

# Low skilled, low paid workers of the world don't unite, research shows

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Workers in low-skilled, low paid employment aren't prone to band together and form a common bond, new research has shown.

The belief that members of the "precariat—the group of workers found in insecure, low-waged employment—are united by working contexts in order to rally against their bosses does not necessarily hold true, according to the study.

The research, led by Dr. Constantine Manolchev from the University of Exeter Business School, showed that the idea of a formed and unified precariat tends to be over-stated, and that workers don't necessarily unite together with their peers to display group dissatisfaction in the workplace.

The research is published in leading journal, *Economic and Industrial Democracy*.

"The idea of the existence of a formed and unified 'precariat' is increasingly taken for granted," said the lead author of the report, Dr. Constantine Manolchev from the University of Exeter Business School.

"Our research suggests that this tends to be over-stated. We need to also take into account personal life histories and working trajectories, individual experiences and aspirations; so their relationship with their boss, their own sense of pride in their job and their personal circumstances all play a part.

"What we've identified is that just because a [worker](#) is a part of that particular social group and has negative attitudes towards the workplace doesn't mean that they are necessarily united with their peers. We believe more research needs to be carried out in this area."

Precariat workers generally fall into three main groups—workers who have lost access to secure or meaningful employment, migrants & ethnic minority workers who have left their home countries and educated members of the group who don't have access to a career path.

They also differ from one another in terms of their working relationships with managers, social status or meaningful social relationships. For example, while [migrant workers](#) often recognise that they are in low-paid UK jobs, their wage still equates to three to four times their salary at home, which gives them a [different perspective](#) to many other workers in similar roles.

The research was also carried out by Professor Richard Saundry and Professor Duncan Lewis from the University of Plymouth. The team carried out 77 in-depth interviews with cleaners, care workers and [farm workers](#) in the south-west of England and also reviewed research data already produced in this arena.

While there were common characteristics within the group, the researchers were unable to find evidence of a clear collective, or a 'class' interested in far-right messaging or engaging in populist politics for its own agenda.

**More information:** Constantine Manolchev et al, Breaking up the 'precariat': Personalisation, differentiation and deindividuation in precarious work groups, *Economic and Industrial Democracy* (2018). [DOI: 10.1177/0143831X18814625](https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X18814625)

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