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## INTRODUCTION

**Welcome to the Care Economy, a term that is being used much more frequently these days.<sup>1</sup> America's aging population means that many workers are spending more hours than ever taking care of older parents. At the same time, the time burden of raising children has not diminished. That means roughly 36% of the working-age population is engaged in providing unpaid care on any given day, according to the annual American Time Use Survey (ATUS) from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.<sup>2</sup>**

Overall, if Americans were paid \$15 per hour for their unpaid caregiving labor, then the total value of the time spent on unpaid care would be \$980 billion per year.<sup>3</sup>

The nature of work in America, though, means that unpaid care is more stressful than it needs to be. In an ideal world, many people with caregiving responsibilities would search out part-time positions that fit their specific situations. But conventional part-time employment tends to offer much lower hourly pay than comparable full-time positions and, it turns out, much less flexibility. Therefore, caregivers are forced to either (1) accept low paying and inflexible part-time jobs; (2) take conventional full-time jobs, with all the stress of combining work and unpaid care responsibilities; or (3) drop out of the paid workforce completely.

Notably, this difficult decision — and the burden of unpaid care in general — falls mainly on women. We estimate that the size of the caregiving gender gap can be valued at \$325 billion per year.<sup>4</sup>

This “caregiving gender gap” is especially large for part-time job holders. Among working-age women who hold part-time employment, 49% have unpaid care responsibilities on the average

day, compared to 30% of men with part-time employment, based on our tabulations of the 2021 ATUS (Column (2), Table 1).

**TABLE 1: CAN PLATFORM WORK HELP CLOSE THE “CAREGIVING GENDER GAP”?**

	(1) PERCENTAGE OF PLATFORM WORKERS WHO REPORT ROUTINELY PROVIDING CARE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS OR LOVED ONES	(2) PERCENTAGE OF PART-TIME WORKERS AGED 25-64 WHO REPORT CARING FOR HOUSEHOLD OR NON-HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS ON AN INDIVIDUAL DAY (ATUS)
Female	61%	49%
Male	56%	30%

*Data: 2021 Lyft survey of drivers using Lyft platform (2022 Economic Impact Report and direct communications); Author tabulations based on 2021 BLS American Time Use Survey*

Further, these averages do not convey the unpredictable nature of the caregiving role. It’s one thing for a single working mother to arrange her schedule to be home by six o’clock to make dinner and assist with homework. It’s quite something else when a child suddenly falls ill and needs to be kept home from school for a day or a week. Eldercare is even more unpredictable. Medical crises can happen suddenly, as when an aging parent falls, breaks their hip, and can no longer stay in the house where they have lived for 50 years. The nature of aging is that unpaid care responsibilities cannot be postponed or scheduled in advance.

Government policies can certainly help ameliorate the burden of unpaid care. For example, the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) requires covered employers to provide unpaid leave for certain medical and family obligations.<sup>5</sup> Currently, 11 states, including California, have put in place paid

family and medical leave policies.<sup>6</sup> In his April 2021 American Families Plan, President Biden proposed subsidizing high-quality child care for low-income and middle-income households, and “creating a national comprehensive paid family and medical leave program that will bring America in line with competitor nations that offer paid leave programs.”<sup>7</sup> Some of these programs were incorporated into earlier versions of the Build Back Better legislation, but not the version that eventually passed Congress as the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022.<sup>8</sup>

Even if this legislation had passed in its entirety, the structure of most full-time and part-time jobs is not supportive of unpaid caregiving responsibilities. First, most employers run lean operations without excess labor to rely on in times of emergency. The number of open positions hit record levels in the first half of 2022, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, driven by short-staffing in industries

such as retail, health care, and transportation.<sup>9</sup> Under these conditions, employers struggle when their employees can't show up on short notice because of the need to suddenly take an aging parent to the doctor.<sup>10</sup>

Second, government-mandated paid leave plans, like the one proposed by President Biden or currently in effect in states like California, typically offer only partial reimbursement of a participant's usual pay.<sup>11</sup> The workers who take time off to fulfill caregiving duties additionally have to worry about making up the lost income after the immediate crisis is over. Even the most flexible and supportive employers may be incapable of rearranging work schedules to provide more hours for someone returning from leave.

### THIS PAPER: A FOCUS ON PLATFORM WORK

In this paper we demonstrate how platform work, such as work facilitated by companies such as Lyft, Uber, DoorDash, and Instacart can improve earnings opportunities for many Americans in the Care Economy. We first estimate the number of paid employees in the Care Economy, then compare it to unpaid job equivalents. All told, there are roughly 4.5 million full-time equivalent (FTE) workers engaged in eldercare. The child care services industry employs roughly about 700,000 (FTE) workers, up 10% since 2007.

These are substantial numbers, but fall far short of the actual time devoted to caregiving. Second, we use the ATUS to estimate the number of hours of unpaid caregiving, and translate those hours into full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs. We find that unpaid caregiving is equal to more than 30 million FTE jobs. By comparison, the health care and social assistance sector includes 17 million FTE paid jobs.

Third, we analyze how the unpredictability of caregiving is more conducive to platform work than to traditional part-time employment. In particular, we show two key advantages that platform work has over conventional part-time work: "**downward flexibility**" and "**upward flexibility**." We define **downward flexibility** as the ability of the worker to choose to reduce hours on short notice to deal with unpredictable caregiving issues. We define **upward flexibility** as the ability of workers to increase hours after a caregiving crisis is over to meet existing financial goals and commitments.

**Downward flexibility** is often cited as an advantage of platform work for unpaid caregivers. They can fully customize their working hours, choosing to be home when children are home from school. They can adjust when, or even if, they work, to match unforeseen short-term changes in care arrangements, such as school being closed for a day. And they can step away from their work for extended periods to deal with major health crises, such as an elderly parent who is injured.

**Upward flexibility** usually receives less attention, but it is a key characteristic of platform work that differentiates it from an employer-employee relationship. In general, most jobs are time-capped, in the sense that the worker needs special permission from their immediate supervisor or higher-ups in order to work more hours. Someone who misses out on income when they take time off to care for their aging parent has no guarantee of getting enough hours to meet existing financial goals and commitments, especially if the company is operating under a tight budget.

Upward flexibility provides a way of addressing unexpected caregiving responsibilities while still

continuing to pay for essentials, such as housing and food, meeting debt obligations, and/or saving for the future.<sup>12</sup> Upward flexibility is especially important for low-income households that otherwise may struggle to stay afloat and take care of their children and parents at the same time.

Downward and upward flexibility makes it easier for both men and women to combine platform work with caregiving. A 2021 survey of drivers on one platform suggests that the percent of male drivers who report routinely providing care for family members or loved ones (56%) is quite high, and very near the percent of female drivers who are caregivers (61%), as shown in Table 1 (Column (1)).<sup>13</sup> Indeed, the “caregiving gender gap” between men and women who choose platform work is much smaller than that gap for part-time workers in the general population.<sup>14</sup>

Platform work could lead to a smaller caregiving gender gap because men who are unpaid caregivers, whether for children or adults, are more likely to seek out the flexibility offered by platform work. Alternatively, men who participate in platform work for other reasons can find it easier to take on unpaid care responsibilities, especially since they have the flexibility to earn more and still fulfill financial commitments and goals, including meeting debt obligations and saving for the future. Overall, this suggests that platform work can help narrow the caregiving gender gap.

### THE GROWTH OF THE CARE ECONOMY

The Care Economy is becoming more economically meaningful in the United States, as the total number of people who need some form of care continues to grow.<sup>15</sup> At the younger end of the age spectrum, the number of children under the age of 15 is up slightly in the 15

years since 2007. At the older end of the age spectrum, the number of Americans who are 65 and over has risen almost 60% since 2007 (Figure 1).

Over the same period, the amount of paid Care Economy work has continued to rise, especially work serving the needs of the elderly. Paid FTE employment in eldercare-related industries such as home health care providers and nursing facilities has risen by 41% since 2007 (Table 2).<sup>16</sup> In particular, FTE employment at home health care agencies is up 70%. By comparison, the amount of overall FTE private sector employment rose only 8% since 2007. All told, there are roughly 4.5 million full-time equivalent workers engaged in eldercare.

The child care services industry employs roughly 700,000 FTE workers, up 10% since 2007.<sup>17</sup> If we include all the informal arrangements with people who are paid to monitor and care for kids in their homes, then the total number goes up to roughly 1.5 million, based on a 2019 report from the CED.<sup>18</sup> And to the degree that elementary and middle schools play a “caretaking” role, some portion of the roughly 6 million public school instructors and staff should be booked against the Care Economy as well.

So far, we have been considering paid caregiving. However, we can estimate the number of unpaid caring hours, based on the annual American Time Use Survey from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).<sup>19</sup> The BLS collects data on daily activities from a rolling sample of about 9,000 adult Americans over the course of a year. Broad categories of time use include personal care, working, household activities such as food preparation and cleanup, purchasing goods and services, and leisure and sports (including watching television).

The categories of time use that we focus on are “caring for and helping household children and adults” and “caring for and helping non-household children and adults.” (These two categories also include travel time). Table 3 lays out some of the basic facts from the 2021 ATUS about the number of hours devoted to unpaid caregiving as a primary activity. Line (1) gives the average percentage of the population aged 15+ engaged in unpaid caring or helping children and adults inside or outside the household. The table shows that 21.7% of the population cares for household members on an average day, and 9.1% of the population cares for non-household members on an average day.<sup>20</sup> Line (2) gives average hours of unpaid caregiving per day for people involved in those activities.

We multiply line (1) by line (2) to get line (3), the average hours of unpaid caregiving per day for the entire population, and then multiply line (3)

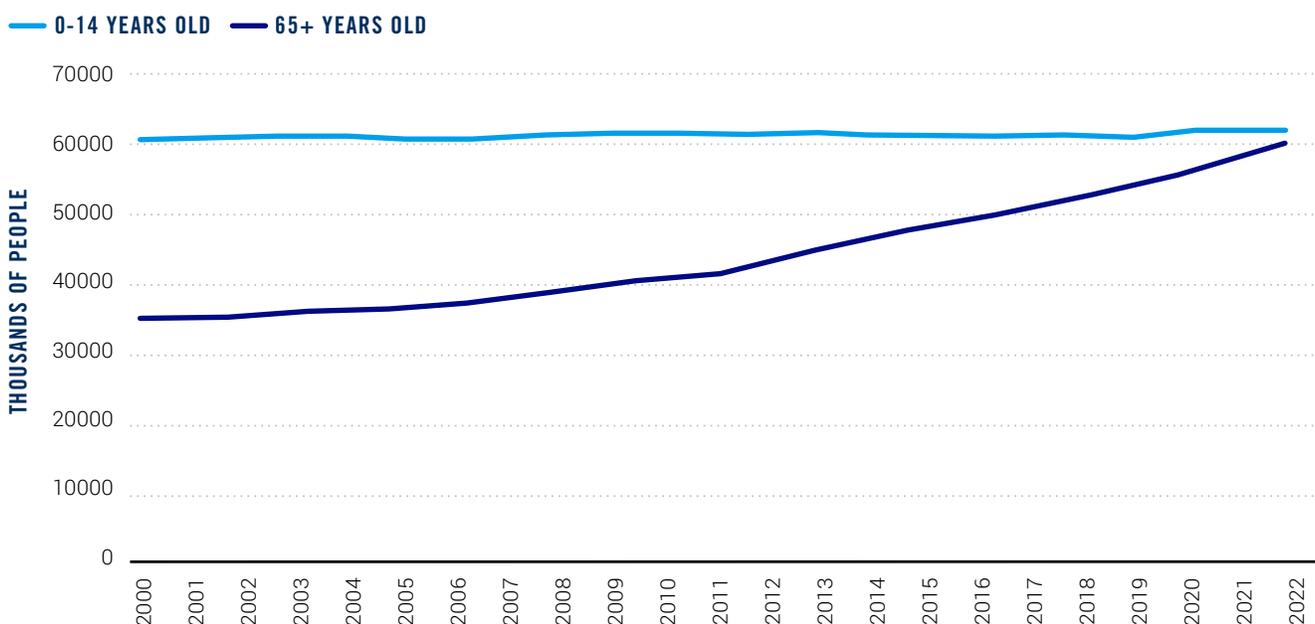
by 7 to calculate the average hours of unpaid caregiving per week (line (4)).

We multiply line (4) by 275 million, the number of people 15 and over, to derive the total number of hours devoted to unpaid caregiving (line (5)). Finally, we calculate full-time equivalent employment by dividing by 40 hours per week (line (6)).

In total, we find that unpaid caregiving hours are equivalent to more than 30 million FTE jobs. That far exceeds the current amount of paid employment in the health care and social assistance sector, which is 17 million paid FTE jobs.

To put it another way, if people were paid \$15 per hour for their unpaid caregiving labor, then the total economic impact of the unpaid care sector work would be \$980 billion per year.

**FIGURE 1: THE GROWTH OF THE CARE ECONOMY: THE NUMBER OF ELDERLY IS CLIMBING, WHILE THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN INCHES UP**



Data: Census Bureau

**TABLE 2: PAID JOBS IN INDUSTRIES PROVIDING ELDERCARE**

	FTE WORKERS*, THOUSANDS, 2021	PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN FTE WORKERS, 2007-2021
Home health care services	1099	70%
Nursing care facilities	1141	-14%
Community care facilities for the elderly (including assisted living)	742	41%
Services for the elderly and persons with disabilities	1495	122%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4477</b>	<b>41%</b>

\*Assumes full time equivalent is 40 hours per week  
Data: Bureau of Labor Statistics

**TABLE 3: UNPAID CAREGIVING HOURS AND FTE-EQUIVALENT EMPLOYMENT, 2021**

	UNPAID CARING FOR AND HELPING HOUSEHOLD CHILDREN AND ADULTS*	UNPAID CARING FOR AND HELPING NON-HOUSEHOLD CHILDREN AND ADULTS*
<b>1</b> Percentage of population aged 15+ engaged in unpaid caregiving activities on an average day.	21.7%	9.1%
<b>2</b> Average hours of unpaid caregiving per day for people involved in those activities	2.17	2.0
<b>3</b> Average hours of unpaid caregiving per day, entire population aged 15+	0.47	0.18
<b>4</b> Average hours of unpaid caregiving per week, entire population aged 15+	3.30	1.27
<b>5</b> Total hours of unpaid caregiving per week (Based on population aged 15+ of 275 million)	909 million hours	351 million hours
<b>6</b> Unpaid caregiving, measured as full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs, millions (based on 40 hours per week)	22.7 million	8.8 million

Note: Line (3) = Line (1) x Line (2). Line (4) = Line (3) x 7. Line 5= Line (4) x 275 million. Line (6) = Line (5)/40.

\* Primary activity only

Data: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021 American Time Use Survey

## THE UNPREDICTABILITY OF THE CARE ECONOMY

The problem, of course, is that much of the unpaid caregiving is supplied by individuals who already have other responsibilities, including paid work. And it is often difficult to integrate since unpaid Care Economy tasks are often unpredictable. Caring for children, as any parent knows, involves frequent unanticipated crises of uncertain duration. Children may suddenly get sick, especially during the age of COVID, and can't go to school or child care, leaving parents with no choice but to stay home or ask for help from friends or relatives.

The literature and anecdotes suggest that unpredictability is an even more important characteristic of unpaid eldercare. The elderly are likely to suddenly suffer from major illnesses or injuries, such as a stroke, that require a large amount of support. And their ability to take care of daily tasks, like getting themselves to the doctor, may deteriorate at unpredictable rates.

Unpredictability is an important reason why studies and reports consistently show a constant friction between work schedules and unpaid care needs. As one analysis notes:

**“Particularly when care demands increase, the unpredictability and the duration of the caregiver experience is accompanied by increased stress, distraction and anxiety over lost productivity.”<sup>21</sup>**

The stress can be seen in an employee survey done for a 2019 report on “The Caring Company” from the “Project on Managing the Future of Work” at the Harvard Business School.<sup>22</sup> The survey revealed that “32% of all employees had voluntarily left a job during their career due to caregiving responsibilities.”

What drove these voluntary departures? According to the report:

**A closer look at the 32% of employees who admitted to leaving a job due to caregiving showed that this is a multigenerational issue. Care obligations can arise at one or more stages of a worker’s career. Employees cited taking care of a newborn or adopted child (57%), caring for a sick child (49%), or simply managing a child’s daily needs (43%) as the top three reasons for leaving. However, the obligation to provide care for other adults also featured prominently. A third of employees who left a position (32%) cited taking care of an elder with daily living needs as the reason. Almost 25% did so to care for an ill or disabled spouse, partner, or extended family member.**

One academic paper identifies a clear difference between child care and eldercare:

**While childcare has a fairly predictable pattern with children becoming less dependent on parents as they get older, eldercare is unpredictable, varies in duration, and tends to increase in amount and intensity over time as the care recipient ages.<sup>23</sup>**

The burden of the unpredictability of unpaid care mostly falls on women, because they disproportionately provide most of the unpaid care. That’s the “caregiving gender gap,” and no matter what set of numbers you look at, the caregiving gender gap is wide. Going back to Table 1, 49% of women aged 25-64 who work part-time report caring for household or non-household members, compared to 30% of men aged 25-64 who work part-time. That’s based on the 2021 ATUS.

Here's another illustration of the caregiving gender gap. Table 3 calculates that there are 909 million hours per week in unpaid care for household members, and 351 million hours per week in unpaid care for non-household members, for a total of 1.260 billion hours per week in unpaid care.

Out of those more than one billion hours of unpaid care per week in the United States, roughly 66%, or 840 million hours, come from women, and roughly 34%, or 420 million hours come from men. That's a difference of 420 million hours per week. Valuing time at \$15 per hour — which clearly is a floor — the size of the caregiving gender gap can be quantified as \$325 billion per year (420 million hours per week x \$15 per hour x 52 weeks).

### CONVENTIONAL PART-TIME JOBS, FLEXIBILITY, AND WAGES

It's important to stress that working a conventional part-time job — say, in the retail sector — typically does not solve the unpaid care issue. Research shows that conventional part-time employment is less flexible and lower-paid than full-time employment. For example, a February 2022 report from the Bureau of Labor Statistics used newly collected data to ask the question: "Does part-time work offer flexibility to employed mothers?"<sup>24</sup> The authors' answer was no.

**...mothers working part-time are employed in jobs that lack many of the attributes that would characterize these jobs as flexible. Mothers in part-time jobs were less likely to have paid leave, work-at-home access, and advanced schedule notice. Although part-time jobs require fewer work hours, these shorter work hours may come at a cost of reduced flexibility, pay, and availability of family-friendly benefits.**

For example, the report noted that mothers who worked part-time were less likely to have access to paid leave. Only 29.3% of mothers who were part-time workers had access to paid leave, compared to 76.0% of mothers who worked full-time.

Moreover, the report showed that employed mothers have less control over their work schedule in part-time jobs. According to the data, 22% of mothers in part-time jobs had less than a week's notice of their work schedule, compared to 10% percent of their full-time counterparts. Similarly, only 50% of employed mothers in part-time jobs had at least 4 weeks advance notice of their schedule, compared to 71% for full-time employed mothers.

Other studies show similar results. "Among 30,000 employees at 120 of the largest retail and food-service firms in the United States... we find that a third of workers are involuntarily working part-time: They usually work fewer than 35 hours and would like to be scheduled for more hours at their job."<sup>25</sup>

Then there's the question of pay. BLS data shows that part-time jobs pay considerably less than full-time jobs. Across the private sector, as of June 2022, average hourly wages and salaries for part-time workers came in at only \$16.60 per hour, 47% below average full-time wages and salaries.<sup>26</sup> Part-time work is also paid much less within the same occupational category. For example, within service occupations, part-time workers are paid wages and salaries of \$13.16 per hour on average, 26% than full-time workers. Within sales and related occupations, part-time workers are paid \$13.98 per hour on average, a full 55% less than full-time workers.<sup>27</sup>

Obviously, part of that gap is because part-time workers have different demographic and education characteristics than full-time workers. But even taking those differences into account, the wage penalty for part-time work is still huge. According to a 2020 study, part-time workers “are paid 29.3% less in wages per hour than workers with similar demographic characteristics and education levels who work full-time. Even after controls for industry and occupation are added, part-time workers are paid 19.8% less than their full-time counterparts. ... By gender, the adjusted wage penalty is 15.9% for women and 25.8% for men, suggesting that men pay a noticeably higher price for working part time.”<sup>28</sup>

Moreover, “within all occupational groups, mothers earned less per hour when they worked part-time rather than full-time.” Most strikingly, “women working part-time in service occupations and sales and office occupations earned 75% of the earnings of their full-time counterparts, or 25 cents on the dollar less per hour.”<sup>29</sup>



*Platform work offers granular and immediate control over schedules – a plus for people with caregiving responsibilities.*

## CHARACTERISTICS OF PLATFORM WORK FOR THE CARE ECONOMY

So far, we have established that unpaid care work is pervasive across the economy. Moreover, the high time demands and unpredictability of unpaid care suggests that caregivers would prefer work that leaves them enough time to provide care; is flexible enough to adapt to care crises; and does not require them to absorb a lower hourly wage for the “privilege” of working part-time.

Yet it is clear that conventional part-time work is profoundly biased against precisely the caregiving groups that would want to take advantage of it. With part-time work having lower hourly pay and potentially less flexibility, many people with care responsibilities opt for full-time jobs, or not working at all.

Table 4 shows the distribution of unpaid caregiving hours across full-time and part-time employees, and people who don't have paid work, broken down by gender. We see that less than 14% of unpaid caregiving hours come from part-time employees. That low figure shows how problematic conventional part-time work is for people doing unpaid caregiving.

By comparison, platform-based work is better suited to people with unpaid care responsibilities. Table 5 lays out the reasons why. These include better schedule control, downward flexibility in work hours, upward flexibility in work hours, and earnings consistency. Let's discuss each of these in turn.

**TABLE 4: WHAT UNPAID CAREGIVERS DO FOR WORK**

	AGES 25-64	
	SHARE OF UNPAID CAREGIVING TIME	
EMPLOYMENT TYPE	MALE	FEMALE
Part-time	2.4%	11.2%
Full-time	25.4%	28.6%
No paid work	5.3%	27.1%

*Sums to 100%.  
Data: 2021 ATUS, author tabulations*

**TABLE 5: WHY PLATFORM WORK IS BETTER FOR CAREGIVERS**

	CONVENTIONAL PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT	PLATFORM WORK
<b>BETTER SCHEDULE CONTROL</b>	Conventional part-time employment, especially in the retail sector, often gives workers little control over their own schedule.	Platform work offers granular and immediate control over schedules.
<b>DOWNWARD FLEXIBILITY</b>	Most conventional part-time employment do not offer paid family leave or informal opportunities to reduce workloads on short notice.	Platform workers can reduce or eliminate their work hours on demand as caregiving needs change.
<b>UPWARD FLEXIBILITY</b>	Many workers in conventional part-time employment can't get as many hours as they want because of employer restrictions. If they take time off for caregiving responsibilities, it's not certain they will make up the lost income.	Platform workers have flexibility to adjust their use of the platform to increase their earnings opportunities to meet financial goals and commitments.
<b>UPWARD FLEXIBILITY</b>	Most studies show that part-time workers make substantially lower hourly wages than similar full-time workers. This part-time "wage penalty" is typically larger for men.	Generally, platform work offers the same pay scale regardless of how much an employee works; thus it does not unfairly penalize "part-time" workers.

**Better control over schedules:** As documented in the previous section, conventional part-time employment, especially in the retail sector, often gives workers little control over their own schedule. By contrast, platform economy work offers workers granular and immediate control over their own schedule. Given the unpredictability of caregiving responsibilities, that control is a huge advantage.

**Downward flexibility** is the ability of the worker to choose to reduce hours on short notice to deal with unpredictable caregiving issues. That is a major advantage of platform work for unpaid caregivers. They can choose totally customized working hours, such as being home when children are home from school. They can adjust their working schedules to match unforeseen short-term changes in care arrangements, such as school being closed for a day. And they can step away from their work for extended periods to deal with major health crises that require focusing on caregiving responsibilities.

**Upward flexibility** can be defined as the ability of platform workers to adjust their use of the platform to increase their earnings opportunities to meet financial goals and commitments. That includes paying for essentials such as food and housing; paying for extras such as gifts and vacations; paying off debt; and saving for retirement or home purchase.

Upward flexibility is a key characteristic of platform work that differentiates it from an employer-employee relationship. In general, most conventional jobs are time-capped, in the sense that the worker needs special permission from their immediate supervisor or higher-ups in order to work more hours. Someone who needs to take off two weeks to care for their aging parent has no guarantee of getting enough hours to make up

for the lost income, especially if the company is operating under a tight budget.

Upward flexibility provides a way of reconciling unexpected caregiving responsibilities while still meeting the family's financial goals and commitments. Upward flexibility is especially important for low-income households that otherwise may struggle to stay afloat and take care of their children and parents at the same time.

**Earnings consistency:** Conventional part-time work usually incurs a wage penalty; most studies show that part-time workers make substantially lower hourly wages than similar full-time workers. This part-time “wage penalty” is typically larger for men. By contrast, platform work generally offers the same pay scale no matter how much time a worker puts in. To the extent that there are small wrinkles in the pay structure, such as incentives for driving during high-demand periods, they are mostly available to all drivers. Thus, platform work does not unfairly penalize workers for the “privilege” of working part-time.

## IMPLICATIONS

The stresses of unpaid caregiving responsibilities are not well-suited to conventional part-time employment, forcing people to either work full-time or withdraw completely from the workforce. The choice is especially tough for people working in retail, service, or production occupations, which have less flexibility even than full-time jobs. And because women typically do two-thirds of the unpaid caregiving, the lack of a good flexible alternative falls even more heavily on them.

Platform work provides an alternative that offers better scheduling and earnings opportunities for unpaid caregivers. Rather than requiring a

choice between full-time work and no paid work at all, there is a flexible alternative.

In addition, platform work may help spread the burden of caregiving. Consider the caregiving gender gap. As shown in Table 1, 49% of women aged 25-64 who work part-time are unpaid caregivers for household or non-household members. That's according to the 2021 American Time Use Survey. But only 30% of men aged 25-64 who work part-time are caregivers. That's a huge gap. By contrast, a 2021 survey of drivers on one platform shows that 56% of male drivers report that they "routinely provide care for family members or other loved ones" almost identical to the 61% of female drivers who report being caregivers.<sup>30</sup> While these numbers are not directly comparable to the figures produced by the ATUS,<sup>31</sup> the much smaller gender gap for the platform survey suggests that platform work makes it easier for men to combine part-time work with caregiving.

This reduced caregiving gender gap could be because men who have unpaid caregiving responsibilities, whether for children or adults, are more likely to seek out flexible platform work. Alternatively, men who are already doing platform work find it easier to take on unpaid caregiving without changing their overall goals and commitments, since they can add on more hours of work as needed to make up for the time spent on caregiving. Either way, platform work is associated with a more even distribution of caregiving responsibilities across genders.

As America ages, navigating the stress of the Care Economy in a fair way is going to become increasingly important. Platform work has an important role to play.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Michael Mandel** is Vice President and Chief Economist at the Progressive Policy Institute.

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- 11 For example, California’s Paid Family Leave program offers a wage replacement rate of approximately 60% for a worker with gross pay of \$5,000 per month ([https://edd.ca.gov/en/disability/PFL\\_Calculator/](https://edd.ca.gov/en/disability/PFL_Calculator/)). In California, recipients of PFL pay federal income and payroll taxes, but not state payroll taxes.
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