



حوار أبوظبي بين الدول الآسيوية
المرسلة والمستقبلة للعمالمة

Abu Dhabi Dialogue among the Asian
Labour-Sending and Receiving Countries

ON UNDERSTANDING EXPATRIATE GIG WORKERS IN THE ABU DHABI DIALOGUE MEMBER STATES

FRAGOMEN



ADDRESSING LEGAL, SOCIAL AND CAREER IMPLICATIONS

January 2026

Executive Summary

Section 1 provides an overview of the gig economy, its origins and global expansion, key social, technological and economic drivers, as well as the diversity of its participants and business models. Despite its strong growth, inconsistencies in definitions and limited data hinder the development of uniform and effective policies.

Section 2 examines the classification of gig workers and their access to social protection. While some labour-sending countries have introduced reforms to extend coverage, substantial gaps persist, particularly in economies with high informality rates.

Section 3 reviews immigration and labour mobility frameworks for gig workers within the ADD corridor. In GCC countries, employer sponsorship models remain dominant, leaving foreign gig workers with few alternative options, such as dedicated freelance visas. In labour-sending countries, the regulatory focus remains on protecting their nationals working abroad.

To enable a more sustainable approach to gig work within the ADD corridor, this policy report recommends:

1. **Establishing a unified, contextual definition of gig workers** within the ADD corridor. The definition of “Digital Platform Worker” that has been put forward by the International Labour Organization (ILO), though still under review, would appropriately capture this segment of the labour market.
2. **Integrating gig work metrics into national labour force surveys** across ADD member countries to enable accurate data collection and evidence-based policies.
3. **Ensuring access to fit-for-purpose social protection** for all workers, employees and independent contractors.
4. **Developing dedicated immigration pathways** for gig and freelance workers, along with accompanying dependents, to better reflect modern work models, and facilitate long-term residency.
5. **Promoting upskilling and training initiatives** in partnership with digital platforms to ensure gig workers have access to relevant skills development that can enhance their adaptability and economic mobility.
6. **Encouraging and facilitating the creation of new digital platforms for independent contractors** to enhance opportunities for gig workers and facilitate talent mobility within the corridor.

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FOREWORD

The gig economy is shaping the future of work. Driven by digital platforms, mobile technology and changing labour market expectations, gig and freelance work is creating countless work opportunities. This transformation has created new opportunities for flexibility, income generation and labour mobility. However, gig work has also raised complex legal and policy challenges, particularly for foreign workers and the businesses that depend on them.

In light of these changes, the Seventh Ministerial Declaration of the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) in 2024 identified the growing importance of the gig and sharing economy as a key area for research. Member States requested the ADD Secretariat to conduct a thematic research study to improve the understanding of legal, social and career implications of the gig economy for foreign workers. This includes examining compliance frameworks, worker protections, access to benefits and career development opportunities, as well as considering strategies that promote sustainable growth in this evolving segment of the labour market.

In response to this mandate, the present policy paper analyses the status of foreign gig workers in ADD countries. It explores how emerging work models intersect with national labour and immigration frameworks and assesses the extent to which current policies enable or constrain new forms of freelancing or short-term / project- and techdriven engagements for foreign nationals. The paper addresses key questions regarding legal definitions, social protections, pathways, best practices and opportunities for innovation, particularly from the perspective of businesses operating within the corridor.

The research methodology combines:

- Desk-based legal and policy analysis;
- A dedicated survey shared with private sector companies and International Organisation of Employers (IOE) members across the ADD corridor; and Interviews with immigration experts.

The results of this study will be presented at the Eighth ADD Ministerial Consultation, which is scheduled to take place on 31 January and 1 February 2026. Special thanks go to Fragomen LLP and the team comprising Mona Ahmed, Ali Haider, Murtaza Khan, and Marcin Kubarek, as well as IOE members and IOE team comprising Akustina Morni and Stéphanie Winet.

1. DEFINING THE GIG ECONOMY: ACTORS, PLATFORMS AND BUSINESS MODELS

The gig economy is transforming labour markets around the world, particularly through digital platforms that facilitate short-term, project-based arrangements between workers and service requestors. Platform work represents just one model of work, which digital technology has, in recent years, made available to a much wider pool of workers. This section outlines the origins of the gig economy and its key drivers, as well as the variety of platforms and business models driving this growing segment of the labour market.

1.1 Origins and Drivers of the Gig Economy

The term “gig work” first emerged around 1915 to describe short-term, task-based exchanges for payment. Originally used by musicians to denote one-off performances, it was not until the early 2000s that the gig economy gained widespread recognition with the advent of digital platforms such as Uber, TaskRabbit and Upwork (World Bank Group, 2024). These platforms have revolutionized labour markets by facilitating temporary, freelance engagements through digital interfaces, enabling workers and service requestors to connect seamlessly on demand (Singh, 2024).

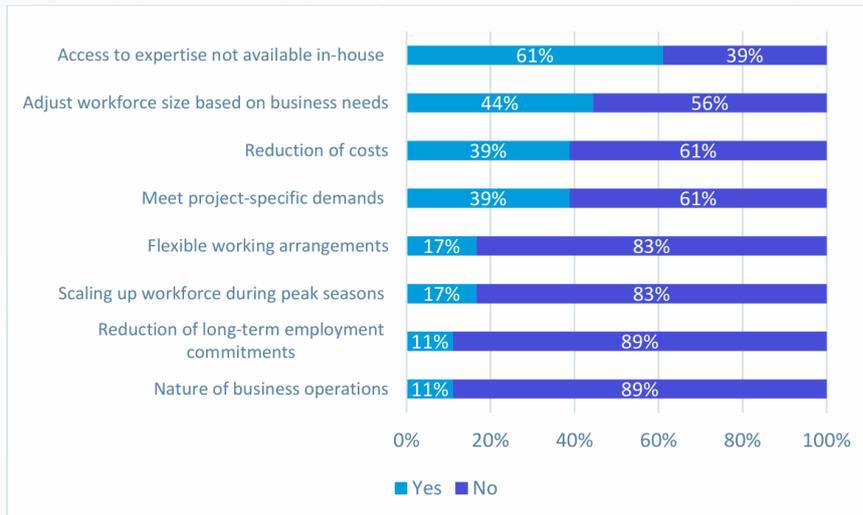
Gig work serves as a major economic enabler by expanding access to valuable services - particularly in underserved areas - creating significant consumer surplus, stimulating overall demand through more efficient labour-market matching, enabling micro, small and medium-sized enterprises as well as larger businesses to access specialised and agile workforces to reach broader, more dispersed client bases, and ultimately providing consumers with more and better service options across time and place. Platform work provides an income option for workers left out of the traditional labour markets, helping vulnerable workers fill employment gaps, and enhancing employability by maintaining labour market attachment, providing work experience, and facilitating training, skills development and broader capacity-building.

Multiple factors have accelerated the global expansion of the gig economy:

- **Technological innovation:** The widespread adoption of smartphones and digital platforms has created channels for matching gig workers with clients. Algorithms enhance matching efficiency and digital payment systems simplify transactions.
- **Globalization:** Businesses increasingly outsource tasks worldwide, including labour markets in emerging economies. This global reach enables companies to scale cost-effectively.
- **Changing worker preferences:** Many workers, especially younger cohorts, value the autonomy and flexibility that project-based work offers over traditional full-time roles. The gig economy’s flexible structure aligns well with these preferences.
- **Economic necessity:** In the context of economic shocks, such as the 2008 financial crisis and the COVID19 pandemic, digital work has proven to be an alternative source of income to mitigate shortages in formal employment (Joshi et al., 2024).

These global drivers are also reflected in the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD) corridor, where surveyed private sector companies and employer federations¹ highlight supplementing in-house expertise (61%) and adjusting the workforce size based on business needs (44%) as the primary reasons for engaging digital workers² (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Primary reasons for engaging digital workers



Source: Fragomen Survey on Engaging Digital Workers Across the ADD Corridor, 2025.

1.2 Gig Economy Platforms

The growing prevalence of gig work is largely driven by digital platforms that use technology to efficiently match labour supply with demand. These platforms vary in their operational models, but for the purposes of this research paper, they can be categorised as follows (Singh, 2024; Lasya KR, 2024):

- **Location-based platforms:** These platforms facilitate services that are tied to physical locations, such as ride-hailing ,food delivery and personal services (e.g., Uber, Careem, Talabat, Care.com, Helping).
- **Online freelance platforms:** These platforms connect workers with remote clients for digital tasks such as programming, design and writing or for talent services (e.g., Upwork,Fiverr, Catalant, TalentNet, Zhubajie).
- **Microtasking platforms:** These platforms break down digital work into small tasks that can be completed remotely (e.g., Amazon Mechanical Turk, FigureEight).

¹ For more details on the survey methodology refer to Annex on page 28.

² The terms "gig worker" and "digital worker" are used interchangeable in this policy paper.

The ILO is in the process of formalising a definition of “digital labour platform,” which currently refers to a legal person, or where applicable under national law, a natural person that, through digital technologies, using automated decision-making systems, organizes and/or facilitates work performed by persons for remuneration or payment, for the provision of service, upon request of the recipient or requestor, regardless of whether that work is performed online or in a specific geographic location” (ILO, 2025).

Regardless of the type of platform, a minimum level of digital literacy is required to access digital devices and navigate platform-based interfaces. However, the required skills vary across platform categories. Location-based platforms generally require lower formal skill levels, while online freelance platforms demand higher technical skills. Microtasking platforms, on the other hand, exhibit more variable, task-specific skill profiles.

The platform economy is a fast-expanding global phenomenon, with under 200 digital platforms in 2010 globally to currently thousand of platforms connecting millions of workers worldwide. 70% of platform providers are headquartered in North America, Europe and Central Asia. In contrast, only 3 to 4% of platforms operate in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Although internet and mobile coverage is widespread in the MENA region, the ease in which platforms can scale varies across countries.

In the GCC, the UAE and Saudi Arabia have built some of the region’s most advanced digital payment ecosystems, yet constraints remain in the broader regional context. These include limited cross-border interoperability, regulatory inconsistencies and gaps in digital financial literacy. Such factors can make platform operations more complex when expanding beyond individual national markets (World Bank Group, 2023). In addition, while there is a concentrated move towards self-sponsorship frameworks and freelancing permits in some ADD member states, the broader immigration and labour regulations in many instances are still not conducive to such ways of working.

There are nearly as many business models as platforms, each shaping the nature of work and working conditions, and these differing models influence which regulations apply to a given platform. As most gig economy platforms operate as two-sided marketplaces, revenue is often generated through commissions. Alternative business models have also emerged, including freemium services where basic access is free but premium features incur a charge; ad-supported platforms; subscription-based systems and worker-owned cooperative platforms that aim to enhance worker agency (ILO, 2023).

Table 1: Examples of digital platforms prevalent in ADD countries

Platform	Operating Countries
Careem	United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman
Talabat	United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman
Justlife	United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman
Dawsat	Saudia Arabia, United Arab Emirates
Urban Company	United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia
Grab	Indonesia, Vietnam, Philippines and Thailand
Gojek	Indonesia
Ola	India
Pathao	Bangladesh, Nepal
Angkas	Philippines
Bykea	Pakistan
GoGet	Malaysia
Upwork	Effectively global
Fiverr	Effectively global
Freelancer.com	Effectively global

1.3 Scale of the Gig Economy

Measuring the size of the gig economy is challenging due to the variety of definitions and data collection methods. It is estimated that between 4.4% and 12.5% of the global workforce engages in gig work (World Bank Group, 2023), whereas the International Labour Organization (ILO) reports that approximately 16% of workers participate in digital platform work (ILO, 2021).

A range of terms, such as “gig workers”, “digital workers” and “platform workers” are used to describe individuals participating in the gig economy. Although these terms are often used interchangeably in literature and policy discourse, the descriptions adopted here reflect the commonly assumed distinctions between them. In practice, these concepts overlap but are not identical: gig workers typically engage in short-term, task-based contracts outside of traditional employment relations; digital workers operate primarily online; and platform workers access work opportunities through digital platforms, such as ride-hailing or freelancing platforms (Singh, 2024; Joshi et al., 2024). While this paper does not examine these definitional issues in depth, it is important to acknowledge that greater clarity and consistency in terminology at the national level would help remedy the current interchangeable use of these terms.

For the purposes of this policy paper, the term "gig worker" will be used in alignment with the definition of a "digital platform worker" proposed by the International Labour Organization (ILO). While still under review, the definition is expected to be agreed and adopted by June 2026. It refers to any individual employed or engaged to work:

- for the provision of service organized and/or facilitated by a digital labour platform;
- for remuneration or payment;
- regardless of their classification of status in employment (ILO, 2025).

According to this definition, gig workers can be directly employed by a platform company, independent contractors, or in a third category in some jurisdictions. Different regulations apply to different groups. Workers in the platform economy have highly diverse profiles and motivations, ranging from income generation, social interaction to skills development, complexity further heightened by workers’ frequent movement between platform and non-platform jobs. At the same time, platforms themselves operate under a wide variety of business models that determine which regulations apply. Understanding these distinctions is essential for effective policy design, especially since many challenges attributed to platform work also arise in traditional work arrangements and may already be addressed through existing instruments.

Across the ADD corridor, gig work is gaining traction in both labour-sending and labour-receiving countries. In the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region, between 8% to 17% of the workforce are estimated to be gig workers. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar have particularly high participation rates (see Table 2). For women and youth, the gig economy offers more flexible and accessible employment opportunities than in traditional labour markets. This holds potential for reducing unemployment and supporting inclusive economic growth across the region (Darwish et al., 2025).

Evidence from the ILO shows that there are significant variations in how digital labour platforms are used as a source of income. Approximately 30% of workers on online platforms, including freelancing and microtasking, report that platform work is their main source of income. By contrast, individuals engaged in location-based platforms, particularly those in passenger transport and delivery services, exhibit a much higher degree of income dependence. In these sectors, around 80–90% of individuals rely on platform work as their main source of income (ILO, 2021).

Table 2: Overview of Gig Workers in GCC countries, 2018

Country	Gig workers (in millions)	% of total workforce
Saudi Arabia	2.1	12
United Arab Emirates	1.5	17
Qatar	0.4	15
Kuwait	0.3	9
Bahrain	0.2	13
Oman	0.2	8

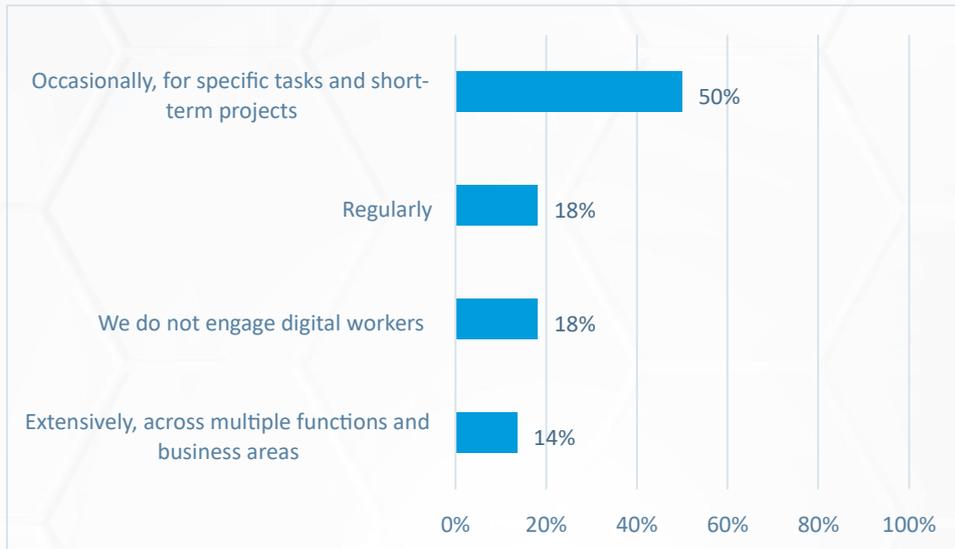
Source: Darwish et al., 2025 based on Sabrina Saxena (2018), *The Growth of the Gig Economy*, Al Tamimi & Co.

In line with the rise of diverse forms of work and flexible working arrangements in the post-COVID era, gig work has gained significant traction in recent years. However, the availability of post-pandemic, GCC-specific data remains limited. Despite this, there are clear indications of an upward trend in gig work uptake across the region compared to the figures in Table 2. For example, Saudi Arabia’s national freelance platform recorded more than 2.25 million registrants in the first three quarters of 2024 (Saudi Press Agency, 2024). While other GCC countries have not released comparable statistics, several indicators point to a similar trajectory. In the UAE, the introduction of new self-sponsored visa categories, such as the Golden Visa and Green Visa, has facilitated greater participation of freelancers. Similarly, Kuwait reported a 227% increase in the issuance of freelance licenses in Q1 2025 compared to the previous quarter (Arab Times, 2025).

In labour-sending countries, the available data is less robust. In India, for example, the gig workforce is projected to grow from 7.7 million in 2020–21 to 23.5 million by 2029–30, accounting for approximately 7% of the nonagricultural workforce (ILO, 2024). In the Philippines, it is estimated that around 4% of the employed population are engaged in digital platform work (ILO, 2025). However, these estimates may be subject to different definitions and categorisation of income sources as primary or secondary, as well as reliance on self-reported surveys.

Surveyed private sector companies reported varying approaches to engaging digital workers. While half of the respondents occasionally engage digital workers for specific tasks or short-term projects, only a minority use them across multiple business functions (see Figure 2).

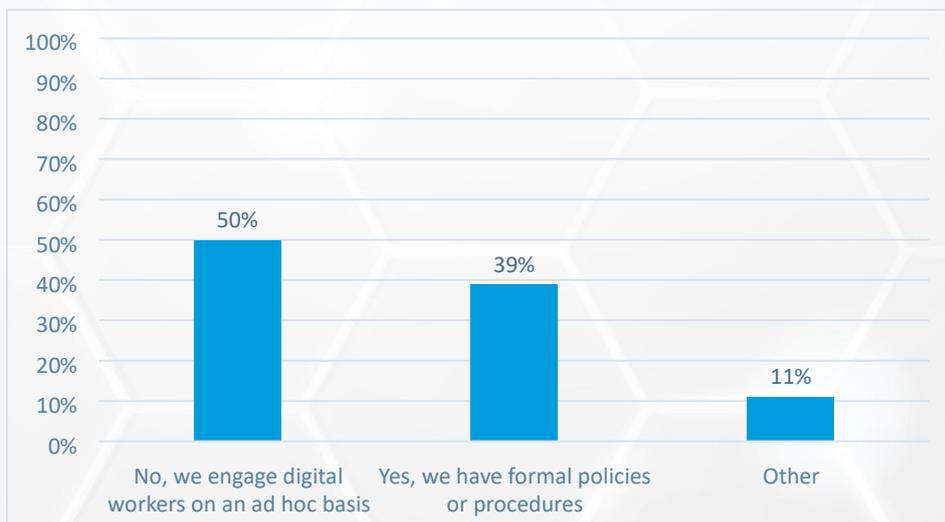
Figure 2: Reliance on digital workers to support business operations



Source: Fragomen Survey on Engaging Digital Workers Across the ADD Corridor, 2025.

This task-specific engagement may also explain why most respondents rely on general workforce policies when engaging digital workers, rather than adopting dedicated guidelines tailored to these arrangements (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Internal policies and guidelines for engaging digital workers



Source: Fragomen Survey on Engaging Digital Workers Across the ADD Corridor, 2025.

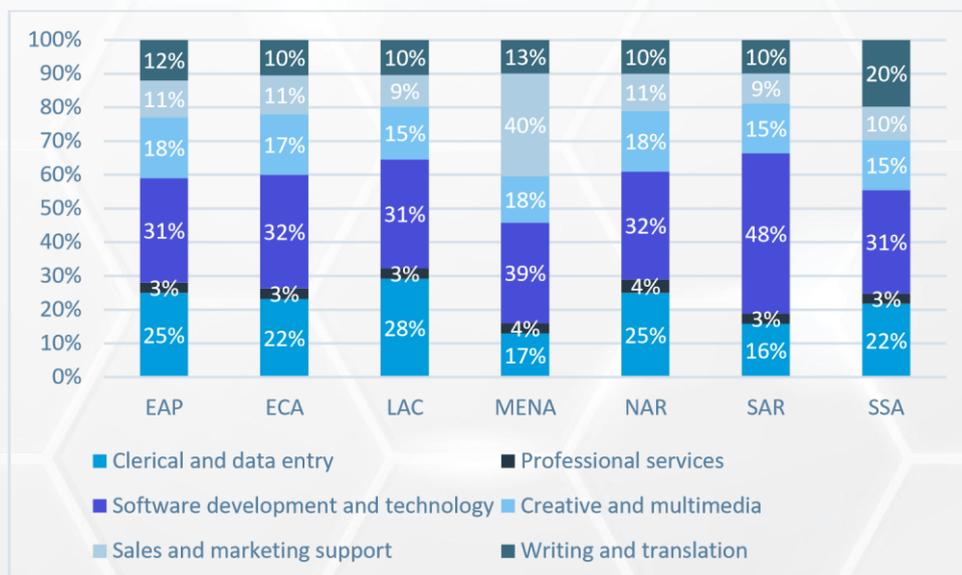
1.4 Industry Trends in the Gig Economy

The gig economy has experienced rapid growth across a range of sectors. Transportation-based services, including ride-hailing and food delivery, constitute the largest segment in the gig economy, contributing \$61.3 billion or 46% of total disbursements in 2018, and an estimated \$137 billion in 2023. These disbursements were driven by 17.13 million independent contractors in 2018, and an estimated 31 million independent contractors in 2023 (Mastercard, 2020). This growth reflects the sustained demand for on-demand mobility and the relatively low barriers to entry for workers. Close behind were asset-sharing platforms such as Airbnb and Turo, which have transformed property ownership into an opportunity to generate income. This sector reached \$122.6 billion in disbursements in 2023, benefiting more than 14.4 million people worldwide.

Other growing segments include household services and handmade goods (HSHG), as well as professional services. The household services sector, which covers childcare, home maintenance and craft sales, grew from \$4 billion dollars in disbursements in 2018 to \$25 billion in 2023. This sector engaged with 14.8 million people, many of whom were women or informal workers seeking flexible income. Meanwhile, professional services such as freelancing and micro tasking grew from \$6 billion in 2018 to \$13.4 billion in 2023. Platforms such as Upwork and Freelancer enable remote, knowledge-based digital work, which connect skilled professionals with international clients.

While these global trends illustrate the scale and diversification of gig work, regional demand for digital labour varies. As illustrated in Figure 4, Southeast Asia shows consistently high demand for software development and technology services, which are also sought after in other regions but to a lesser extent. In the MENA region, sales and marketing support is in the highest demand, accounting for approximately 40% of online labour activity. This likely reflects the region's rapidly growing digital economy and e-commerce sector, in which customer acquisition, digital outreach and online advertising have become key business priorities.

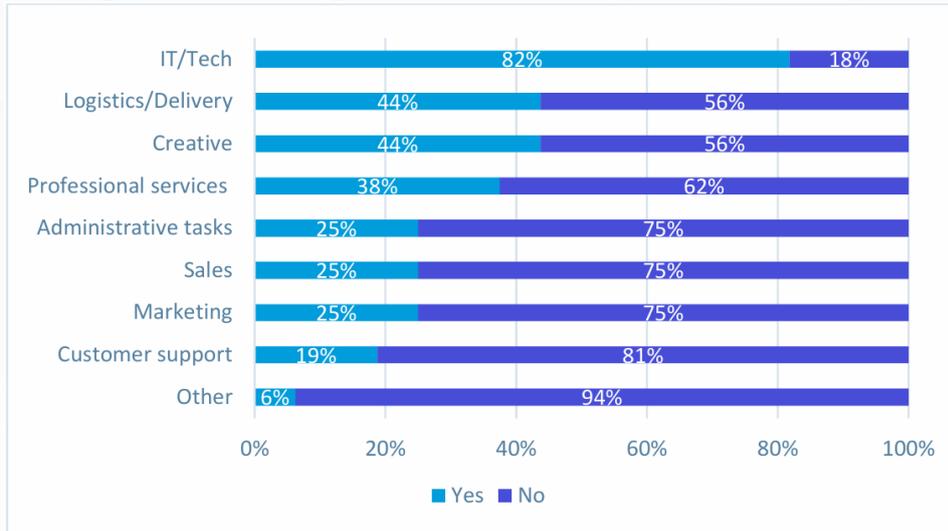
Figure 4: Demand for digital work, by occupation and region



Note: EAP= East Asia and Pacific; ECA=Europe and Central Asia, LAC=Latin America and Caribbean; MENA= Middle East and North Africa, NAR = North America region; SAR = South Asia region; SSA = Sub-Saharan Africa Source: World Bank Group, 2023 based on Online Labour Index data.

In line with these regional trends, surveyed employers across the ADD corridor report that digital workers are primarily engaged in IT/technology, creative and logistics/delivery roles (see Figure 5).

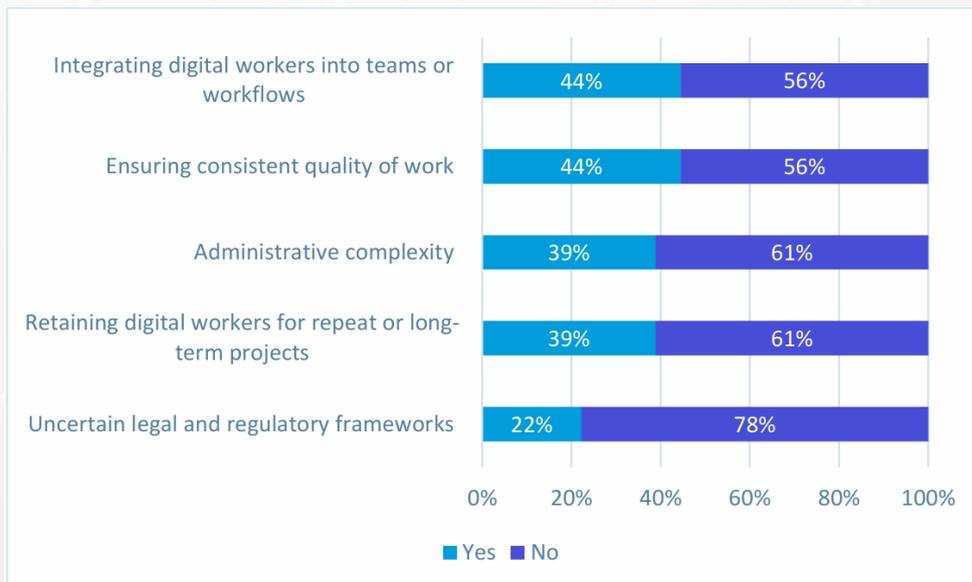
Figure 5: Key roles filled by digital workers



Source: Fragomen Survey on Engaging Digital Workers Across the ADD Corridor, 2025.

Despite the unique benefits of the gig economy, survey results also highlight the challenges that private sector companies face when engaging gig workers. The main challenges reported include the administrative complexity of tasks such as preparing contracts, onboarding and processing payments, as well as difficulties integrating gig workers into existing teams and workflows (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Main challenges in engaging digital workers



Source: Fragomen Survey on Engaging Digital Workers Across the ADD Corridor, 2025.

1.5 Gender Dynamics in the Gig Economy

Women's participation in the gig economy is consistently higher than in traditional labour markets, reflecting the accessibility and flexibility offered by digital forms of work. According to the World Bank, women account for 42% of online gig workers across 17 surveyed countries, compared with 31.8% in the general labour force. In the MENA region, women represent 28% of online gig workers, with notable participation in Lebanon (38%), Saudi Arabia (33%) and the UAE (32%). While these figures highlight the inclusive potential of gig work, data across all GCC countries remains limited (World Bank, 2023).

Flexibility is the primary driver of women's engagement in gig work. Digital and remote platforms allow women to choose when and where they work, which enables them to balance paid work with caregiving and household responsibilities. Evidence from a randomized evaluation by J-PAL illustrates this dynamic: women offered flexible, internet-mediated gig jobs were three times more likely to accept employment than those offered traditional office roles, with participation increasing from 6% to 18%. Participants also reported improved ability to manage childcare and greater personal safety (J-PAL, 2023).

Women also turn to gig work to supplement income, especially where traditional employment opportunities are limited, including in remote areas. Digital platforms also offer opportunities for women to build digital skills, strengthen their employability and access training or other support services that are not typically available through traditional employment channels. In contexts where social norms restrict women's mobility or labour market participation, gig work provides an avenue to earn an independent income (UNDP, 2024).

In summary, this section highlights the limited availability of consistent and comparable data on gig workers across the ADD corridor. This restricts cross-country analysis and informed policymaking. The lack of clear distinctions between the terms 'gig workers', 'digital workers' and 'platform workers' further impedes the development of targeted regulations and policy frameworks for the sector. Without precise definitions, it is difficult to identify the specific protections and policy interventions that each group requires.

2. CLASSIFICATION OF GIG WORKERS AND ACCESS TO SOCIAL PROTECTION

As gig work becomes more widespread, questions about worker classification and access to social protection have emerged as key topics in policy discussions. This section examines the policy approaches to these issues.

2.1 The Classification of Gig Workers

Globally, the vast majority of gig workers are classified as independent contractors. For many, gig work provides an accessible entry point into the formal labor market, lowering barriers to participation and empowering people to generate income on their own terms. Self-employed gig workers consistently report that they value their control over when, where, and how they wish to work. The flexibility of self-employment allows individuals to supplement income from full- or part-time jobs, earn across multiple platforms simultaneously, and work during hours that fit their schedules, no matter how sporadic those hours may be.

Experts expect the gig economy to continue to grow, driven in large part by the preferences of workers, who are increasingly seeking flexible work opportunities. Governments can support the creation of opportunities in the platform economy by providing incentives to emerging local platforms, investing in technology education, and simplifying business registration for self-employed platform workers, if needed. A thriving platform economy helps drive economic development and social inclusion.

Workers and businesses value clear classification rules that apply economy-wide. To the extent governments may deem it necessary to update their laws, embracing the ILO's forthcoming definition of "platform worker" could help promote legal clarity across the region. Additionally, embracing a uniform definition could also serve as a basis for policies that aim to promote an enabling environment for the gig economy, in partnership with businesses.

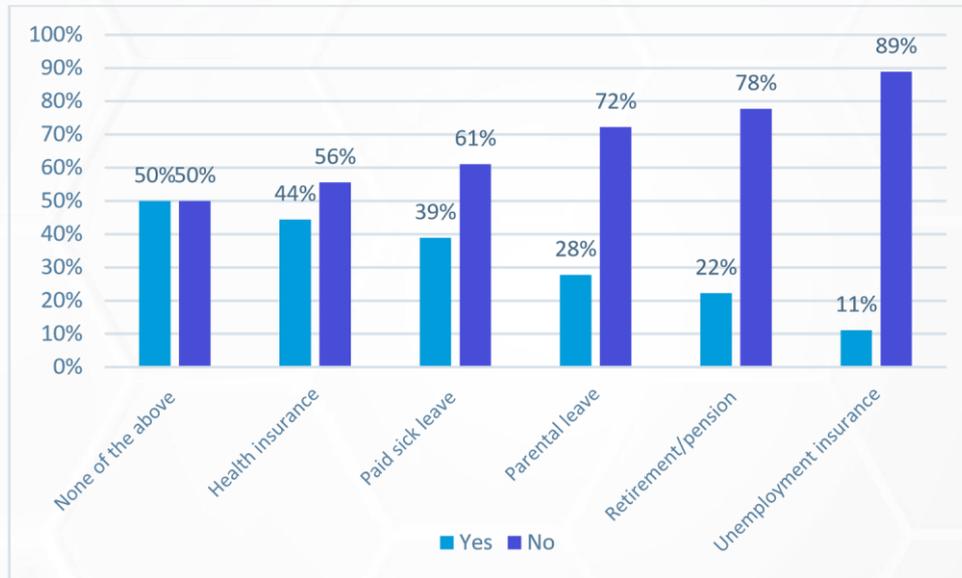
2.2 Social Protection for Gig Workers

Globally, millions engage in gig work, often as a supplementary source of income. The rise of part-time and flexible work arrangements reflects the autonomy that many individuals seek, but it also highlights gaps in systems that were designed around full-time employment.

Nevertheless, limited access to adequate protections, particularly in low-income countries, raises important policy concerns. There is a clear need for social protection schemes that respect the independence of gig workers while ensuring they have access to essential benefits (World Bank, 2023). At the same time, digital platforms already contribute to public systems through tax revenue and can play a role in extending coverage where feasible, especially in countries where gig work is governed through civil or commercial contracts rather than labour laws.

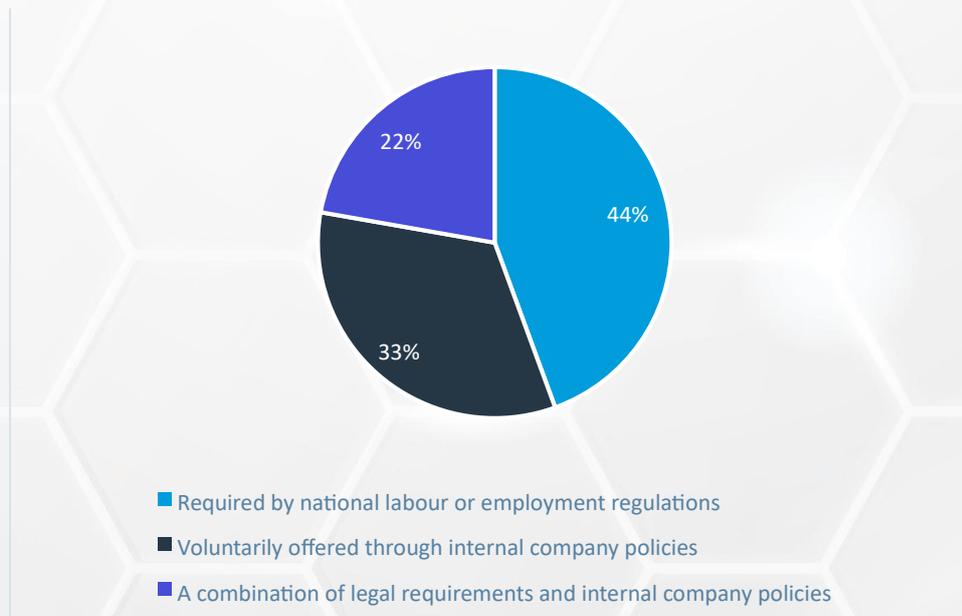
Evidence from the ADD corridor reflects these broader trends. Survey data shows that half of all participating companies offer some level of social protection to digital workers, even though these workers are not internally classified as employees. The benefits offered in such cases are limited, typically paid sick leave or health insurance (see Figure 7), but they indicate growing private sector awareness of the gaps. In some cases, these measures are introduced voluntarily as internal policy, while in others they arise from legal or regulatory requirements (see Figure 8).

Figure 7: Social protection benefits offered to digital workers



Source: Fragomen Survey on Engaging Digital Workers Across the ADD Corridor, 2025

Figure 8: Rationale for offering social protection benefits

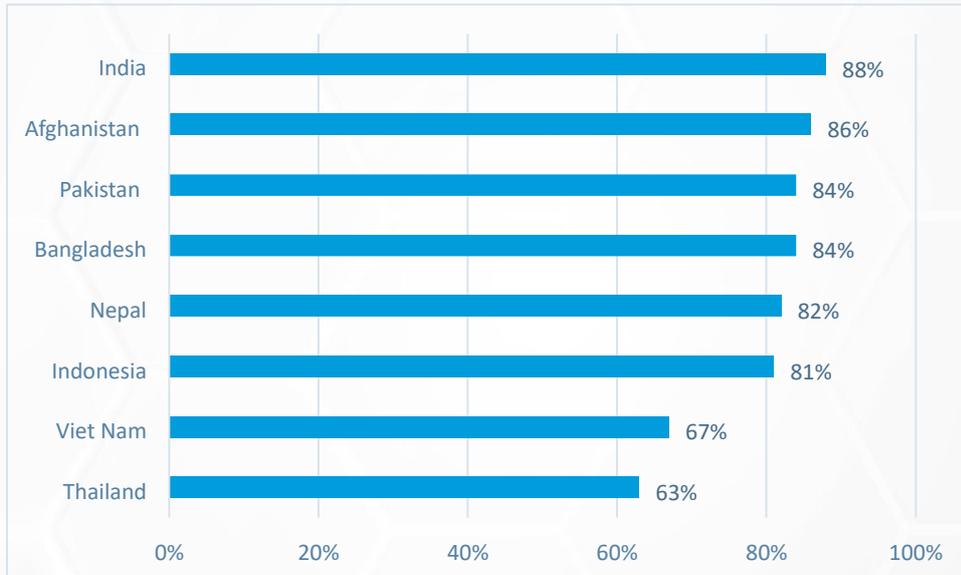


Source: Fragomen Survey on Engaging Digital Workers Across the ADD Corridor, 2025.

Additional Barriers to Social Protection

Most social protection systems are not designed to cover those who are self-employed or working in the informal economy. This exclusion affects not only gig workers, but a broader group of workers. These challenges are particularly pronounced in countries with high rates of informal employment. Many of these countries are major labour-sending countries in the ADD corridor. As Figure 9 shows, informality rates in these countries often exceed 80%, which highlights the structural obstacles to accessing social protection.

Figure 9: Informal employment rate across selected labour sending countries in ADD corridor



Note: Informality rate data are from the most recent year available. Afghanistan (2021), Bangladesh (2023), Indonesia (2023), India (2024), Nepal (2017), Pakistan (2021), Thailand (2024), Viet Nam (2023). Source: ILO Stats, available at: <https://ilostat ilo.org/topics/informality/>.

In such contexts, workers have not only limited access to social protection schemes tailored to their needs, but oftentimes insufficient knowledge of the benefits they are entitled to. Research shows that low awareness and information gaps are key factors that limit enrolment in social protection programmes (ILO, 2017; OECD, 2021).

2.3 Policy Responses of Labour-Sending Countries

Several labour-sending countries within the ADD corridor have begun extending protections to gig workers in response to the expansion of the gig economy. India stands out for its legislative efforts to redefine social protection frameworks for gig workers³. The 2020 Code on Social Security is the first national law to explicitly define and include gig and platform workers within its scope. The code establishes the Social Security Fund, which provides benefits such as health insurance, maternity leave and retirement protection to gig and platform workers. It also requires gig and platform workers to register on the national e-Shram portal, which aims to streamline access to benefits and create a comprehensive database of informal and gig workers. While these provisions represent a significant policy shift, full implementation is pending, and enforcement mechanisms are still being developed (ILO, 2024).

At the state level, India has implemented more targeted initiatives. The 2023 Rajasthan Platform-Based Gig Workers Act, for example, established a welfare board and social security fund for gig workers. In addition, Karnataka's 2024 draft bill proposes a comprehensive framework that includes mandatory registration, welfare benefits and grievance redress (ILO, 2024).

Other labour-sending countries have formed public-private partnerships to improve access to social protection. In Indonesia, the government's social security agency partnered with financial service providers to facilitate direct contribution deductions from earnings. This enables Gojek drivers to receive compensation for work-related injuries and ensures that their families are eligible for payouts in the event of accidental death. Similarly, Malaysia has required ride-hailing drivers to register with and contribute to the Social Security Organisation (SOCSO) since 2018 to obtain or renew their public service vehicle licences. Contributions can be made directly via mobile apps or Grab's payment platform (ILO, ISSA, OECD, 2023).

³ India's Code on Social Security defines a gig worker as "a person who performs work or participates in a work arrangement and earns from such activities outside of the traditional employer-employee relationship". Platform work is considered "a work arrangement outside of a traditional employer-employee relationship in which organisations or individuals use an online platform to access other organisations or individuals to solve specific problems or to provide specific services or any such other activities in exchange for payment" (India's Code on Social Security, 2020).

2.4 Private Sector Approaches to Social Protection

While social protection frameworks in most ADD Member States remain closely linked to employment relationships, private sector actors have begun experimenting with alternative mechanisms to extend coverage to gig workers. These initiatives vary in scope and design, but they offer practical approaches for improving access to social protection in contexts where statutory schemes are limited or difficult to reach.

Collective and Portable Benefits Funds

Collective funds pool contributions through transaction-based surcharges or platform fees, providing workers with access to social protection benefits usually reserved for those in formal employment.

Digital Benefit Wallets

Some platforms have developed digital benefit wallets that link access to social protection and other benefits to worker participation. These systems usually have a tiered structure that rewards either task completion or reliability. In Singapore, for example, the JodRewards programme provides gig workers with a package of social protection that is calibrated according to their level of participation. Higher tiers (Gold and Silver) offer benefits such as paid sick leave, income protection in the event of cancellations, compassionate leave and sponsored accident and liability insurance underwritten by private insurers. These benefits are maintained for a set period and are issued through a digital wallet, providing workers with predictability despite their variable work patterns (JodApp, n.d.).

Micro-insurances

In markets with low insurance penetration, partnerships between digital platforms and insurtech firms have enabled the development of low-cost microinsurance products specifically designed for gig workers. In Indonesia, for example, PasarPolis works with Gojek to offer microinsurance products that cover risks such as ride-related accidents and delivery incidents. These products are embedded directly into the Gojek app and are priced according to workers' willingness to pay (less than 2 USD per month). Automated policy issuance and digital claims processing increase accessibility and reduce administrative burdens for workers (Fintech News Indonesia, 2024).

Governments have begun to adapt their social protection systems to include gig workers, while private sector actors are voluntary experimenting with new models that extend coverage to gig workers.

3. REGULATING GIG WORK AND IMMIGRATION PATHWAYS

Labour migration within the ADD corridor is characterised by a strong interdependence between labour-sending and labour-receiving countries. In the GCC, foreign labour forms the backbone of key sectors that drive economic growth, while labour-sending countries have established robust systems to manage the overseas employment of their nationals. These long-standing patterns have resulted in governance frameworks in which access to employment and legal residence is primarily determined by immigration regulations and employer sponsorship systems.

However, the ability of these frameworks to accommodate new forms of work, such as gig work, has become a critical policy issue considering their rise and the diversification of the workforce. This section reviews the main immigration systems governing gig work in countries receiving and sending labour, highlighting the current challenges faced by gig workers and the emerging pathways available to them in the ADD corridor.

3.1 Immigration Pathways in Labour-Receiving Countries

Across the GCC, foreign nationals account for over half of the total population. In the UAE, Qatar and Kuwait, they constitute more than two-thirds of all residents. In Saudi Arabia and Oman, a larger proportion of residents are citizens. This demographic reality highlights the pivotal role of immigration frameworks in governing the entry, residency and work rights of foreign workers.

Enhancements to the Traditional Sponsorship Framework

Over the past decade, several GCC countries have amended labour regulations to recognise diverse work arrangements beyond full-time employment. These include part-time, temporary and flexible work (see Table 3). These models are often promoted to increase workforce participation, particularly among nationals, and often alongside localisation initiatives aimed at improving the representation of the national workforce within the private sector. For foreign workers, such opportunities remain limited. Access typically depends on the approval of a primary sponsor and, in some cases, additional authorisation from government authorities. In countries such as Saudi Arabia and Oman, certain forms of diverse work contracts (e.g., part-time or flexible work) are explicitly reserved for nationals (Saudi Arabia, Ministerial Decision No. 115921/1446; Oman, Ministerial Decision No. 13/2025).

Table 3: Diverse forms of work models in GCC countries

Country	Labour Laws and Executive Regulations	Types of Diverse forms of Work Models	Applicability
United Arab Emirates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Decree Law No. 33/2021 Cabinet Resolution No. 1/2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part-time Temporary Flexible 	Nationals and foreign nationals
Saudi Arabia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Royal Decree No. M/51 Cabinet Decision No. 219/1426 Ministerial Decision No. 115921/1446 (Implementing Regulations) Ajeer Guidelines (HRSD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part-time Flexible/hourly work Temporary work (via Ajeer platform) 	Part-time and flexible work are limited to Saudi nationals
Qatar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour Law No. 14/2004 Executive Regulations of Law No. 21/2015 Ministerial Resolution No. 25/2019 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary work Occasional work Part-time 	Nationals and foreign nationals
Oman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sultani Decree No. 53/2023 Ministerial Decision No. 619/2024 Ministerial Decision No. 13/2025 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Casual work Temporary work Part-time work Remote work 	Part-time employment is limited to Omani nationals
Bahrain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour Law No. 36/2012 Law No. 47 of 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part-time, but no explicit mention in the labour law and executive regulations 	Nationals and foreign nationals
Kuwait	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Law No. 6 of 2010 Ministerial Decision No. 10/2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part-time 	Nationals and foreign nationals

Source: Labour laws and executive regulations in GCC countries.

Business Registration as a Pathway for Independent Activity

For foreign nationals, pursuing independent or freelance work typically requires formal business registration. This may involve establishing a business or securing a freelance permit to operate as a sole proprietor, obtaining approvals from relevant authorities, including immigration and labour departments. Where applicable, local sponsorship requirements must also be met. These requirements create considerable administrative and financial obstacles, especially for individuals on low incomes or those seeking short-term, gig-based opportunities. The costs and procedural demands of setting up a business (e.g. documentation, fees and office space) contrast with the fast-paced, on-demand and flexible nature of gig work.

Expansion of Self-Sponsored Residency Pathways

In an effort to promote economic diversification and attract talent, some GCC countries have introduced self-sponsored residency programmes for investors, entrepreneurs, and highly skilled professionals. These long-term residency pathways represent a significant shift away from traditional sponsorship models. However, holding a self-sponsored residence permit may not automatically grant work rights. Individuals must obtain separate work authorisation or approvals relevant to their sector and intended economic activity:

- **United Arab Emirates:** Several self-sponsored residency options have been implemented in the UAE, including the Golden Visa (valid for 10 years), the Green Visa (valid for five years) and the Blue Visa (valid for 10 years). Golden Visa holders who wish to work independently must obtain a freelance permit or a commercial licence. Similarly, Green Visa holders who wish to conduct freelance work must secure a selfemployment permit from the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (MOHRE). They must also demonstrate the necessary qualifications and provide evidence of income or financial solvency.
- **Saudi Arabia:** The Premium Residency Programme offers eligible individuals a self-sponsored, long-term residency. Depending on their eligibility, individuals can apply for either a fixed-term residency of up to five years or permanent residency. Those holding a Premium Residency who wish to engage in freelance work may have to obtain additional permissions, including in some cases a business licence from the Ministry of Investment.
- **Qatar:** Introduced in 2024, the Mustaqel Programme was designed to offer talented professionals and entrepreneurs a five-year, renewable, self-sponsored residence permit. While the programme has yet to be launched, implementation details and timelines are expected to be announced by the authorities.
- **Oman:** The 2021 Investment Residency Programme (in 2025 rebranded to Golden Residency) grants eligible investors, business owners and retirees a residence permit valid for either five or 10 years.
 - Independent work is permitted through the establishment of a registered and licensed business on the mainland or within designated free zones. Once licensed, foreign nationals can apply for an investor or partner visa, which permits residency and employment within their business entity.
- **Bahrain:** The 2022 Golden Residence offers property owners, retirees, high-income professionals and highly skilled individuals the opportunity to reside in the country for 10 years. Those engaging in independent contract work must establish a formal business and obtain a commercial registration.

Unlike other GCC countries, Kuwait does not currently offer self-sponsored residency visas to foreign workers. Access to residency is still dependent on employer or family sponsorship.

Limited Availability of Freelance Permits

Despite the expansion of self-sponsored residency pathways, permits specifically for freelancers remain rare in the GCC. The UAE is the only country in the region to offer foreign nationals access to dedicated freelance pathways. These are typically granted by free zones targeting sector-specific talent in areas such as media, technology and design, and do not cover a large proportion of the gig working community. Applicants are required to demonstrate relevant industry experience, financial stability and, in some cases, hold a relevant educational qualification.

In addition, the UAE’s Green Visa includes a track for freelancers that provides a five-year self-sponsored residency. To be eligible, professionals must hold a bachelor's degree (or an equivalent qualification) and demonstrate financial solvency, with an annual income of at least AED 360,000. They must also obtain a freelance license from MOHRE. Under these permits, freelancers are not classified as employees under the UAE Labour Law, as they operate under civil or commercial contracts. While the UAE has made significant progress in supporting freelance work, the availability and issuance of freelance permits may be subject to periodic suspensions.

Elsewhere, freelance work is subsumed under broader commercial frameworks. Bahrain previously offered a Flexible Work Permit aimed at regularising informal workers, which was discontinued in 2022. It has since been replaced by the Labour Registration Program.

3.2 Immigration Pathways in Major Labour-Sending Countries

India, Indonesia, Pakistan and the Philippines are key labour-sending countries within the ADD corridor. Despite their significant contribution to inter-regional labour migration, they have a relatively small number of foreign nationals within their borders. According to the most recent census data, foreign nationals account for less than 2% of the total population in each of these countries (see Table 4).

Table 4: Total population and percentage of nationals and non-nationals in selected labour sending countries

Country	Census Year	Total population	% Nationals	% Foreign Nationals
India	2011	1,210,854,977	>99.5	<0.5
Indonesia	2020	270,203,917	99.92	0.08
Pakistan	2023	241,499,431	>98	<2
Philippines	2020	109,035,343	99.93	0.07

Source: Official national census reports and statistical authority releases for each country (BPS Indonesia, Census of India, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Philippine Statistics Authority).

Exit Requirements for Nationals for Outbound Migration

Regulatory efforts in labour-sending countries have focused on facilitating and protecting the outbound migration of their nationals rather than creating immigration pathways for inbound foreign freelance or digital workers:

- **India:** Indian nationals seeking employment in GCC countries are required to register through the Government of India's e-Migrate portal, which regulates overseas employment and provides protections for migrant workers. Individuals holding Emigration Check Required (ECR) passports must obtain clearance from the Protector of Emigrants (PoE) before migrating to one of the 18 designated countries, mostly in the GCC and Southeast Asia. In some cases, workers must also attend a Pre-Departure Orientation Programme (PDOT) to better understand their rights, workplace conditions and the legal framework in the host country. Additional safeguards apply to women under the age of 30 with an ECR passport.
- **Indonesia:** While no general exit restrictions exist, the government regulates the deployment of domestic workers through mandatory pre-departure training and formal approval mechanisms, particularly under the oversight of the Indonesian Migrant Worker Protection Agency (BP2MI).
- **Pakistan:** All migrant workers are required to register with the Protectorate of Emigrants and present a valid polio vaccination certificate at departure.
- **Philippines:** Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) must secure an Overseas Employment Certificate (OEC) to validate their employment abroad, which also provides exemptions from travel taxes and terminal fees. OFWs are also required to contribute to the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), PhilHealth, Pag-Ibig Fund, and the Social Security System (SSS) as part of the pre-departure process.

3.3 Digital Nomad Programmes

In recent years, digital nomad programmes have emerged as a policy tool for attracting remote professionals. These schemes allow individuals to live in the host country while working for overseas employers or clients, but they prohibit them from engaging in local economic activity. Applicants are typically required to demonstrate stable foreign income through employment or freelance contracts, as well as meeting minimum earnings thresholds. As they restrict work for domestic companies or clients, such programmes are not well suited to the broader gig workforce, however, they can serve as a tool for facilitating overseas gig-workers supporting a third country if underpinned by adequate supporting infrastructure and uniform classification and treatment across the ADD corridor (Fragomen, 2025).

Within the ADD corridor, only a small number of countries have adopted digital nomad visas. Each of these programs has distinct features in terms of eligibility, validity period and minimum income requirements (see Table 5).

Table 5: Digital nomad visa programmes in ADD countries

Country	Program	Year	Eligible Groups	Validity	Minimum monthly salary
United Arab Emirates	The Remote Working Visa ⁴	2021	Remote workers with overseas employment	1 year, renewable	USD 3,500
Malaysia	DE Rantau Nomad Pass	2022	Remote workers, digital freelancers and independent contractors	3-12 months, renewable	USD 2,000 for tech talent and USD 5,000 for non-tech talent
Indonesia	Remote Work Visa (E33G)	2024	Remote workers with overseas employment	1 year, renewable	USD 5,000
Thailand	Destination Thailand Visa (DTV)	2024	Remote workers, digital nomads and freelancers	5 years, up to 180 days per visit	No minimum monthly salary required, but THB 500,000 in savings

Source: Fragomen.

In summary, the platform economy represents a dynamic and increasingly valuable driver of innovation, labour market participation and economic growth across the ADD corridor. However, immigration and labour market frameworks remain largely designed around traditional employment models and offer little flexibility for gig and platform work. Consequently, many gig workers are compelled to rely on migration pathways that do not align with their actual work arrangements, which has trickle-down compliance implications for them, their sponsors and potentially accompanying dependents. This also places unwarranted strain on the host country's regulatory and enforcement infrastructure. As diverse forms of work become more prevalent, modernising immigration frameworks, including through the availability of more appropriate visa options, will be crucial to supporting the growth of the platform economy while ensuring legal compliance and sustainable economic outcomes .

⁴ Prior to the UAE Cabinet's announcement of the federal Remote Working Visa in 2021, the emirate of Dubai launched its own scheme - Dubai's Virtual Work Program - in October 2020. This program was specific to Dubai and served as an early model for attracting remote workers.

4. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The steady growth of the gig economy along the ADD corridor is creating new opportunities and policy challenges. Current frameworks often fail to address the needs of independent contractors. To develop a coherent and inclusive approach, this policy report makes the following recommendations to ADD member countries:

1. Establish a Unified and Contextual Definition of Gig Workers

- ▣ **Adopt a uniform definition of gig worker across the ADD.** Collaborate across ADD member countries to agree on a clear and inclusive definition of gig worker that reflects the diverse work arrangements and perspectives of both labour-sending and receiving countries. The definition for “Digital Platform Worker” that has been suggested by the International Labour Organization (ILO), and is currently under review, would appropriately capture this segment of the population, and could help pave the way for a unified immigration pathway for inter-regional gig work across the ADD corridor. As gig work is often short-term and project-based, a well-trained and highly mobile gig work force can flexibly respond to shifting regional demand by taking up projects as and where they are needed.

2. Enhance Data Collection

Accurate measurement of the gig workforce remains limited due to inconsistent definitions and the lack of standardized data. Most labour force surveys do not capture gig work, resulting in major information gaps. The adhoc surveys or platform-generated data provide only fragmented insights.

- **Integrate gig work into national labour surveys.** Include specific questions about gig work in labour force surveys to obtain detailed and reliable data. Basic demographic data such as sex, age, citizenship (national/foreign national), education and sector of activity should be covered.
- **Standardize data definitions.** Adopt consistent national and regional definitions of gig work to enable better cross-country and longitudinal data comparisons. Encourage platforms to provide anonymized data to national statistical authorities.

3. Consider Social Protection Programs that Appropriately Address the Needs of Independent Contractors

In many labour-sending countries, broader issues like high informality rates and immature social security systems further restrict access.

- **Access to social protection systems.** Governments should ensure that all workers have access to sustainable social protection systems. These systems should be tailored to local contexts and reflect the distinct needs of employed and self-employed workers.
- **Leverage existing bilateral protection frameworks.** Consider extending protections already available to other worker groups to independent contractors, as appropriate. Platforms such as Saudi Arabia's Musaned, which is currently used for recruiting domestic workers, could for example, be adapted for expatriate gig workers to improve oversight and protection.

4. Develop Upskilling and Training Initiatives for Gig Workers

Most training and upskilling programmes are geared toward employees, leaving gig workers who are not employees underserved.

- **Expand training options to gig workers.** Develop accessible online and offline training programs tailored to the needs of gig workers, including sector-specific certifications. Malaysia's Digital Economy Corporation, for example, has created the eRezeki (micro task training) and GLOW (freelancing skills like web design and digital marketing) programmes to support digital work opportunities.
- **Leverage partnerships with platforms.** Promote modular training, micro-credentials and digital badges to enhance the mobility and competitiveness of gig workers. For example, Fiverr Learn offers affordable skills courses (e.g. graphic design and coding) to freelancers, while Upwork Skill Certifications validate their expertise in areas such as web and mobile development or customer service. These certification platforms can be underpinned by skills gaps identified by labour force surveys carried out at national and regional levels.
- **Consult the private sector.** Engage with employers, business chambers and industry associations to identify emerging skills requirements and potential future shortages. Insights from the private sector can help align training with evolving market demand, reduce skills mismatches and enable gig workers to adapt more easily to new opportunities.

5. Establish Dedicated Immigration Pathways for Gig Workers

Despite the rapid expansion of the gig economy, formal immigration pathways specifically tailored to gig work remain limited. As a result, employment frameworks that are not suited to diverse forms of work are often used instead.

- **Work towards standardised recognition in immigration systems.** ADD Member States should coordinate to develop standardized regional approaches for recognizing gig work within immigration frameworks.
- **For GCC countries:** Develop a unified immigration framework for gig and freelance work. Building on the GCC agreement's objective of labour market harmonisation⁵, consider creating a coordinated freelance visa or permit to support compliance and enable controlled labour mobility across the region. To enhance regional competitiveness, consider expanding existing digital nomad visa programmes.
- **Labour-sending countries:** Integrate gig-specific modules into pre-departure orientation and training programmes to ensure that workers are informed about their rights, the risks they may face and compliance requirements. Existing programmes could be leveraged for this purpose, such as India's PreDeparture Orientation Programme (PDOT) or the UAE's labour awareness sessions for new arrivals.

6. Create New Digital Platforms for Independent Contractors

Independent contractors often face fragmented access to opportunities across the ADD corridor. Purpose-built digital platforms can bridge this gap by connecting contractors with clients across borders while safeguarding transactions and supporting skills development.

- **Expand regional opportunities.** Enable independent contractors to access projects across the ADD corridor, not only from labour-sending to labour-receiving countries, but also between labour-sending countries. Integrate safeguards such as verified worker profiles, digital contracts and secure payments to benefit both sides.
- **Link platforms to training and certification.** Use these systems as policy tools to help independent contractors adapt to evolving skills demand in labour-receiving economies and across the corridor more broadly, thereby enhancing their mobility and competitiveness.

⁵ The Economic Agreement between the Countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (2001). In accordance with Art. 16 (1), Member States are required to adopt the necessary policies to develop and unify their labour rules and legislation.

Table 6: Summary table of key policy recommendations

Policy Area	Recommendation Highlights	Intended Outcome
Data Collection	Embed gig work metrics in national surveys; standardize definitions	Reliable data to inform targeted policies
Worker Definition	Develop unified, context-sensitive gig worker classification	Clear regulatory basis for protections
Access to social protection	Ensure all workers have access to sustainable social protection systems	Improved welfare and financial security
Skills Development	Expand training accessible to gig workers; involve platforms	Enhanced worker capabilities and mobility
Immigration Pathways	Create gig-specific visa options; harmonize regulations	Regulatory clarity and compliance
Digital Platforms	Create digital platforms for independent contracts with safeguards	Expanded opportunities and regional mobility

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Labour laws and executive regulations

United Arab Emirates

- Federal Decree Law No. 33/2021, *On the Regulation of Labour Relations*.
- Cabinet Resolution No. 1/2022, *Implementing Regulations of Federal Decree Law No. 33/2021*.

Saudi Arabia

- Royal Decree No. M/51, *Labour Law*.
- Cabinet Decision No. 219/1426, *Approval of the Labour Law Implementing Regulations*.
- Ministerial Decision No. 115921/1446, *Implementing Regulations of the Labour Law*.
- Ajeer Guidelines, *Labour Rental Programme Rules and Procedures*, Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (HRSD).

Qatar

- Labour Law No. 14/2004, *Labour Law*, Qatar.
- Executive Regulations of Law No. 21/2015, *On the Entry, Exit and Residency of Foreign Nationals*.
- Ministerial Resolution No. 25/2019, *Implementing Regulations for Labour Dispute Resolution*.

Oman

- Sultani Decree No. 53/2023, *Labour Law*, Oman.
- Ministerial Decision No. 619/2024, *Implementing Regulations of the Labour Law*.
- Ministerial Decision No. 13/2025, *Further Regulations on Labour Relations*.

Bahrain

- Labour Law No. 36/2012, *Labour Law in the Private Sector*.
- Law No. 47 of 2014, *On the Labour Market Regulatory Authority*.

Kuwait

- Law No. 6 of 2010, *Private Sector Labour Law*.
- Ministerial Decision No. 10/2023, *Implementing Regulations of the Labour Law*.

ANNEX: SURVEY

[Survey Methodology](#)

To gather insights on company practices related to gig workers across the ADD corridor, an online survey was disseminated to private sector companies and employer federations. The survey targeted a diverse range of respondents, including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), multinational corporations and local businesses. Respondents represented sectors such as oil and gas, information technology, professional services, finance and health care.

A total of 22 responses were received, comprising 8 employer federations or chambers of commerce and 14 private sector companies. Four respondents indicated that they do not engage digital workers. The findings presented in this paper reflect the practices of the surveyed organizations and should be interpreted as a snapshot, rather than as representative of the broader private sector across the ADD corridor. [Survey Questions](#)

Definition of digital workers:

Digital workers are individuals engaged in short-term, task-based, or freelance work. They are typically not employed on a full-time basis and provide services that are organized or facilitated by a digital labour platform. They receive payment for their work, regardless of their employment classification or status. Examples include ridehailing drivers, delivery workers, online freelancers, and on-demand service providers in sectors such as hospitality, logistics and care.

1. Please provide the name of your company and the country in which it operates.

2. To what extent does your company rely on digital workers to support its operations?

- Extensively, across multiple functions and business areas
- Regularly
- Occasionally, for specific tasks and short-term projects
- We do not engage digital workers

3. Where do the digital workers your company engages typically come from? (Select all that all)

- Nationals residing in the country
- Foreign nationals residing in the country
- Individuals based abroad
- A mix of local and international digital workers

If individuals are based abroad, please specify the countries typically represented.

4. Does your company have dedicated internal policies or guidelines for engaging digital workers?

- Yes, we have formal policies or procedures
- No, we engage digital workers on an ad hoc basis and typically in accordance with policies that cater to regular employees
- Not applicable, as we do not engage digital workers
- Other, please specify: _____

5. In which functions does your company typically engage digital workers? (Select all that apply)

- IT/Tech (e.g. software development, data entry)
- Creative (e.g. content writing, graphic design)
- Logistics/Delivery
- Customer support
- Marketing
- Sales
- Administrative tasks
- Professional services (e.g. legal, accounting)
- Other, please specify: _____

6. What are the primary reasons your company engages digital workers? (Select all that apply)

- To have the flexibility to adjust workforce size based on business needs
- To reduce costs
- To access expertise not available in-house
- To meet niche, short-term or project-specific demands
- To scale workforce quickly during peak seasons
- To reduce long-term employment commitments
- To respond to the flexible working arrangements demanded by our talent pool
- The nature of our business operations requires a freelancing workforce
- Other, please specify: _____

7. Which of the following benefits typically provided to regular employees, does your company offer to digital workers as well? (Select all that apply)

- Health insurance
- Paid sick leave
- Unemployment insurance
- Maternity or paternity leave
- Retirement or pension contributions
- Other, please specify: _____
- None of the above

8. If you selected any benefits in the previous question, what is the main reason your company provides them to digital workers?

- Required by national labour or employment regulations
- Voluntarily offered through internal company policies
- A combination of legal requirements and internal company policies

9. Does your company provide access to training or upskilling opportunities for digital workers?

- Yes, on a regular basis
- Occasionally
- No

If yes or occasionally, please specify the type of programs provided:

10. What are the main challenges your company experiences in engaging digital workers? (Select all that apply)

- Uncertain legal and regulatory frameworks
- Ensuring consistent quality of work
- Integrating digital workers into teams or workflows
- Retaining digital workers for repeat or long-term projects
- Administrative complexity (e.g., setting up contracts, payment, onboarding)
- Other, please specify: _____

11. What changes (e.g., in policy, regulation or company practices) would help your company engage digital workers more effectively?