

The rise of the “just-in-time workforce”: On-demand work, crowd work and labour protection in the “gig-economy”

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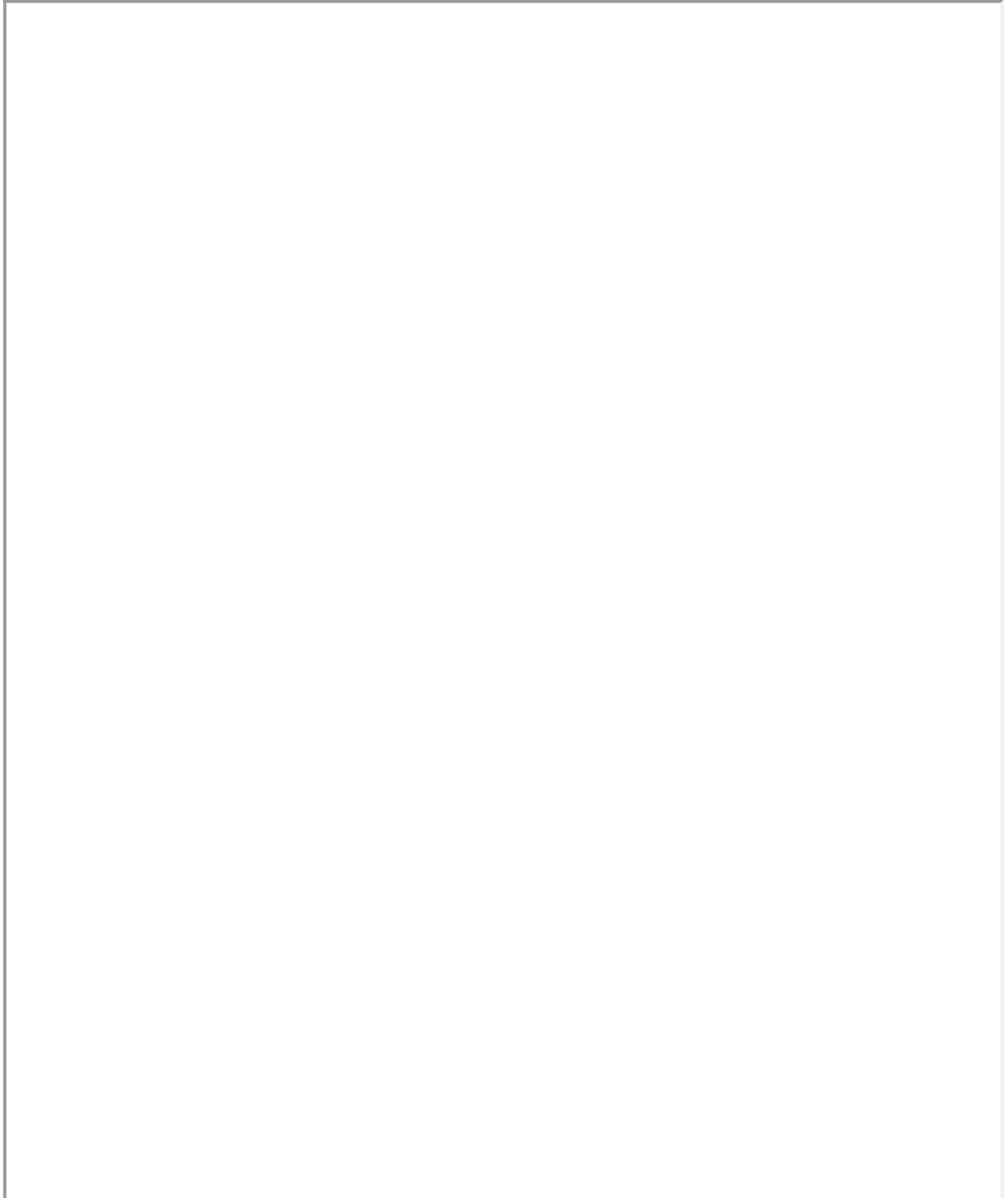
Why did we select this research?

The challenges the gig-economy poses to the world of work are enormous: simplistic and hastened responses aimed at deregulation and shrinking workers' protection must be avoided if opportunities stemming from the gig-economy and future technology-enabled developments in the economy are to be seized for everyone. This study is highly relevant as it discusses the implications of activities in the gig-economy and some policy proposals are critically analysed.

Key findings

The study argues that while the gig-economy provides a number of benefits, including good matching of job opportunities and flexible working schedules, it is also leading to a severe commodification of work. The implication of this, De Stefano explains, is that gig-economy workers experience heightened difficulty in acceding to Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, as defined by the International Labour Organisation. The author then investigates the specific issues concerning misclassification of employment relationships that surround the gig-economy, while also critically reviewing the proposal of introducing a new category of workers between 'employees' and 'independent contractors'.

De Stefano suggest that a new category of employment would not solve most of the labour issues related to the gig-economy, and would indeed increase complexity and uncertainty for businesses and workers in this sector. Instead the author proposes a series of policy changes, including stronger advocacy for gig work to be fully recognised as work, measures to allow for portability of workers good ratings from one platform to another, and some universal protections regardless of employment status.



Reference

De Stefano, V. (2015). The rise of the 'just-in-time workforce': On-demand work, crowd work and labour protection in the 'gig-economy'.

