

# In Robust Job Market, Gig Workers' Satisfaction on Par With Wider Workforce

**Poll: 67% of those in the gig economy use contract jobs as supplementary income; 33% rely on it as main source**

By [Sam Sabin](#)

- Hispanic workers account for 20% of the gig workforce, double of that in the overall workforce (10%); African-Americans make up 12% of gig workers, 8% of all.
- Gig workers were split on whether they'd stay in the gig economy: 51% said they would, but 49% would prefer a full-time position.
- 51% of all adults employed in the last six months said they'd pick more flexibility and shorter hours even if it meant less pay; 34% preferred more pay despite longer hours.

As the explosion in the use of the internet and mobile devices has fueled the growth of freelance, contracting and piece work, worries about the so-called gig economy have risen in tandem. Lacking company-provided benefits such as health insurance and employee-sponsored retirement savings accounts, many gig economy workers generally face more constant instability in their jobs than their counterparts who work full time at companies.

But a new Morning Consult [survey](#), conducted online Aug. 16-19, shows that adults who identify as being a gig economy worker report being just as satisfied with their jobs, financial situations and family life as the average adult who has been employed in the past six months. Gig workers also report similar satisfaction rates on pay, benefits, required hours, work-life balance and other working conditions.

Out of a national sample of 2,566 adults employed in the last six months, 19.4 percent, or 498, self-identified as gig economy workers, which the survey defined as those who accrue a considerable amount of their income from a series of freelance and contract jobs and included both full-time and part-time gig workers. The full survey has a margin of error of 2 percentage points; the subsample of gig economy workers has a margin of error of 3.9 percentage points.

In the survey, 80 percent of gig workers said they are satisfied with their current job, and 59 percent are satisfied with their financial situation. That is compared to 78

percent of all workers who said they are satisfied with their current jobs and 62 percent satisfied with their current financial situation.

Gig workers surveyed also show similar satisfaction with their pay (69 percent), benefits (64 percent) and required hours (75 percent) to the entire workforce, where 68 percent are satisfied with pay, 67 percent with benefits and 78 percent with the required hours.

Yet Louis Hyman, director of Cornell University's Institute for Workplace Studies, said it's important to consider the context for gig work and job satisfaction, especially considering that contractors on certain gig platforms were sold a specific image.

"There is this fantasy that you can work in this space and make good money even though you don't have a job or skill set more complicated than driving a car," he said. "That's an issue. It's not delivering to working-class Americans any better than the rest of the economy."

The survey data is set against the backdrop of a robust wider U.S. economy: The latest Labor Department employment data, released Sept. 7, showed 201,000 jobs were added in August, and hourly wages rose 2.9 percent from a year earlier. The unemployment rate stayed at 3.9 percent.

How much the gig economy has grown in recent years is a matter of debate, with researchers noting that varying terminology and research methods in surveys can yield different results.

"Some people just look at people who work on online platforms as the gig economy; some look at the broader categories of independent work as a proxy of the gig economy," Alastair Fitzpayne, executive director of the Aspen Institute's Future of Work Initiative, said in a phone interview.

Among gig workers in the survey, most of them are male (53 percent), white (62 percent), between the ages of 18-44 (63 percent), make under \$50,000 each year (55 percent), don't have a college degree (56 percent) and a plurality are based in suburbs (49 percent).

Hispanic workers make up twice as much of the gig workforce (20 percent) as they do the overall workforce (10 percent). The gig workforce also has more African-American workers (12 percent), compared to the overall workforce (8.8 9 percent).