



International
Labour
Organization

► Decent work in the platform economy in the Caribbean



- ▶ **Decent work in the platform economy in the Caribbean**



Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. See: creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0. The user is allowed to reuse, share (copy and redistribute), adapt (remix, transform and build upon the original work) as detailed in the licence. The user must clearly credit the ILO as the source of the material and indicate if changes were made to the original content. Use of the emblem, name and logo of the ILO is not permitted in connection with translations, adaptations or other derivative works.

Attribution – The user must indicate if changes were made and must cite the work as follows: *Decent work in the platform economy in the Caribbean*, Geneva: International Labour Office, 2025. © ILO.

Translations – In case of a translation of this work, the following disclaimer must be added along with the attribution: *This is a translation of a copyrighted work of the International Labour Organization (ILO). This translation has not been prepared, reviewed or endorsed by the ILO and should not be considered an official ILO translation. The ILO disclaims all responsibility for its content and accuracy. Responsibility rests solely with the author(s) of the translation.*

Adaptations – In case of an adaptation of this work, the following disclaimer must be added along with the attribution: *This is an adaptation of a copyrighted work of the International Labour Organization (ILO). This adaptation has not been prepared, reviewed or endorsed by the ILO and should not be considered an official ILO adaptation. The ILO disclaims all responsibility for its content and accuracy. Responsibility rests solely with the author(s) of the adaptation.*

Third-party materials – This Creative Commons licence does not apply to non-ILO copyright materials included in this publication. If the material is attributed to a third party, the user of such material is solely responsible for clearing the rights with the rights holder and for any claims of infringement.

Any dispute arising under this licence that cannot be settled amicably shall be referred to arbitration in accordance with the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). The parties shall be bound by any arbitration award rendered as a result of such arbitration as the final adjudication of such a dispute.

For details on rights and licensing, contact: rights@ilo.org. For details on ILO publications and digital products, visit: www.ilo.org/publns.

ISBN: 9789220430019 (web PDF)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54394/DARN4544>

The designations employed in ILO publications and databases, which are in conformity with United Nations practice, and the presentation of material therein do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the ILO concerning the legal status of any country, area or territory or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. See: www.ilo.org/disclaimer.

The opinions and views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions, views or policies of the ILO.

Reference to names of firms and commercial products and processes does not imply their endorsement by the ILO, and any failure to mention a particular firm, commercial product or process is not a sign of disapproval.

► Table of contents

► Table of contents	1
► List of acronyms and abbreviations	3
► Acknowledgements	5
► 1. Background	7
1.1.1 The study's framework	8
1.1.2 Technologies available at the workplace in the Caribbean	8
1.1.3 Telework and remote arrangements	10
1.1.4 Platform work	10
► 2. Socio-economic context in the Caribbean	13
2.1 Economic environment	13
2.1.1 Economic growth trends	13
2.1.2 Macroeconomic policy environment	14
2.2 Labour market situation	14
2.2.1 Structural drivers of labour market dynamics	14
2.2.2 Labour market trends	15
► 3. Overview of constituents' perspectives	17
3.1 Constituents' perspectives	17
3.1.1 Familiarity with digital labour platforms	17
3.2 Perceived challenges, potential opportunities	19
3.3 Social dialogue initiatives on platform work	21
3.4 Policy and regulatory environment	22
3.4.1 Existing laws and legislative frameworks	22
3.4.2 Non-regulatory measures and practices	23
3.5 Sectoral distribution and enabling factors	24
3.5.1 Platform typology and sectoral distribution	24
3.5.2 enabling factors for platform work	25
3.6 Organization and representation of platform workers	25
3.6.1 Formal and informal workers groups	25
3.6.2 Support mechanisms for informal workers	26
3.7 Local vs global digital platforms	26
► 4. Conclusion and recommendations	27
► References	29



► List of acronyms and abbreviations

AI	artificial intelligence
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSME	CARICOM Single Market and Economy
DAWU	Dominica Amalgamated Workers' Unions
DPSU	Dominica Public Sector Union
EBMOs	Employer and Business Membership Organizations
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EU	European Union
GenAI	generative AI
GDP	gross domestic product
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organization
IoT	Internet of Things
IT	Information Technology
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LAC	Latin American and the Caribbean
NIS	National Insurance Scheme
NWU	National Workers' Union
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OLI	Online Labour Index
OSH	occupational health and safety
SIDS	Caribbean Small Islands Developing States
SMEs	small and medium enterprises
NEET	not in employment, education, or training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
US	United States

US\$	United States dollar
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WAWU	Waterfront and Allied Workers' Union

► Acknowledgements

This paper was authored by **Mr. Abdelmalik Muhummed**, Employment and Labour Market Specialist at the ILO Decent Work Team (DWT) and Office for the Caribbean. Its writing greatly benefited from the guidance and feedback of several ILO specialists during the design and drafting phases. These include **Mr. Nuno Meira Simoes Cunha**, Senior Labour Market Institutions, ILO INWORK, Geneva; **Ms. Annarosa Pesole**, Labour Market Specialist, ILO INWORK, Geneva; **Mr. Abdourahmane Diaw**, Junior Professional Officer, ILO INWORK, Geneva; **Mr. Shingo Miyake**, International Labour Standards Specialists, ILO Caribbean Office; **Ms. Vera Guseva**, Workers' Specialist, ILO Caribbean Office, and **Ms. Maria Victoria Giuliatti**, Employers' Specialist, ILO Caribbean Office.

The author also expresses his gratitude to **Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies** for conducting interviews, and to the **government, workers' and employers' representatives** for their valuable input and feedback throughout the process.

Finally, the author gratefully acknowledges **Ms. Suzanne Joseph**, Senior Information Technology Assistant at the ILO Caribbean Office, for her work in editing and designing this report.



► 1. Background

The growth of digital platforms has been a transformative force in the global economy. In the context of work, it reshaped traditional employment structures and created new opportunities for workers across various sectors. Over the past decade, the advancements in technology and the increased internet accessibility have facilitated the rise of digital platforms globally, contributing to exponential growth in their market presence and user engagement.

However, the prevalence of platform work varies significantly across countries, ranging from 0.5 per cent in Chile to 4 per cent of total employment in the Philippines, depending on the methodology and definitions used in the estimation. According to the World Bank, the number of active workers on online platforms is globally estimated to range between 154 million to 435 million (World Bank, 2023). In 2022, more than 10 per cent of workers in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Panama, and the Dominican Republic reported participating in online gig work (World Bank, 2024). This growing engagement with platform work reflects a broader shift in employment patterns across Latin America and the Caribbean. In particular, Caribbean islands are beginning to experience the impact of this transformation, with current trends suggesting that the prevalence of platform work is likely to increase significantly in the coming years.

A defining feature of work organization in the platform economy is the possibility to leverage technologies to match labour supply and demand in near real-time. This technological capability enables platforms to connect workers and clients across geographic boundaries, bypassing many of the constraints of traditional labour markets. Through algorithmic management and mobile connectivity, tasks can be allocated efficiently and at scale, allowing for rapid service delivery and flexible work arrangements. This model not only facilitates access to employment opportunities for individuals but also supports the emergence of new business models and service ecosystems. However, the speed and scale of these interactions raise important questions about regulation, worker protection, and the sustainability of employment relationship in this evolving digital landscape.

Building on the transformative potential of digital platforms to organize work across borders, it is important to recognize the diversity in work arrangements and the types of labour services facilitated through these platforms. The nature of platform work varies considerably in terms of duration, skills requirements, complexity, and modality of delivery. Broadly speaking, platform work falls into two main categories: online services and location-based services. Services such as graphic design, data tagging, or translation can be performed remotely, allowing workers to engage with clients without geographic constraints. In contrast, location-based services such as passenger transportation or food delivery require the worker to be physically present at specific location to carry out the task. This distinction has important implications for policy design, particularly in relation to labour protection, social security, and regulatory oversight.

Regarding the duration and skill levels required, the services offered by digital labour platforms vary widely. Tasks can range from microtask lasting only a few minutes complete, to complex projects extending over several days. The level of complexity involved can range from highly skilled freelance activities such as translation, software programming, graphic design, to more routine, task-based services such as home repair, delivery, and transportation. More recently, there has been an increase in the number of digital labour platforms in the field of care economy, including those offering domestic work and professional healthcare assistance.

In broader terms, platform work can be categorized into main five types:

1. **Freelance platforms:** these platforms typically offer remote tasks that require medium to high levels of skill and vary in complexity and duration. Such services include graphic design, translation, accountancy, and other professional activities.
2. **Microtask or crowd-work platforms:** these platforms outsource small tasks that are generally repetitive and require low skills. Examples include photo tagging, data entry, and transcriptions. All tasks are performed entirely online.
3. **Delivery and transport platforms:** these platforms involve low-skilled tasks that usually require the use of personal assets such as bicycles, scooters, or cars. Services are provided within specific geographic areas and are often subject to national legislation and regulations (i.e., transport regulations).

4. **Domestic work platforms:** these platforms facilitate services performed at the client's premises, such as home repair, cleaning, furniture assembly, and beauty services.
5. **Care work platforms:** similar to the domestic work platforms, these services are delivered at the client's premises. However, due to the personal and relational nature of the care work, these platforms may impose stricter registration requirements and apply different contractual arrangements to ensure continuity and quality of services.

The platforms can also be differentiated according to different business models under which they operate, as summarized below:

- ▶ **Crowdsourcing platforms:** the platforms assign tasks to a large pool of workers without direct matching process between individual clients and workers. The allocation of tasks is typically managed by the platform itself, allowing multiple workers to complete microtasks simultaneously or independently.
- ▶ **On demand platforms:** tasks allocation on these platforms typically follow one of two approaches: either tasks are automatically assigned to workers based on predefined criteria such as geographic location, availability, or performance ratings, or clients are given the option to select workers directly. This allocation model is commonly observed in delivery services, transportation, and freelance work.
- ▶ **Bidding platforms:** these platforms operate on a bidding-based model, whereby workers submit proposals in response to job postings. In certain cases, workers may invest virtual currency or token to boost the visibility of their proposals. For instance, a worker may use a number of tokens to enhance the visibility of their bids. Alternatively, some platforms adopt a competition-based approach, allowing workers to present their work directly to the potential clients, who then select a preferred submission or opt to cancel the posting if none meet their expectations. In both models, workers actively market their services or outputs to clients, often in a competitive environment.

1.1.1 The study's framework

The ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean launched this study to gain a general insight on the prevalence of platform work in the Caribbean. Using a descriptive research design, the study combines a review of existing literature, legal, policy frameworks and non-regulatory practices, with key informant interviews conducted across eleven (11) Caribbean countries.

The study presents an overview of constituents' perspective on platform work in the region alongside a summary of economic and labour market trends. A total of 33 in-depth interviews were conducted, with tripartite representatives from 11 countries, drawn from the ministries responsible for labour, as well as workers' and employers' organizations. The interviews were guided by a semi-structured questionnaire to explore constituents' familiarity with platform work, their perceptions of its opportunities and challenges, the existence (or absence) of legal and policy frameworks, sectoral trends, and issues related to workers' representation and organization. The research also sought to identify any ongoing or planned initiatives aimed at regulating platform work and non-regulatory mechanisms shaping working conditions on these platforms.

By amplifying the voices of tripartite constituents, the study seeks to contribute to evidence-based dialogue and policymaking, ensuring the evolution of platform work in the Caribbean aligns with the decent work agenda.

1.1.2 Technologies available at the workplace in the Caribbean

The pandemic accelerated the digitalization of the world of work, paving the way to the introduction of new work arrangements and forms of work, such as remote work, telework¹ and work on digital platforms.² In the Caribbean region,

¹ Telework is work that is fully or partly carried out at an alternative location other than the default place of work with the use of personal electronic devices such as computer, tablet or telephone to perform the work. Telework is a subcategory of the broader concept of remote work. (ILO, 2020)

² ILO, [Panorama Laboral 2019 América Latina y el Caribe](#), 2020.

especially since 2015, broadband penetration has increased. More countries observe growth in both fixed and mobile broadband subscriptions - 3G and 4G coverage is nearly universal in several countries, and in more than three quarters of Caribbean countries, the number of individuals internet users (78 per cent)³ is higher than the global average (63 per cent)⁴.

Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT) and cloud computing are increasingly reshaping economic structures and employment dynamics across Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC). A recent study by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Bank reveals that between 30 to 40 per cent of employment in the LAC region is exposed to generative AI (GenAI), through automation, augmentation and the “big unknown”. While 2 per cent of occupations are currently at risk of automation, exposure is uneven: urban, highly educated workers in the formal sector are more likely to interact with GenAI, while young and female workers, especially in the finance, insurance, and public administration, face greater automation risks. Importantly, the share of jobs that could benefit from GenAI-driven productivity gains is consistently higher than those at risk, ranging from 8 per cent to 12 per cent across LAC countries, particularly in education, health and personal services (ILO and World Bank, 2024).

However, the potential benefits of GenAI are constrained by digital access gaps. Nearly half of the jobs that could be augmented by GenAI are limited by inadequate digital infrastructure, with 6.24 per cent of women’s jobs and 6.22 per cent of men’s jobs affected. Sectors such as retail, trade, hospitality, and customer service face the highest exposure to the “big unknown,” which accounts for 14–21 per cent of employment (ILO and World Bank, 2024).

The increased access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has also contributed to more access to social media with the region having 22.2 million active users⁵, and to the expansion of e-commerce which showed unprecedented growth during the pandemic.⁶ However, the progress has been uneven. A study of 2,876 local online marketplace websites based on active URLs across LAC found that countries such as Saint Lucia, Dominica and Saint Kitts and Nevis accounted for less than 1 per cent of the sample.⁷ In addition, only 16 per cent of the sampled websites allowed for digital payments method and services to buy and sell goods on the platform.

Among Caribbean countries, Trinidad and Tobago had the highest percentage of such platforms with 30 per cent, while the rest of the Caribbean countries did not exceed 15 per cent. The technology development disparity suggest that many people may still lack access to ICTs and the benefits that it can provide⁸. For instance, as of 2020, 1.3 million Caribbean persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups, including the older population, could not benefit from the government’s effort to bring increased ICT⁹. Another contributing factor, especially in some Caribbean Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) is the spread of small population across islands¹⁰. Several digital initiatives and projects are underway with a regional perspective. This includes the “Single ICT Space Project”¹¹ of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) which aims to create an enabling environment for regional infrastructures and systems, the “Digital Support Facility for the Caribbean” which supports Small Islands in the Caribbean to become Small Islands Digital States¹², or the

³ OECD and IDB, [Caribbean Development Dynamics 2025](#), 2024; ECLAC, [Observatorio de Desarrollo Digital](#). Accessed 12 March 2025,

⁴ Our world in data, [“Internet”](#). Accessed on 11 March 2025.

⁵ Troy Smith and Andy Short, [“Needs affordance as a key factor in likelihood of problematic social media use: Validation, latent profile analysis and comparison of TikTok and Facebook problematic use measures”](#), Addictive behaviours 129 (June 2022).

⁶ International Trade Center, “Latin America and the Caribbean Marketplace Explorer”.

⁷ Estefania Lotitto and Bernardo Diaz de Astarlao, [The Landscape of B2C e-commerce marketplaces in Latin America and the Caribbean](#), (ECLAC, 2023).

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ OECD, UN, CAF and EU, [“Special feature: The Caribbean” in Latin America Economic Outlook 2020](#), 2020.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ CARICOM, [Vision and roadmap for a CARICOM single ICT space](#), 2017

¹² UNDP, [“Leaders from Caribbean small islands set priorities to ensure a digital transformation that leaves no one behind”](#), 1 May 2024; Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, IDB, CAF and UNDP, [High level conference: SIDS 2.0 Defining the pathway for small islands DIGITAL states in the Caribbean](#), 2024.

“Caribbean Digital Transformation Project”¹³ by the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) which aims to increase access to digital services, technologies, and skills by governments, businesses and individuals¹⁴.

1.1.3 Telework and remote arrangements

Prior to the pandemic, the ILO estimated that only 7.9 per cent of the global workforce (or 260 million workers) worked from home on a permanent basis and employees accounted for 18.8 per cent of the total number¹⁵. In 2020, the ILO found that close to 18 per cent of workers work in occupations and live in countries with the infrastructure that would allow them to effectively perform their work from home, with higher variations across regions¹⁶. Although teleworking is not a new phenomenon, the COVID-19 pandemic and associated measures which were implemented significantly increased this work arrangement in LAC¹⁷. This is confirmed by the rise in downloads of apps that facilitate teleworking such as Zoom, Skype for business, or Microsoft Teams, which increased by 3,340 per cent in the LAC region¹⁸.

Disaggregated data on telework and remote arrangements exclusively for Caribbean countries is generally lacking¹⁹. However, there are few studies that allow us to assess how adopted these arrangements are, especially since COVID-19. An ILO study examining how Employer and Business Membership Organizations (EBMOs) in the Caribbean use digital tools found that remote work and collaboration was the most common shift experienced during COVID-19 as reported by 88 per cent of the surveyed CEOs and board members²⁰. Fifty-five per cent of the companies maintained the arrangement after the pandemic. The study also revealed that certain EBMOs were prepared to work remotely to varying extent²¹. About 73 per cent of CEOs and board members reported that staff members have access to flexible work arrangements, including working from home. Additionally, during the COVID-19 pandemic, several Caribbean countries encouraged remote work in the public and private sectors, by both advancing regulations, and developing permits that would allow foreigners to work from within their countries for foreign companies²².

1.1.4 Platform work

Like remote work arrangements, comprehensive and disaggregated data on the prevalence of platform work in the Caribbean remains limited. Most available studies tend to focus on the broader Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region, which usually offer partial insights but do not fully capture the unique dynamics and labour market characteristics of the Caribbean countries. This data gap presents a challenge for analysis and policymaking, particularly in understanding the scale, distribution, and working conditions of platform workers in the sub-region.

Despite these limitations, available evidence from the LAC region provides useful indications of emerging trends. For instance, between January and March 2020, there was a 30 per cent increase in download of online digital labour platforms in LAC²³. According to the evidence available, the professional areas most frequently found among the supply and demand for platform work on online digital labour platforms are design, media, engineering, and science; translation and language; and information technology and software. To a lesser extent, there is supply and demand for work in data

¹³ OECS, “[Caribbean Digital Transformation Project](#).”

¹⁴ OECD and IDB, [Caribbean Development dynamics](#), p.203.

¹⁵ ILO, [How the COVID-19 pandemic is changing businesses: A Literature Review](#), 2021.

¹⁶ ILO, [Working from home: Estimating the worldwide potential](#), 2020.

¹⁷ Roxana Maurizio, [Challenges and opportunities of teleworking in Latin America and the Caribbean](#), (ILO, 2021)

¹⁸ IDB, [The future of work in Latin America and the Caribbean: how can technology facilitate job recovery after COVID-19](#), 2020; There is a lack of data specific to the Caribbean, thus the usage of Latin America and the Caribbean.

¹⁹ Most studies will provide data for Latin America and the Caribbean.

²⁰ ILO, [Digitalization to support the transformation of EBMOs as data-driven organizations in the Caribbean](#), 2023.

²¹ Ibid.

²² See Roxana Maurizio, [Technical note: challenges and opportunities of teleworking in Latin America and the Caribbean](#), (ILO, 2021); ILO, [COVID-19 and the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean labour market: A rapid assessment of impact and policy response at the end of Q3, 2020](#), 2020.

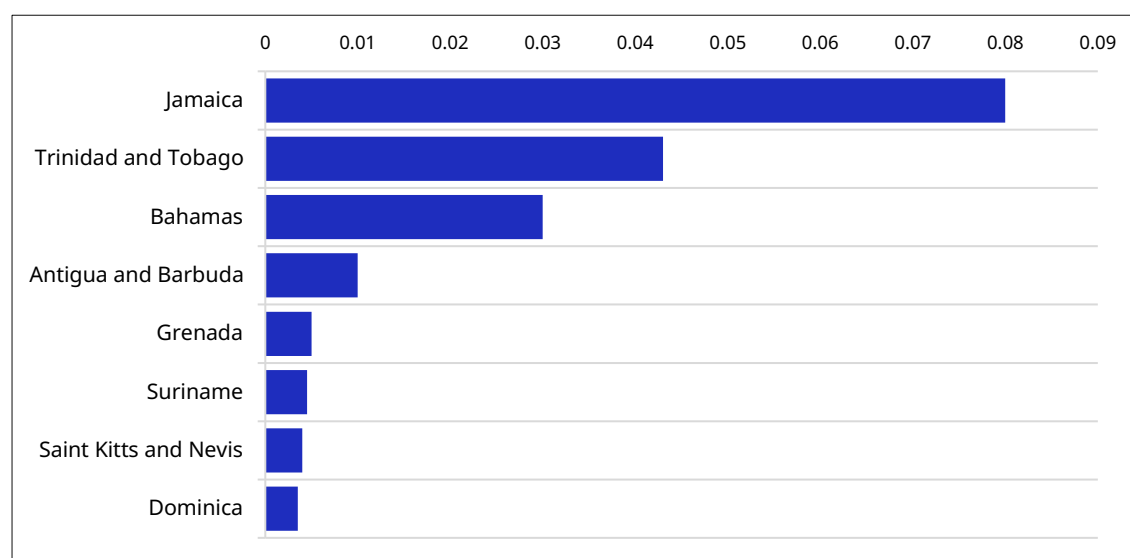
²³ Gabirela Aguerrevere and Maria Victoria Fazio, [E-lancing in Latin America and the Caribbean: How to connect digital talent with global opportunities](#), (IBD, 2022).

processing²⁴. Interestingly, in LAC, 64 per cent of online platform workers live in tertiary cities, meaning cities that are not the capital city nor the top 10 largest cities in a given country²⁵. Jamaica is the country with the highest number of online platform workers per capita in the LAC region.²⁶

In the Caribbean, digital billboards such as [CaribbeanJobs](#) and [CaribbeanJobsOnline](#) are among the most frequented used websites for posting and finding online employment opportunities. At the national level, a notable example is the National Commercial Bank Gig Network in Jamaica, which facilitates gig-based work arrangements²⁷. Additionally, a study conducted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) on online platform work shows a relatively high level of engagement among freelance workers, particularly in Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados²⁸.

An additional source of data come from the [Online Labour Index \(OLI\)](#) developed by the University of Oxford.²⁹ It measures the supply and demand of online freelance labour across countries and occupations by tracking the number of projects and tasks across a certain number of platforms in real time. Data from the OLI in Figure 1, shows the share of transactions in the Caribbean as a percentage of the global volume. Although the Caribbean region accounts for a small share, it is interesting to notice the type of services provided. Figure 2 shows a prevalence of software development and technological services, followed by creative and multimedia services.

► **Figure 1: Online Labour Index by countries**



Source: OLI 2020 | onlinelabourobservatory.org

²⁴ ECLAC and ILO, [Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean: Decent work for platform workers in Latin America](#), 2021.

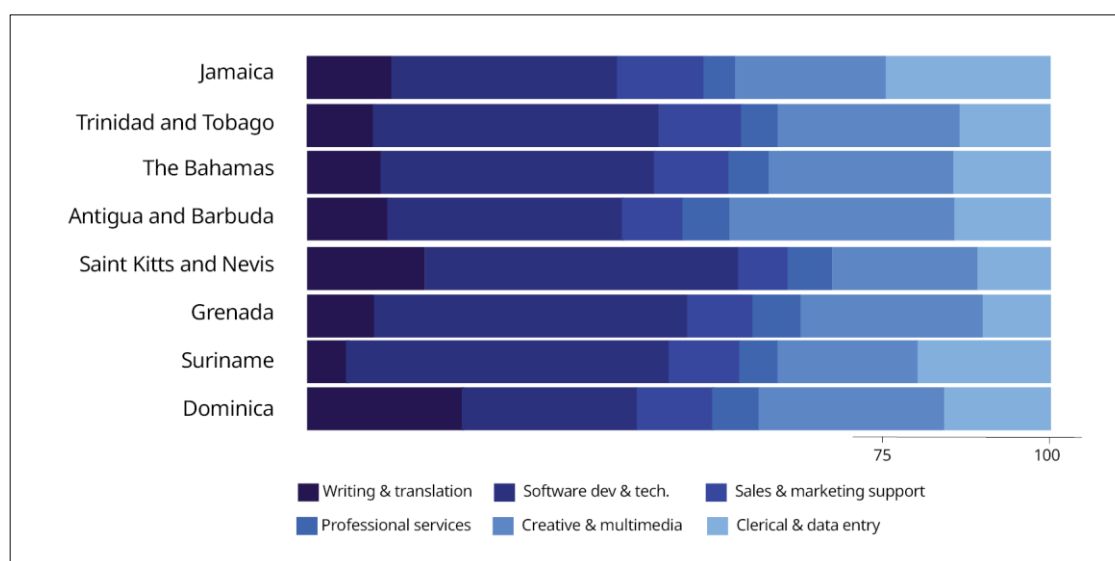
²⁵ World Bank, [Working without borders: The promise and peril of online gig work](#), 2023.

²⁶ Ibid, 23.

²⁷ NCB, [“NCB solicits freelancers on its new job website”](#), 26 October 2020.

²⁸ Martin Hilbert and Kangbo Lu, [The online job market trace in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) (ECLAC, 2020) p.30

²⁹ [The iLabour Project](#)

► **Figure 2: Online Labour Index by countries and occupations**

Source: OLI 2020 | onlinelabourobservatory.org

Finally, when it comes to location-based platforms, there are both locally developed as well as internationally renowned digital labour platforms in food delivery and passenger transportation, though specific figures regarding the number of users in the region is lacking. According to the Transport Ministry of Jamaica, there are 14,000+ drivers registered in the country using transport digital labour platform³⁰.

³⁰ Vanessa McKenzie, "[Vaz meets with inDrive executives to discuss ride-sharing regulations in Jamaica](#)", Our today, June 21st 2024

► 2. Socio-economic context in the Caribbean

There are considerable socio-economic disparities among Caribbean countries, particularly in terms of income classification. These differences significantly influence socio-economic environment at national and regional levels. Haiti stands out as the only lower-middle income country in the Caribbean, while the remaining countries are classified as either upper-middle income or high-income economies. The contrast becomes even more pronounced when population size and distribution is taken into account. Despite its lower income status, Haiti accounts for over half of the Caribbean's total population. These demographic and economic imbalances have important implications for regional employment and economic dynamics. Higher-income economies tend to have stronger labour market institutions, robust social protection systems, better developed public services, and greater access to investment and export markets — factors that significantly contribute to stronger job creation potential.

At the same time, Caribbean economies feature several structural similarities. They are small, highly open to international trade, deeply integrated regionally, and heavily reliant on the tourism sector. Despite these shared features, they face a range of persistent challenges that hinder sustainable and inclusive growth. These include vulnerability to climate change and external shocks, limited economic diversification, entrenched inequality, and demographic and labour market constraints. Together, these factors shape the region's development trajectory and highlight the need for coordinated policy responses that account for both shared vulnerabilities and country-specific socio-economic realities.

This section provides an overview of the Caribbean's economic landscape with focus on growth trajectories, and the macroeconomic environment, and its perennial vulnerabilities such as trade shocks, and rising debt levels. It also examines demographic trends and key labour market indicators to offer understating of the factors shaping economic and employment outcomes across the Caribbean region.

2.1 Economic environment

2.1.1 Economic growth trends

In 2024, Caribbean economic growth (excluding Guyana)³¹ slowed to 1.7 per cent down from 2.5 per cent in 2023 (CDB, 2025). Historically, the region has seen modest and volatile growth, averaging 2.5 per cent annually between 2000 and 2023, comparable to neighbouring Latin America but well below other comparable income levels. Over the same period, GDP per capita increased from US\$15,000 to US\$21,800 in the Caribbean, compared to an increase from US\$40,000 to US\$53,000 in OECD countries (OECD/IDB, 2024).

Caribbean economies span three income classifications. With the exception of Haiti, which remains a low-income country, most countries (e.g., Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and Grenadines and Suriname) are upper middle-income. The remaining, including Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, The Bahamas, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Trinidad and Tobago, are designated as high-income countries³².

The region's slow and volatile economic growth has its roots in three principal factors. Firstly, natural disasters — most recently the 2024 hurricanes that struck Grenada, Jamaica, and Saint Vincent and Grenadines — have undercut GDP by disrupting agricultural output, curtailing tourism revenues, and damaging critical infrastructure. Secondly, chronically low productivity, particularly labour productivity, driven by underdeveloped transport and communications infrastructure, restricted access to financing and technology, and large informal sector, has constrained firms' ability to scale and compete regionally (ILO, 2023). Finally, heavy dependence on tourism and commodity exports exposes their economies to swings in global demand, commodity price fluctuations, and geopolitical tensions, further diminishing sustainable growth prospects.

³¹ Guyana's 43.5 per cent growth rate in 2024 makes it the world's fastest-growing economy; excluding it from the Caribbean's average provides a clearer view of the region's underlying growth dynamics.

³² [World Bank country classifications by income level for 2024-2025](#)

2.1.2 Macroeconomic policy environment

The Caribbean economy is largely driven by the service sector, which accounts for 55 per cent to 78 per cent of GDP in most countries. Tourism alone contributes nearly 33 per cent of regional GDP. It also directly provides about 18 per cent of all jobs and indirectly contributes to another 43.1 per cent of total employment (ILO, 2025). Most tourists come from the United States (46 per cent) and Europe (20 per cent) (CDB, 2025). The financial sector follows the tourism as the next largest service, accounting for between 8 per cent and 27 per cent of GDP across the region.

The Caribbean's highly open economy runs a persistent trade deficit, with exports dominated by primary commodities and resource-based manufactures, in particular, petroleum products, agricultural goods, and basic chemicals. In contrast, the region depends heavily on imports of higher-value goods, including industrial machinery and equipment, technological manufactures, and refined resource-based products to meet domestic production and development needs³³. For instance, the Caribbean ranks among the world's most energy-insecure countries: roughly 90 per cent of electricity generation relies on imported fossil fuels³⁴. Except for Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana, most countries depend on expensive, price-volatile oil imports, resulting in some of the highest electricity tariffs worldwide, averaging US\$0.25 per Kilowatt-hour, more than twice the United States (US) rates.

As a result of the region's high dependence on imports, annual inflation rate has increased from 6.1 per cent in 2024 to 6.9 per cent in 2025³⁵ though some estimates place 2024 inflation at just 4.3 per cent (CDB, 2025). In any case, inflation remains well above its pre-COVID-19 level of 1.5 per cent, with Suriname (16.2 per cent in 2024) and Haiti (26.9 per cent in 2024), each facing economic hardships and political instability pushing the regional average higher. As inflation rises, it erodes real wages and household purchasing power, forcing workers to demand higher wages to maintain their living standards.

Platform work holds potential to support inclusive and sustainable economic transformation in the Caribbean. In a context characterized by constrained fiscal space due to high public debt and declining revenues, governments face limitations in expanding public investment for job creation. Therefore, platform work may provide an innovative pathway to promote labour market efficiency, reduce inequalities, and generate employment opportunities, particularly for youth and women. Social dialogue will therefore be essential to harness the benefits of platform work.

Given the Caribbean's reliance on global supply chains and its vulnerability to rising protectionism and logistical disruptions, platform work presents an opportunity to enhance labour market adaptability. Promoting platform work can complement CARICOM's efforts to deepen integration under the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME), particularly by enabling workers to access regional and international markets without the need for physical relocation. In this context, platform work can serve as a strategic tool to support employment and industrial policies.

2.2 Labour market situation

2.2.1 Structural drivers of labour market dynamics

- ▶ The Caribbean labour market is shaped by a complex interplay of economic, demographic, climate change, and migratory factors. The first relates to the size and structure of the Caribbean economies, which are typically small, highly open, and dependent on a narrow range of sectors. This economic configuration constrains the creation of formal employment opportunities and exposes workers to external shocks or disruptions. Formal employment is concentrated in the service sector, with tourism alone accounting for approximately 33 per cent of GDP and 18 per cent of total employment (ILO, 2025). Women are disproportionately represented in this subsector, comprising between 50 to 60 per cent of the tourism labour force in the Caribbean (ILO, 2025).
- ▶ Secondly, demographic dynamics in the Caribbean are undergoing a significant transformation, driven primarily by declining fertility rates and increasing life expectancy. Between 1950 and 2021, the average number of live births per

³³ <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/68664-international-trade-outlook-latin-america-andcaribbean-2023-structural-change>.

³⁴ [The Caribbean struggles to break its dependence on fossil fuels](#).

³⁵ <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/PCPIPCH@WEO/VEN/CMQ/SMQ/BRA/WE/CBQ>

women fell from 5.71 to 1.85, with projections indicating a further decline to 1.71 by 2050. Simultaneously, life expectancy has increased from 51.2 years in 1950 to 71.6 years in 2021 and is expected to reach 81.9 years in 2050 (OECD/IDB, 2024). This demographic transition presents challenges for the Caribbean's world of work, which include shrinking labour supply, potential skills shortage, and shifting labour market needs.

- ▶ Thirdly, climate change poses a growing threat to employment in the Caribbean, as hurricanes, rising sea levels, tidal surges, and flooding are intensifying due changing weather patterns and rising global temperatures (IPCC, 2022). These environmental threats not only endanger lives, livelihoods and infrastructure but also have profound implications for employment. Sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and construction are particularly vulnerable, facing frequent disruptions that lead to job losses, reduced working hours, and income instability (ILO, 2025). Moreover, climate-induced health risks, including biological epidemics, further strain labour market resilience
- ▶ Lastly, the Caribbean has a longstanding history of emigration, with the majority of countries experiencing net outward migration, reflecting both persistent demographic and economic pressures. On average, 2.7 out of every 1,000 individuals in the population reside abroad (ILO, 2025). While the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), adopted in 2006, has facilitated the free movement of skilled nationals across twelve occupational categories, broader efforts are underway to enable full freedom of movement for all persons. Migration has significant implications for the labour market, including the loss of skilled workers, shifts in labour supply, and changes in wage dynamics. On the other hand, remittances from diaspora communities contribute to household income and national economies, while return migration can bring valuable skills and experience.

2.2.2 Labour market trends

- ▶ The working-age population (aged 15+) in the Caribbean was estimated at approximately 14 million in 2024. Haiti alone accounts for more than 8 million, representing over half of the subregion's total working-age population. The rest of the Caribbean collectively account for around 6 million.
- ▶ In 2024, the labour force participation in the subregion was estimated at nearly 8.8 million people (64 per cent) of working age. Equally, Haiti accounts for the majority of the subregion's labour force, representing almost 60 per cent in 2024. This share has increased over time due to Haiti's faster population growth relative to other countries. Between 2000 and 2024, Haiti's labour force grew at an average annual rate of 4.1 per cent, compared to just 0.6 per cent per year for the rest of the subregion.
- ▶ The situation of women's participation in the labour market presents both challenges and positive development. It remains a concern that women's labour force participation (57.8 per cent) is considerably lower than that of men (70.5 per cent). On a more positive note, this gap has been narrowing over the past two decades, as countries have implemented policies and strategies aimed at promoting gender equality in the labour market. Nevertheless, persistent gender inequalities remain, with the majority of women still concentrated in a limited numbers of sectors characterized by lower quality employment and lower wages.
- ▶ The youth labour force participation rate declined from 39.2 per cent in 2000 to 36.4 per cent in 2024. Once Haiti is excluded, 24 per cent of young people are not in employment, education, or training (NEET). The NEET rate serves as a key indicator of multiple vulnerabilities among youth, including unemployment, early school leaving and labour market discouragement.
- ▶ Unemployment in the Caribbean has been on an upward trajectory, largely driven by persistent joblessness in Haiti. In 2024, the total number of unemployed persons across countries was approximately 1.1 million — representing 11.5 per cent — compared to 876,000 in 2010. However, when Haiti is excluded from the analysis, the regional unemployment rate drops significantly to 6 per cent, down from 8 per cent in 2010. Labour market disparities are also persistent across demographic groups: women face higher unemployment rates (14 per cent) compared to men (9.4 per cent), while youth unemployment remains alarmingly high at 30.5 per cent, nearly four times the rate among adults (8.5 per cent).
- ▶ Nearly 7.8 million people were employed in the region in 2024, up from 6.8 million in 2014. This corresponds to an employment-to-population ratio of 56.7 per cent for the region as a whole, and 58.5 per cent when Haiti is excluded. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic led to a temporary decline in employment levels, with the regional employment-to-population ratio falling to 55.4 per cent in 2020. These trends reflect both gradual labour market recovery and the continued need for comprehensive employment policies in the face of external shocks.

- ▶ It is estimated that approximately three-quarters of total employment in the region is in informal employment. When Haiti is excluded, the share declines to around 50 per cent. In Haiti, informal employment is particularly widespread, representing nearly nine out of every ten workers. Workers in informal employment are typically excluded from social protection coverage and lack access to employment-related benefits. Moreover, informality is closely associated with poorer working conditions, including longer hours, unstable earning and occupational safety and health shortcomings.
- ▶ Given the high level of informality in the Caribbean, it is essential that the expansion of platform work does not further reinforce or entrench informality. A critical first step is to strengthen data collection and analysis on the platform work and its relationship with informal employment patterns. Governments and social partners should place greater policy attention to promoting platform work as a pathway to formal employment, ensuring that platform workers have access to labour protection, stable incomes, and social security coverage.
- ▶ The distribution of employment status across countries reflects significant heterogeneity due to differences in income levels. In 2023, wage employment accounted for 43.5 per cent of total employment in the region, followed by own-account workers at 42 per cent, unpaid family workers at 12 per cent, and employers at 2 per cent. However, when Haiti is excluded from the regional aggregate, the employment structure shifts significantly: wage employment rises to 69 per cent, own-account work declines to 25.7 per cent, unpaid family work drops to 1 per cent and the share of employers increases to 4 per cent. This shift underlines the extent to which Haiti's labour market, characterized by high informality and subsistence-based work, skews regional averages.
- ▶ In the absence of official classification of platform work in labour statistics in the Caribbean, it is difficult to draw definitive patterns and conclusions about its relationship with employment status. However, the high share of own-account workers in the region may conceal a sizable share of platform workers. Additionally, some platforms also blur the boundaries between wage employment and self-employment, creating risks of misclassification. For instance, workers who rely exclusively on a single platform for work and income may functionally resemble wage employees, despite lacking formal employment relationship and protection.
- ▶ Across the region, occupational skill levels are dominated by medium-skilled workers, who consistently account for over 50 per cent of the labour force. High-skilled workers remain comparatively a smaller proportion, while low-skilled workers vary more widely, from less than 5 per cent to over 40 per cent. This distribution underlines the centrality of medium-skilled employment to the Caribbean economy, reflecting structural labour market patterns tied to services, tourism, and public administration. However, the comparatively small share of high-skilled labour signals a need to strengthen advanced training and education systems, while the persistence of sizable low-skilled proportions in some countries highlight structural vulnerabilities of the working poor. Together, these dynamics suggest that the Caribbean's competitiveness and sustainable growth will depend on boosting high-skilled capacity while reducing reliance on low-skilled employment.
- ▶ While the majority of the Caribbean labour force is classified as low-to-medium skilled, recent ILO findings indicate that platform work in LAC tends to attract individuals with higher levels of educational attainment. According to the study, over 51 per cent of platform workers have completed university-level education. Specifically, 38 per cent have a bachelor's or equivalent degree, 7 per cent have a master's or equivalent degree, 5 per cent have an associate's degree, and 1 per cent hold a doctorate. Additionally, 17 per cent have some college education without completing a degree. Workers with a high school diploma or equivalent account for 13 per cent, while 6 per cent have a technical certificate. These figures suggest that platform work is largely concentrated among more educated segments of the labour force (ILO, 2025).
- ▶ Labour productivity in the Caribbean has remained persistently low over the past two decades. Between 2005 and 2023, the region achieved an average annual labour productivity growth of just 0.6 per cent, well below the global average of 1.5 per cent. This performance also lags other regional blocks such as ASEAN (2.8 per cent) and BRICS (5.4 per cent). However, this low productivity is not unique to the Caribbean; the broader Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region experienced an even lower average annual growth rate of 0.4 per cent over the same period (ILO, 2022).
- ▶ In this context of sluggish labour productivity growth, the rise of digital technologies and platform might facilitate a shift toward service-oriented activities that are often low in value-added and thus do not necessarily lead to higher productivity or wage growth as observed in developing economies (ILO, 2023). Without corresponding investment in education, skills development, and human capital, the returns to labour remain limited, while capital gains dominate.

► 3. Overview of constituents' perspectives

3.1 Constituents' perspectives

Platform work has increasingly drawn the attention of governments, and employers' and workers' organizations across the Caribbean, though with varying levels of engagement and differing objectives. Workers' organizations have voiced concerns about the lack of adequate protection mechanism for platform workers, often highlighting the challenges these platforms pose to traditional employment relationships. Employers, on the other hand, view platform work as an opportunity to stimulate innovation, job creation and a competitive environment for local enterprises. However, the absence of tripartite national and international policy guidance on platform work has contributed to limited action by ministries responsible for labour, leaving critical policy and regulatory gaps unaddressed.

While these discussions reflect a diversity of perspectives, the lack of comprehensive evidence on the prevalence, concentration and potential of the platform economy in the Caribbean has constrained the foundations for meaningful social dialogue among constituents. It has also constrained the Caribbean's ability to engage in and contribute to global and regional policy debates, and to fully harness the opportunities that these platforms present to workers, enterprises, and society.

In response to these challenges and as an initial step toward informed policymaking, this qualitative study was undertaken to capture the perspectives of the constituents across the Caribbean. This section aims to assess their familiarity with platform work, identify the existence of relevant policy and regulatory frameworks, if any, and collect insights on the sectoral and geographical distribution of platform activity, including the presence of local versus global platforms. Therefore, this section presents a synthesis of this perspective, drawing on inputs from representatives of ministries of labour, and workers' and employers' organizations across 11 Caribbean countries. The findings provide a foundational understanding to support evidence-based dialogue and guide the development of relevant response to the evolving digital platform work as an integral part of inclusive labour market policies.

3.1.1 Familiarity with digital labour platforms

- **Antigua and Barbuda:** the Workers' Organization reported limited familiarity with, and exposure to, digital labour platforms in the national context. From the union's perspective, the only "platforms" currently in use are social media channels such as Facebook, which serve primarily for communication and outreach.
- **The Bahamas:** platform work gained prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly within the financial sector. Workers' Organizations reported that platform work was adopted out of necessity during the pandemic, enabling remote service delivery and continuity of operations. However, the shift towards platform-based work was concentrated among workers who had access to digital tools and possessed the requisite digital skills, leaving many excluded from emerging opportunities. While the financial sector demonstrated adaptability, the Workers' Organizations remain wary of the long-term implications of blending traditional work practices with remote or platform-based models. Their concerns stem from the absence of a level playing field, particularly regarding the labour protection, job security and equitable access to digital infrastructure which could exacerbate the existing inequality. The union finds the private sector more supportive of digital transitions, in contrast to the Government's perceived limited enthusiasm for promoting platform-based or remote work in the financial sector.

On the other hand, employer organizations, in general, have extensive experience in digitalizing business processes and engaging workers via digital platforms. They indicated familiarity with a range of platforms serving freelancers, remote workers, and independent contractors who prefer the flexibility of setting their working hours and managing their workloads. The employers' perspective reflects the evolving nature of professional work in The Bahamas, especially among service-oriented professionals.

- **Belize:** the Workers' Organizations in Belize expressed a high level of familiarity with platform work, describing them as a growing phenomenon over the past five years. The platform economy is increasingly recognized as a new source

of employment, particularly for young people who have accessed gainful work opportunities through these platforms. However, despite its expansion, platform work is still embryonic and evolving, while presenting decent work deficits and challenges to workers' rights and protection. Further, the union highlighted notable gaps in labour standards, protections, and rights for the platform workers, particularly among youth.

- ▶ **Saint Kitts and Nevis:** the Labour Commissioner at the Ministry for Tourism, Labour, Aviation, and Urban Development, reported a solid understanding of platform work. Locally, platform delivery workers operate as independent contractors using their own vehicles and get paid per delivery. One of the most prominent examples is the online food ordering and delivery services, which actively involves workers and small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The Employer Organization highlighted their international exposure such as participation in a conference advocating for platform regularization, and ongoing efforts to ensure platform workers' protections under the evolving national labour code. Although no formal national consultations have occurred, platform work has been publicly debated in the media, signalling the need for a more structured dialogue among the tripartite constituents.
- ▶ **Dominica:** tripartite constituents expressed varying degrees of familiarity with platforms. The Workers' Organizations reported a solid understanding of the platform economy and launched several platform-based initiatives. For instance, unions vet and nominate qualified taxi operators to join ride-hailing platforms, liaising directly with platform companies to conduct background checks. With support from the ILO, the Dominica Public Sector Union (DPSU), in collaboration with Dominica Amalgamated Workers' Unions (DAWU), the Waterfront and Allied Workers' Union (WAWU), and National Workers' Union (NWU) enhanced their capacity for digital transformation and crises-responsive union education during the COVID-19 pandemic. These efforts aimed to develop products and services that improve member engagement and adapt to evolving work arrangement, including remote work, online sales, and platform-based work. Many clients served by these platforms are overseas based, particularly in the United States. Finally, the unions noted that the platform work has seen steady growth, attracting both clients and workers. In contrast, the employer organization noted that none of its members engage in platform work. While acknowledging the existence of platform workers in Dominica, such as remote freelancers, they highlighted a lack of official data on the platform economy. No sectoral or national-level studies have been conducted, leaving insights into platform work largely anecdotal or informed by external reports, such as those by the ILO. This gap points to a broader data scarcity issue regarding platform work within Dominica.
While Workers' Organizations have demonstrated a strong commitment to embracing both the opportunities and challenges associated with platform work — reflected in various initiatives — employers' organizations have shown comparatively limited engagement. Nonetheless, some initiatives have been introduced, including digital training programmes and dedicated support portals, aimed at enabling their members to access and benefit safely from emerging forms of employment.
- ▶ **Saint Lucia:** although no reliable data exists on the prevalence or scale of platform work, constituents in Saint Lucia reported some familiarity with platforms across various sectors - particularly with regard to commercially established platforms in passenger transportation (e.g., ride-hailing apps), the creative industries (such as musicians, photographers, and event decorators), and online customer service roles, alongside social-media groups for hiring domestic workers. Yet platform work remains limited in scale: persistent infrastructure gaps and low levels of digital adoption have hindered its expansion. This suggests that, without targeted investments in connectivity and systematic, robust data collection, it will be difficult to understand the scope and prevalence of platform work or design policies that enable its broader uptake or contribution to decent work and inclusive growth.
- ▶ **Trinidad and Tobago:** the Ministry of Labour's understanding of platform work draws largely from its oversight of remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it reaffirms limited direct engagement with platform operators and the wider ecosystem. It is now commissioning a "Transitioning to Formality" study to assess the role of platforms in the informal economy and where regulatory gaps lie. Workers' Organizations report close monitoring of platform business models, especially in delivery services, ride-hailing and creative sectors, but acknowledge that organizing this fragmented labour force remains a significant challenge. Meanwhile, the Employers' Organization maintains a database of job seekers and collaborates with online recruiters. They observed that most people search for employment via online platforms. These include national platforms such as D'HUB's marketplace, which connects job seekers to freelance and employment opportunities. In addition, global freelance platforms are widely used,

reflecting the growing presence and prevalence of the platform economy in the country's evolving employment landscape.

- ▶ **Saint Vincent and Grenadines:** overall, the tripartite constituents reported that platform work remains very limited, with only a temporary surge during the COVID-19 pandemic. Where platform work does persist, the Labour Commissioner noted that it operates completely invisible and beyond the ambit of existing legal framework, raising concerns about worker protections, tax compliance, and regulatory oversight. Social partners, on the other hand, have a wider understanding of platform work and demonstrate divergent views on its potential to either spur innovation or exacerbate labour market vulnerabilities. However, they unanimously noted that the platform economy is already reshaping employment relationships, even though no legal definitions or classifications currently govern this new form of work.
- ▶ **Grenada:** the constituents reported that platform work is expanding, albeit from a low starting point. While most workers continue to favour traditional jobs, younger tertiary graduates are increasingly drawn to income generating opportunities offered by platforms such as content creation or food delivery. However, the partners have not yet placed sufficient emphasis on supporting this nascent trend. As a result of the platform's limited prevalence and weak constituent engagement, overall awareness, and knowledge on platform work among the constituents remain notably low.
- ▶ **Suriname:** the tripartite constituents in Suriname show varying levels of familiarity with the platform economy. The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Opportunities is generally familiar with the concept, primarily through its engagement in the ongoing standard-setting discussions on decent work in the platform economy at the International Labour Conference (ILC). Workers' Organizations show moderate familiarity, with local food delivery platforms cited as the commonly used example for both ordering and delivering meals. In contrast, the Employers' Organizations report limited or no familiarity.
- ▶ **Jamaica:** the Employers' Organization is fairly familiar with the concept, indicating that the country is significantly integrated in the Global Services and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector, which employs approximately 65,000 workers — 5 per cent of the total labour force. Additionally, the employers' reported that many workers work virtually for overseas entities or offer services and creative content online, though exact numbers are unknown. Workers' Organization identified several forms of platform works including ride-hailing services as well as food delivery apps active in Kingston, Montego Bay, and Portmore. Other forms of platform work, such as online tutoring and academic services, are emerging though this remains limited in uptake. Additionally, short-term rental platforms are widespread particularly in major tourism regions, contributing to income generation and informal employment.

3.2 Perceived challenges, potential opportunities

In Antigua and Barbuda, the constituent highlighted the risk that platform work might facilitate practices that circumvent labour standards compliance. Yet they can present greater opportunities particularly for women with caregiving responsibilities, youth, and elderly people by providing flexible work arrangements and income opportunities.

In The Bahamas, the Workers' Organizations identified reduced stress and time saving from commuting as a key benefit of working via online platforms and remote work. However, they warned that shifting costs such as higher home-utility bills and the burden of maintaining work-from-home equipment, can disadvantage workers, especially if devices fail under a remote work mandate. The employer organization similarly highlighted time and fuel savings as primary advantages, noting digital connections can accelerate client engagement. Yet they also alerted that the decline in face-to-face interaction weakens relationship-building among clients and workers, suggesting that successful platform-based models must pair technological convenience with practical strategies for maintaining strong professional relationship.

In Belize, the Workers' Organizations view the platform economy as a catalyst for youth employment, providing flexible pathways into formal employment. Integrating platform work into national labour market policies and programmes could expand access to work for disadvantaged groups. However, in the absence of robust regulatory frameworks and social protection measures, these platforms risk reproducing informal sector vulnerabilities — a concern widely raised by Workers' organizations. Moreover, dependence on international platforms introduce economic and legal complications, while linking platform work with business process outsourcing (BPO) industry may redirect local value abroad and

perpetuate precarious working conditions. Balancing flexibility and decent work will be essential to harness the benefits of the platform economy while safeguarding workers' rights.

The Workers' Organizations also raise concerns regarding platform work undermining labour standards (i.e., work during public holidays, lack of formal contracts or protection). Such unregulated practices may perpetuate precarity, deny legal recourse, and enable challenging working conditions including deactivation from the platform. Therefore, these concerns require stronger oversight and compliance to protect platform workers.

In Dominica, the Workers' Organizations noted that the platform economy offers a promising avenue for entrepreneurship and youth employment. Recent experiences show that a substantial proportion of young men launched delivery services and ride-hailing platforms (as well as online businesses) after prolonged unemployment. However, significant challenges persist. Platform work remains unregulated, allowing unrestricted access market entry which risks oversaturation as more individuals offer similar services. This unregulated growth, combined with gradual customer adoption due to unfamiliarity with these services, limits the scalability of platform work. Furthermore, Dominica's relatively small population size constrains the potential market for such services, raising concerns about the sustainability of these enterprises.

Employer organization identified distinct challenges in platform and remote work setting, including limited supervision, complex productivity measurement, and data security risks. A case in point occurred after Hurricane Maria in 2017, when financial institutions shifted to remote work arrangements. Though not strictly "platform" arrangements, these experiences exposed issues related to data confidentiality and occupational health and safety (OSH) for home-based workers that may similarly affect platform workers. Some employers extended OSH obligations into workers' homes, conducting home safety assessments to mitigate employer's liability. These examples demonstrate the potential broader implications of online platform work and the need for updated regulatory frameworks to address emerging risks.

From the Government's standpoint in Saint Kitts and Nevis, key challenges for platform workers include the lack of comprehensive social protection coverage, including health insurance, and the absence of collective bargaining, which frequently confines workers to the statutory minimum wage. The main opportunity is the flexible working arrangements for workers to optimize work-life balance and supplement income even though they remain vulnerable to unpredictable hours and earning. Employers view digital platform work as a means to upskill labour and facilitate integration into regional and international markets. However, they caution that limited access to reliable internet and modern technologies could impede both the scalability of platform operations and workers' participation rates.

In Saint Lucia, the tripartite constituents reported that digital labour platforms create significant opportunities for self-employment, flexible work arrangements, and entry into global markets, particularly for young people and creative professionals. Platform work also enhance professional visibility and grant greater autonomy for some workers. However, these opportunities are tempered by several interrelated challenges: income volatility without a guaranteed floor; irregular hours and lack of safety or quality of service standards; and limited access to health or pension schemes. Compounding these issues are digital infrastructure deficits such as unreliable internet and intermittent electricity supply which restrict platform scalability. Finally, difficulties in formalizing businesses, navigating tax regimes, and contributing to social security systems produce further barriers to sustainable enterprises within the platform economy.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the Employers' Organization's perspective is notably related to the labour force's lack of digital skills — ranging from basic IT literacy to platform-specific onboarding and e-payment management, that would allow workers to engage in platform work. These digital skills gaps should be addressed to leverage the platform economy's potential to mitigate structural unemployment, pay gaps and accommodate caregiving responsibilities.

Workers' Organizations, by contrast, identify the absence of core social protection measures such as sick leave, health insurance and pension contributions for platform workers. They express concern over working conditions such as the lack of minimum wages, undefined working hours, and non-existence of collective bargaining rights as the main challenges that would lead to precarious working conditions. Both the Government and Workers' Organizations equally underscore the lack of policy and regulatory frameworks as a major impediment to integrating platform workers into the formal economy despite the platform's opportunities of cost-saving and work-life balance improvements.

In Saint Vincent and Grenadines, the Labour Commissioner emphasises that insufficient data and statistics hinder meaningful social dialogue and evidence-based policymaking. Equally critical is the absence of conducive regulatory environments, which currently impedes the development of platform work. Both the Workers' and Employers'

Organizations agree that without clear legal definitions and standards, platform work will remain informal and precarious. Employer organization points out that a supportive platform ecosystem could incubate innovative business models, particularly for micro, small, and medium enterprises, while workers argue that the platform economy could create substantial formal employment opportunities for those who are left behind such as youth, women, and elderly people.

In Grenada, the Government noted that platform work can potentially provide promising gains by enabling the production and distributions of new and innovative services whilst also enhancing workers' digital competencies through targeted training programmes. Although both workers and employers acknowledge the value of global digital platforms, concerns remain regarding their compliance with national labour standards. Specifically, the absence of a mechanism to resolve disputes such as those related to contractual terms, remuneration, and working hours between workers and global digital platforms or intermediaries raises questions about fairness and accountability in the digital labour environment.

In Suriname, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Opportunities highlights the platform work's potential for youth employment in ICT-related sectors and flexible work arrangements. However, concerns persist around OSH, non-traditional working hours, and enforcement challenges for labour inspections, including jurisdictional limitations and digital monitoring constraints. The workers' Organization sees benefits in flexible income generation, entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, and skills development. Yet, they also note inherent risks such as income instability, limited social protection, and unclear employment status. The employers' organization raises questions about the classification of platform workers and their access to social protection coverage, including pensions, insurance, and sick leave.

In Jamaica, the Employers' Organization considers digital training through institutions like HEART/NSTA Trust as a key opportunity for preparing workers for platform work. However, they highlight that limited access to affordable internet and devices remain a major barrier. On the other hand, the workers' organization raises safety concerns, particularly for ride-hailing platforms, which have reportedly been misused for criminal activity. They also noted that limited understanding of these platforms has constrained regulatory development, as seen when the Government's attempt to regulate a short-term rental platform was paused due to public opposition to the proposed law.

Across all constituents interviewed, the principal cross-cutting challenges include the circumvention of labour standards and the reinforcement of informality, with many workers operating without contracts, unpredictable earnings, or access to minimum wage protections, collective bargaining, and social security. Remote and platform-based work is reported to have often shifted operational costs to workers such as increased utility bills and the burden of providing their own equipment while also raising concerns around productivity measurement, and occupational safety. Given the unregulated environment, platform work is also noted to lead into income volatilities. These challenges are also compounded by unreliable internet and electricity, limited access to digital tools, low digital literacy, and regulatory gap particularly when work is carried via international platforms.

Despite these challenges, greater opportunities and positive views exist among constituents. The majority of them believe that the platform economy can eventually expand access to work and income opportunities. They also provide flexible work arrangement that are particularly beneficial for women with caregiving responsibilities, youth, older persons, and creative professionals. The platform economy boosts self-employment and entrepreneurship in sectors such as delivery, passenger transportation, and freelancing, and can serve as pathways to formal employment when aligned with national labour market policies. It is also likely that such platforms enable SMEs to access regional and international markets. Employers, in particular, see potential to upskill the labour force and close the digital divides through targeted training. When enabling conditions exist such as reliable connectivity, clear legal frameworks, effective social protection coverage, the platform economy can support sustainable enterprises and potentially lead to decent work.

3.3 Social dialogue initiatives on platform work

Across nearly all countries surveyed in the Caribbean, there is an almost complete absence of structured tripartite or bipartite consultations on the platform economy. In Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Vincent and Grenadines, Dominica, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia, no formal consultations at national, sectoral or enterprise levels have been organized within the existing industrial relations framework. Dominica's employer organization and Trinidad and Tobago's Workers' Organizations only participated in ILO-led international webinars and discussions on platform work, but none of those discussions have been translated into domestic policy dialogues or regulatory proposals. The limited presence of

national social dialogue suggests challenges in institutional capacity, including the need for clearer regulatory frameworks, enhanced technical expertise on the platform economy, and more developed procedural mechanisms.

In Saint Kitts and Nevis, no formal tripartite and bipartite dialogue on digital labour platforms were held. However, the Employers' Organization has initiated an extensive series of internal discussions on the impact of digital and remote work, including platform work. These consultations concentrate on two critical areas: ensuring that the employer provides workers with appropriate digital equipment and reliable connectivity as well as supporting the necessary amendments to the labour code to extend legal protections to platform workers.

In The Bahamas, the tripartite consultations on digital platforms have primarily targeted the financial sector, but they have not received strong support from employers and Government. The Chamber of Commerce reports that employers' main strategy is to include platform work into future social dialogue mechanisms and advocate for updated employment legislations. Additionally, the Chamber intends to initiate a series of consultations with sectors that have already begun adopting platforms, aiming to build broader consensus and policy alignment.

At the operational level, the Chamber of Commerce in The Bahamas has highlighted an upcoming apprenticeship programme, with US\$5 million funding, as an opportunity to build beneficiaries' digital skills. While this initiative presents a greater opportunity, the Chamber of Commerce underlines that the digital component focuses narrowly on basic skills development, without addressing the broader and more complex dimensions of platform work. Hence, this approach might not address the decent work deficits faced by platform workers, including income volatility, inadequate social protection, and mismatches between skills and labour market demand.

In Grenada, tripartite partners are engaged in ad hoc discussions to design a social protection scheme for informal workers, including platform workers. This initiative covers discussions on employment security and the development of regulatory frameworks to integrate platform workers into the formal social protection system. In parallel, ongoing efforts aim to extend coverage through National Insurance Scheme (NIS).

Belize stands alone in the region for taking initial steps to integrate platform work into its industrial relations framework. National level tripartite and bipartite discussions on platform work have already taken place, although a permanent consultation mechanism has not been established thus far. To strengthen these gains, the discussion is underway to embed platform work topics into formal labour dialogue structures. An additional development that could support the introduction of safeguards for young people engaged in platform work is the recent tripartite agreement on promoting decent work for youth. While not specific to platform work, this agreement reflects a growing willingness to address youth employment within broader labour policy frameworks, potentially creating space for future inclusion of platform-related concerns.

In Suriname, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Opportunities noted that following the 13th Ministerial Meeting, the Government Group within the Labour Advisory Board recommended in April 2025 that the Platform Economy be placed on the agenda. However, workers' and employers' organizations have indicated they are not aware of any tripartite or bipartite consultations on this topic to date.

3.4 Policy and regulatory environment

3.4.1 Existing laws and legislative frameworks

This study first requested all ministries responsible for labour in Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and Grenadines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago, to submit any policy or legal instruments either dedicated to or containing provisions for platform work. Simultaneously, semi-structured interviews with the tripartite constituents in the same countries were conducted to identify any existing or pending frameworks. Both lines of inquiry converged on a single finding: no Caribbean country currently possess specific legal or regulatory measures on platform work. The absence of laws across countries highlights a regional regulatory gap, suggesting the need for more structured efforts to develop guidance and protections for both platform workers and digital labour platforms.

Nevertheless, several countries have signalled potential opportunities for regulating platform work within broader labour legislations and digital economy reforms. In The Bahamas, the employers' organization points to a package of labour legislation reforms currently under Parliament review which might provide avenues to explicitly include provisions on platform work.

In Suriname, the Government plans to use the upcoming International Labour Conference (ILC) to develop a tripartite — agreed Plan of Action for implementing the relevant ILO instrument, which will include reviewing and amending national labour legislation to better reflect the realities of platform work. One proposal is to integrate a provision on platform work into the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Bill, pending before the National Assembly since 2018 and 2021, to ensure protections related to OSH and work-life balance. However, workers and employers have not reported any plans or advocacy to support platform work regulations.

In Jamaica, the Workers' Organization noted that Parliament initiated a bill to regulate short term rental services platforms. However, the proposed law was deferred following public concern and calls for broader consultation. On the other hand, the Employers' Organization highlights that existing labour laws apply (to platforms?) while Data Protection Act (2020) and Cyber Crime Act are indirectly applicable to platform operations.

Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Lucia are undertaking reviews of their labour code which would help to identify challenges related to platform work as part of the gap analysis and recommendations for addressing them in the Act. In Dominica, the recent enactment of cybersecurity legislation and the expansion of Government-supported business incubators demonstrate a commitment to the digital economy and entrepreneurship platforms that could readily link to the platform economy agenda.

While many countries are currently reviewing — or soon will review — their labour legislations, the ILO's guidance has been noted as necessary to advise policymakers on integrating platform work dimensions into labour legislation reforms. Because comprehensive legislative reforms can take years to be finalized, it is imperative to initiate both national and regional social dialogues, ensuring that new laws are not only technically sound and enforceable but responsive to the needs of both digital labour platforms and platform workers.

3.4.2 Non-regulatory measures and practices

This study also attempted to identify non-binding norms and sector — or enterprise — level practices governing platform work. In other words, an attempt was made to map voluntary standards and monitoring mechanisms adopted across industries and individual firms to regulate working hours, ensure worker safety, and provide social protection benefits, among others.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the National Business Registry registers digital platforms and monitors their compliance with national regulations. However, the global platforms are of this registry system. In addition, the Government also recognizes that platforms typically use "internal service agreement" to set working hours and performance standards. However, these "unilateral terms of service" is a concern for both workers' and employers' organizations as they deem that these create de facto digital and home-based workplaces that lack formal regulation. Workers' Organizations argue that voluntary service arrangements limit platform liability, transfer risks to workers, and create asymmetrical power dynamics in the labour market.

In The Bahamas, Workers' Organizations have raised concerns about the lack for structured mechanisms on digital platforms to monitor working time, and measure productivity. One example is the growing use of login-logout tracking system which has sparked debate. While these systems are intended to provide oversight, unions argue that they often lack transparency, and may not accurately reflect the actual hours worked, hence raising the challenge of fair treatment of platform workers.

In Belize, the Employers' Organization recognizes that some platforms issue a general handbook outlining employment and working conditions. However, these handbooks are non-binding, vary widely among platforms, and lack enforceability

of formal labour legislation. Consequently, working hours, occupational safety and health, and social security coverage remain largely unregulated within the platform economy.

In Suriname, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Opportunities reported that platform work is currently offered by five to six formally operating companies, employing an estimated 6000 workers across both location-based and web-based services. The majority of these workers are young women with higher levels of education. These companies generally comply voluntarily with national labour standards, increasing the likelihood that workers have access to basic social protection, including maternity benefits, sickness insurance, old-age pensions, and coverage for industrial accidents and occupational diseases however, regulatory oversight remains limited. The Labour Inspectorate does not have a dedicated programme to monitor platform work, and the list of occupational diseases, unchanged since 1947, only covers physical injuries, excluding conditions that may arise from platform-based work. Furthermore, neither workers nor employers have confirmed any knowledge of this non-binding rules.

In Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Government confirmed that labour and social inspection services are actively monitoring working conditions on certain local platforms while the Employers' Organization recommends that the Ministry of Labour collaborate with Social Security Administrations to ensure platform operators and workers make appropriate contributions. This dual approach, according to the employers' organizations, underlines both the need for enforcement of existing standards and the extension of social protection to platform workers.

In Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica and Saint Vincent and Grenadines, no sectoral or enterprise-level practices or rules are yet to be observed. However, these countries are keen to draw on international and regional experience and best practices to improve the working conditions of platform workers.

3.5 Sectoral distribution and enabling factors

3.5.1 Platform typology and sectoral distribution

Despite the relatively low penetration of platform work in the Caribbean, the sectoral distribution shows distinct patterns. Across the region, location-based platforms represent the largest share of platform work. In Belize, Grenada, Jamaica and Saint Vincent and Grenadines, platform work occurs in transport, food delivery, and tourism services. Similarly, in Dominica and Saint Kitts and Nevis, platform activity is mainly concentrated in ride-hailing and courier services. In Trinidad and Tobago, the spectrum extends beyond transport and delivery to include household service (e.g., domestic work) and on-site skilled services (repair and maintenance). Meanwhile, in The Bahamas the finance and consulting sector play the leading role in the digital economy and in Antigua and Barbuda, digital engagement remains limited to information exchange.

According to the Ministry of Labour in Suriname, platform work is mostly prevalent in the customer service and call centre sector. The companies, often national branches of international companies or locally registered entities, are subject to national labour legislation. Their growth has been facilitated by Suriname's Dutch-speaking labour force and shared linguistic alignment with European markets, particularly the Netherlands.

In Jamaica, the Employers' Organization reported that platform work is dominant in the Global Services and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector, supported by the country's alignment with US time zone and its English-speaking workforce, which facilitates near-shoring of customer service operations. Additionally, employers also highlighted the creative industries, particularly music, as a significant sector where producers and musicians have long used digital platforms for collaboration and sales. While the Workers' Organizations acknowledged the presence of platform work, they are uncertain about which forms are most prevalent.

Except for Belize which reports widespread diffusion of platform work nationwide, other Caribbean countries noted that platform work remains centred in capital cities and tourist hubs, with minimal presence in areas less connected to the

tourism sector. This urban-and-tourism bias suggests that infrastructure, market demand, and digital literacy barriers continue to limit broader platform economy penetration.

Three key insights emerge from these findings. Firstly, the COVID-19 pandemic drove a sharp, but transient, surge in the demand for platform work across the countries. Secondly, despite this initial momentum, online platforms, particularly freelancing and microtask platforms, have not achieved widespread uptake in the region. Thirdly, the platform penetration remains heavily tourism-driven; digital labour platforms are most prevalent in tourism hubs, reflecting the tourism-outsized role in economic activity and employment in the region.

3.5.2 enabling factors for platform work

This section summarizes the conditions conducive for scaling platform work identified in the interviews. Four key enabling factors emerged: sustained investment in digital infrastructure; growing demand driven by the tourism sector; strong constituency support for a coherent framework; and the opportunity to learn from both regional and international best practices.

Firstly, the constituents recognized the region has relatively robust digital infrastructure such as reliable high-speed internet and telecommunication networks, which underpins the growth of the platform economy. Moreover, the development and implementation of large-scale digitalization strategies in most countries promises to accelerate platform adoption. However, the archipelagic geography exacerbates both connectivity and skills gaps, creating a pronounced “digital divide” that risks leaving certain communities behind.

Secondly, although the platform economy remains relatively nascent, the tourism industry is uniquely positioned to catalyse its growth. Its high volume of service transactions — with many tourists lacking local contacts — naturally drives demand for online solutions. Moreover, Caribbean youth, keen for these forms of work, represent a dynamic cohort ready to innovate and adopt emerging digital technologies.

Thirdly, governments, and employers’ and workers’ organizations across countries have identified both opportunities and challenges related to the platform economy, and they demonstrate significant commitment to embrace it, particularly within social dialogue forums and regulatory reviews. However, despite this shared interest, limited institutional capacity to integrate platform work discussions into a formal industrial relations process remains a major bottleneck. To bridge this gap, targeted technical assistance and peer-learning exchanges are inevitably necessary to promote effective social dialogue.

Lastly, constituents, particularly the employers, recognize that learning from peer countries, especially small island states facing similar challenges, can accelerate the uptake of the platform economy. Yet, the lack of formal inter-regional dialogue hampers knowledge-sharing. As a first step, constituents propose to institutionalize south-south cooperation, perhaps through CARICOM and regional social partner networks, to exchange best practices, coordinate pilot initiatives, and build a harmonized regulatory foundation.

3.6 Organization and representation of platform workers

3.6.1 Formal and informal workers groups

Workers’ organizations across all countries in this study reported no knowledge of formal and informal groups for platform workers, nor have they received any membership requests from these cohorts. Consequently, platform workers operate as independent contractors without formal union representation. This absence of collective organization highlights a significant vulnerability: without union engagement, digital platform workers lack mechanisms to engage in collective bargaining and advocacy for fair terms, address grievances, or influence regulatory frameworks.

Similarly, employers' organizations reported that they have not identified any formal or informal groups of digital platforms, at either the sectoral or enterprise level, willing to engage with them.

3.6.2 Support mechanisms for informal workers

Only the Workers' Organizations in Dominica and Saint Lucia, to a lesser extent, have invested in building internal capacity to deliver information, training and advocacy for platform and other informal workers. The Employers' Organization in Dominica, by contrast, reported only modest capacity to provide labour management relations advice, occupational safety and health services, training, and advocacy primarily through lobbying for regulatory improvements. In Dominica, where the union-led services are open to all members, there exists a promising model: business transitioning into or engaging with platform work can access institutional support, highlighting a scalable approach for the wider region.

In Grenada, the Government partnered with UN-Women and ILO to extend social protection coverage to informal and platform workers. This collaboration includes evidence-based analysis and programmes designed to improve coverage and access to the National Insurance Scheme (NIS), particularly for self-employed and non-standard workers.

In Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Belize, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago, no support programmes are currently available for platform workers. However, unions reported that the existing suite of services, such as training, legal assistance, and advocacy, could be adapted to meet these workers' needs. At the same time, there is a risk that repurposed services may fail to address the unique challenges of digital platform workers, which necessitates careful design and oversight. In Jamaica, no formal support for platform workers is currently in place. However, the Workers' Organization has the potential to play a key role by helping these workers organize, training their representatives, and advocating for their interest in tripartite forums.

3.7 Local vs global digital platforms

Nearly all tripartite constituents interviewed reported that no local platforms have yet scaled to a level comparable with their global counterparts. A few exceptions emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in The Bahamas and Saint Kitts and Nevis, where financial services, which offer cryptocurrency trading, payment services and money lending, and food delivery platforms briefly sprang up. Notably, most of these platforms have sustained growth beyond the pandemic.

Notwithstanding the previous findings, Trinidad and Tobago reported that several local web-based job search platforms have evolved into emerging regional platforms with specialization in job search, e-recruitment, vacancies posting, and application tracking (e-recruitment marketplaces). While these platforms have gained initial traction, they struggle with inadequate server capacity and suboptimal user experience when compared to global competitors. Moreover, gaps in data storage protocols, cybersecurity measures, and overall platform reliability have thwarted their growth. In the absence of targeted policy support and public private investment in technological infrastructures, these nascent platforms face significant challenges to scaling and sustaining their operations.

In Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Employers' Organization pointed out that the national development strategy places stronger emphasis on digital transformation. The country's Voluntary National Review (VNR) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development notes that the COVID-19 accelerated the growth of local digital industry, particularly in areas like food delivery. The VNR also recommends enhancing youth's digital skills to increase their employability³⁶. However, critical challenges, including effective constituents' coordination, have stalled its implementation since then.

³⁶ Saint Kitts and Nevis. Voluntary national review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

► 4. Conclusion and recommendations

Despite the global and regional expansion of platform work, its prevalence within the Caribbean remains relatively limited and uneven, with significant disparities across countries and economic sectors. Platform work is primarily concentrated in urban centres and within the tourism sector, mirroring the region's economic structure and demand patterns. The platform work is largely driven by global digital platforms, although a number of regionally owned platforms have also emerged. Location-based platform work —particularly in transport and delivery services — dominates the platform work landscape in the Caribbean, while web-based work remains less prevalent. Nevertheless, there is a small but growing presence of platform work in the creative industries, which is gaining momentum in several countries and may signal emerging opportunities for diversification and inclusive digital employment.

Several factors continue to constrain the development of platform work in the Caribbean. Chief among these is the absence of legislation governing platform work across the region, resulting in limited labour protections. Consequently, most platform workers operate within the informal economy, with little to no access to social security or employment benefits. Moreover, social dialogue among tripartite constituents remains minimal, although this study's consultations revealed a growing recognition of the issues across all constituents. While digital infrastructure is gradually improving, disparities persist, particularly in smaller island states and rural communities, further limiting equitable access to platform work opportunities.

In addition to regulatory gaps, data limitations pose a significant barrier to evidence-based policymaking and meaningful social dialogue. The lack of disaggregated and timely data on platform work, particularly in relation to worker demographics, income levels, and working conditions, hampers efforts to assess the scale and nature of platform work in the region.

On the other hand, tripartite constituents across the region have expressed a shared view that platform work holds significant potential, provided that an enabling legal, policy, and institutional framework is established. Among the key opportunities identified are the expansion of employment opportunities, particularly for youth and women, the prospects of flexible working arrangements, and ease of entry into the labour market due to low barriers to participation. The regional and global reach of platform workers further enables workers to deliver services remotely to international clients and markets. Employers have also highlighted the value of platform work in introducing innovative business models that enhance service delivery, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction.

To advance decent work in the platform economy, it is essential to initiate, as a starting point, inclusive tripartite social dialogue at both national and regional levels. Such dialogue should inform the development of coherent policy and regulatory frameworks that address the unique characteristics of platform work. Strengthening legal and institutional mechanisms will be equally important to safeguard workers' rights and promote equitable access and outcomes in this evolving labour market phenomenon. Therefore, countries currently reviewing labour legislation or updating employment policies are encouraged to integrate provisions that ensure fair wages, adequate social protection, and decent working conditions for platform work.

Robust systems for monitoring and evaluating platform work must be established to generate reliable data on its prevalence, working conditions, and sectoral distributions. Mechanisms for platform worker representations, such as dedicated unions or integration into existing unions or associations, should be promoted. Furthermore, platform operators should comply with national labour standards, including occupational safety and health, working hours, and dispute resolution procedures. Moreover, platform work should be leveraged as a pathway to formalization by promoting financial inclusion, access to social protection, and innovative regulatory approaches. Finally, targeted digital skills training and capacity building initiatives for workers and enterprises will enhance meaningful participation and competitiveness in the platform economy.

► References

- CDB, C. D. (2025). *Caribbean Economic Review and Outlook 2024-2025*. CDB.
- ECLAC. (2025). *Fiscal Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean*. Santiago: United Nations.
- IDB. (2021). *Digital Infrastructure and Development in the Caribbean*. Inter-American Development Bank.
- IDB. (2025). *Trade Trends Estimates: Latin America and the Caribbean*. IDB.
- ILO. (2022). *Digital Transition, Technological Change and Productive Development Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean: Challenges and Opportunities*. International Labour Organization.
- ILO. (2023). *Employment Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean: Towards the Creation of Better Jobs in the Post-Pandemic Era*. Geneva: ILO.
- ILO. (2023). *Platform work in developing economies: can digitalisation drive structural transformation?* ILO.
- ILO. (2023). *Platform work in developing economies: can digitalisation drive structural transformation?* ILO.
- ILO. (2025). *Free movement of persons in the CARICOM Region: A labour market analysis*. ILO.
- ILO. (2025). *International Labour Migration Statistics Database in ASEAN*. International Labour Organization.
- ILO. (2025). *Survey on workers on web-based digital platforms*. ILO.
- ILO. (2025). *WESO Trends*. Geneva: ILO.
- ILO and World Bank. (2024). *Buffer or Bottleneck? Employment Exposure to Generative AI and the Digital Divide in Latin America*. ILO.
- IPCC. (2022). *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. IPCC Sixth Assessment Report*. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.
- ITU. (2024). *Measuring digital development Facts and Figures: Focus on Small Island Developing States*.
- OECD/IDB. (2024). *Caribbean Development Dynamics*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- World Bank. (2023). *Working Without Borders: the Promise and Peril of Online Gig Work*. Washington, DC, USA.: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank.
- World Bank. (2024). *The Future of Work in Central America and the Dominican Republic*. Washington DC, USA: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank.



ilo.org/caribbean

ILO DWT and Office for the Caribbean
6 Stanmore Avenue
P. O. Box 1201, Port of Spain
Trinidad and Tobago
Tel. +1 868 625-0524
Email: ilocarib@ilo.org