funding

Fairwork draws on the expertise and experience of staff at the University of Oxford, the University of Cape Town, the University of the Western Cape, the University of Manchester, the International Institute of Information Technology Bangalore, and the Technical University of Berlin. Project staff work to translate our principles into measurable thresholds, conduct rigorous research to evaluate platforms against those thresholds, and publish our results in a transparent manner.

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Please cite as: Fairwork (2020) The Gig Economy and Covid-19: Fairwork Report on Platform Policies. Oxford, United Kingdom.

Funders: Fairwork is financed by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), commissioned by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) through the Global Challenges Research Fund (ES/S00081X/1), and the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 838081).

Special Thanks to: The project team is deeply grateful to Arturo Arriagada, Maren Borkert and Ou Lin for their inputs to the research project and the database, and Shakhlo Kakharova and colleagues at GIZ who also contributed to the database. We also thank Tandem Research for their publicly accessible research database.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any other agency, organisation, employer or company.

A Collaboration Between:

University of Oxford

Manchester 1824 The University of Manchester

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Funded by:

Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung

giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

E·S·R·C Economic & Social Research Council

GCRF Global Challenges Research Fund

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[3] At the time of writing, members of the Fairwork team are also in process of undertaking surveys of workers in Fairwork programme countries, and conducting interviews with worker representatives. The results of this survey will be published in a later report.

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[14] Grofers in India has provided essential goods to workers at the end of their workdays to help with their finances and also to incentivise them to return to work the next day.

[15] Ola in India established a "Drive the Driver Fund" (including donation of one year's salary from its CEO). The fund offers interest-free micro-credit payments to drivers of up to Rs3,600 (c.US$50) for immediate expenses and is expected to impact over 10,000 families. Credit will be set off against earnings on the platform after Covid-19. Likewise, Grab in Philippines has rolled out a "Grab Car" fund for drivers significantly affected by the crisis.

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