

'Little improvement for UK gig economy workers' since major report highlighted their plight

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Little has improved for gig economy workers in the UK since the release of a major European report into the platform economy a year ago, a

conference on work and employment heard.

Professor Chris Forde told the British Sociological Association event in Belfast today [Thursday, 13 September 2018] that despite recent court cases in their favour, "for many workers, the experience of platform work remains highly insecure and precarious."

Professor Forde, of the Leeds University Business School, was a co-author of a report issued by the European Parliament last year which surveyed 1,200 [gig economy](#) workers in eight countries, including the UK.

The report found that British gig workers had a median average pay 47% lower than the national hourly [minimum wage](#) for the UK, among the worst rate in the countries studied.

Professor Forde told the conference that, since then, "many gig economy workers are still unable currently to benefit from a range of basic employment rights and forms of social protection.

"A commonly held image of the platform [worker](#) is someone who is just doing gig work, choosing as much work as they want, and being well rewarded for it.

"But most platform workers seem to be using this form of work to supplement income and hours from other jobs. Worryingly, however, their average hourly rates of pay in the platform economy are often very low, working out well below the minimum wage in countries like France and the UK.

"Classified as self-employed contractors in most countries, platform economy workers are often not entitled to the minimum wage for the work they do.

"They are less likely to have access to key forms of social protection, and where they do have access to these, this access typically comes from an extra, regular job, since in [platform](#) work they are typically treated as independent contractors.

"Recent tribunal and court cases in the UK have seen some gig [economy](#) workers classified as 'workers', yet many others remain as independent contractors and self-employed."

Provided by British Sociological Association

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