

Media Release

Mr Tim Pallas MP

Treasurer

Minister for Economic Development

Minister for Industrial Relations



Monday, 28 March 2022

REPORT: WORK GENDER INEQUITIES EXTEND TO GIG ECONOMY

The need to improve conditions for gig economy workers is underlined in a new report commissioned by the Andrews Labor Government that highlights the gender inequalities entrenched in the on-demand economy.

Minister for Women Gabrielle Williams and Minister for Industrial Relations Tim Pallas today released the *Gendered Dimensions of Digital Platform Work* report which found that structural barriers to women's workforce participation and fair payment are present in platform work.

The report, produced by a Queensland University of Technology research team, summarises Australian and global studies on gender and digital platform work and found the gig economy can "both reproduce and exacerbate existing gender inequalities in work".

It found women earn significantly less than men in gig-economy roles – between 10 per cent and 37 per cent lower. For the same work, on average men earned \$2.67 per hour more than women.

Some platforms provide the option for clients to filter worker profiles according to preferred characteristics including gender, which may enable discrimination.

Research shows that in Australia and globally men are more likely to perform platform work that involves software development and technology, transport and food delivery and skilled trade, while women are more likely to participate in work such as clerical and data entry, sales and marketing support, writing and translation, and care work.

In Australia women's desire for flexibility as a motivating factor to undertake platform work has been found to be more closely linked to scheduling their hours around unpaid care responsibilities.

The Labor Government commissioned the *Inquiry into the Victorian On-Demand Workforce* and has accepted its recommendations either fully or in principle.

The Government is devising standards for platforms operating in Victoria – matters being considered include options available to the Government to achieve compliance with the standards.

Recommendations from the Inquiry included that standards be developed on fair conditions and pay, consultation about work status and arrangements, consideration of parties' bargaining power, fair and transparent independent dispute resolution, worker representation (including the ability to seek better work arrangements), and safety.

To read the gig economy gender report, go to engage.vic.gov.au/inquiry-on-demand-workforce.

Quote attributable to Minister for Women Gabrielle Williams

"The pay gap between men and women remains an issue across almost every sector, and the gig economy is no different. Gig economy companies must do more to address the drivers of gender inequality in the workplace."

Quote attributable to Minister for Industrial Relations Tim Pallas

"The gig economy can be a winner for workers, but for too many people – including many women – platform work can fail them on the test of fairness. We're working to improve conditions in Victoria."

Quote attributable to Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer Nick Staikos

"Investigation is important to get to the heart of issues and we'll continue to talk to the community as we form the most appropriate standards for this growing section of the economy."

Media contact: Shaun Phillips 0407 553 763 | shaun.phillips@minstaff.vic.gov.au