



## Gobierno de La Rioja

'Sometimes you don't feel human' –  
how the **gig economy**\* chews up and  
spits out millennials  
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Over the weekend, I used at least three services that are part of the gig economy: Uber, Deliveroo and TaskRabbit. So I am either a really bad person or simply someone living their life.

Millennials use gig-economy services the most – and they also work in the gig economy the most. We enjoy its advantages but we are also its victims.

Ursula Huws, a professor at Hertfordshire Business School, says that young people don't usually choose to work in the gig economy. For most, it is because they cannot find other work or because the money they earn from other low-paid jobs is not enough.

The positives of this sort of work have become fewer over time. Huws says the best time for the gig economy was 2013, when companies took less money from the drivers. Over time, Uber has increased the money it takes from drivers and also pays them less for the fares. Drivers are working much longer hours to make the same money – or less.

Huws says that the gig economy has always existed: cash-in-hand or on-call work or people going to building sites or dockyards and waiting for work. But since the 2008 crash, secure jobs have become harder to find. Huws says that a career is becoming less important and young people often work many different jobs.

Huws worries about something else: the wellbeing of gig-economy millennial workers. There is no sickness pay, no holiday leave, no insurance. Of course, the gig economy isn't all bad. When work is truly flexible and you have a good employer, that's fine. But it's not fine when you have to wait for the phone call that will tell you when your next shift is or when you are not paid for overtime or have to buy your own equipment such as a bike.

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**gig economy**\*: *a labour market characterized by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs.*

### A) Choose the option that agrees best with the text content (4p)

1<sup>a</sup>

- a) The author works in the gig-economy sector
- b) The author is a millennial
- c) The author regrets using gig-economy services

2<sup>a</sup>

- a) Millennials take these jobs because they don't find anything permanent
- b) Young people accept these jobs because they are not appropriately paid in their jobs
- c) a) + b)



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3<sup>a</sup>

- a) Ursula Huws says that gig-economy workers are better-paid now
- b) 2013 was the time when drivers got the most money for their services
- c) Gig economy is a recent concept

4<sup>a</sup>

- a) There is nothing positive about the gig economy
- b) Most gig-economy workers get paid when they are ill
- c) Gig-economy workers don't often know about their timetable in advance

**B) Identify the words defined: (1p)**

- 1<sup>a</sup>.- to throw out or emit like saliva
- 2<sup>a</sup>.- a person reaching young adulthood in the early 21st century
- 3<sup>a</sup>.- the price of travelling in a bus, plane or other carrier
- 4<sup>a</sup>.- a place where ships are repaired or built

**C) Grammar.- Follow the instructions (2p)**

1<sup>a</sup>.- Write this sentence in the passive

The labour market has thrown millenials out of permanent jobs

.....

2<sup>a</sup>.- Complete the second sentence without changing the meaning of the first one

She rejected their job offer last year. They will never call her again

If.....

3<sup>a</sup>.- Write this sentence in reported speech

"When will I find a permanent job?" he wondered

.....

4<sup>a</sup>.- Rewrite the following sentence without changing the meaning. Use **can't**

I'm sure she didn't see me

.....

**D) Write 100-150 words on one of the following subjects (3p)**

- 1) Give your opinion about the following statement: "Life is harder for millenials than it was for their parents."
- 2) Money or job satisfaction? Which is more important for you?