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NATIONAL WOMEN'S
BUSINESS COUNCIL



ADVISORS TO
THE PRESIDENT,
CONGRESS,
AND THE SBA

WOMEN IN THE **GIG ECONOMY**

THE GIG ECONOMY IS ON THE RISE

The gig economy is on the rise, and women account for an outsized share of the increase in the temporary self-employed workforce over the past 20 years.

Although gig work is a stepping stone to business ownership that it may be good for more women to experience, there are also important implications of women's self-employment for technical assistance and support providers.

THE PAY GAP

WOMEN WORKING IN THE FAST-GROWING GIG ECONOMY ARE **BEING PAID FAR LESS THAN MEN.**

Men's overall average
hourly rate is

48%
HIGHER THAN
WOMEN'S
overall average
hourly rate

An earlier pre-pandemic study found a 28% hourly rate disparity among the self-employed—disparities may be widening instead of shrinking. This pay gap is worse than estimates of pay disparities in equivalent roles for male and female employees.

Gendered pay disparities held, and sometimes even increased, when comparing independent workers in the same professions. This demonstrates that inequities are not solely based in gendered segregation into better-and worse-paying fields.

THE SUPPORT GAP

WOMEN IN THE GIG ECONOMY HAVE **BROAD PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.**

Many independent women workers are also caregivers.

The most frequently reported challenges of being self-employed, after inconsistent and unpredictable income, work, and hours, were managing client relationships, receiving benefits, and managing administrative tasks and time available.

HELP NEEDED

CHARACTERISTICS AND EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN IN TODAY'S GIG ECONOMY POINT TO DEMAND FOR:

- More information about pay rates and standards
- Matchmaking events and introductions to potential clients
- Managed pools to achieve economies of scale in purchasing back office support, benefits plans and family care services
- Outreach and education that help self-employed women identify themselves as business owners and access business assistance services

SOURCES

New Research from FreshBooks Discovers a 28% Wage Gap Among Self-Employed Women and Men | FreshBooks

Self-Employment: How Independent Contractors Fuel the Growth of New and Existing Microbusinesses | Association for Enterprise Opportunity

Women as Independent Workers in the Gig Economy | Mercatus Center

Gender Pay Gaps Far Worse for Women in the Gig Economy | World Economic Forum

The Freelancer Pay Gap | ZenBusiness Inc.