

2023

GIG AND PLATFORM WORKERS' PERSPECTIVES ON WORKER COLLECTIVES

Workers on app-based platforms have been at the forefront of organising for collective action and fighting for their rights.

What are their views on the directions towards building solidarity and worker power?

Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union



Workers find value in fostering cooperative structures

75% of workers expressed high interest in joining cooperative societies that work towards their welfare

Cooperative societies are democratically owned and controlled by workers. At their core, cooperative societies strive for workers' social and economic wellbeing. They are committed to values of care, solidarity, and equity. In the world of exploitative platform work, cooperative societies can provide safeguards through high quality services for worker welfare.

Cooperative societies offer several services to support workers' wellbeing: health, insurance, education support, creche facilities, credit, among others.

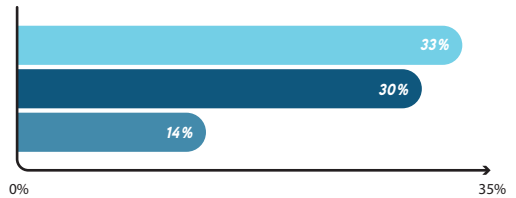
WHICH OF THESE COOPERATIVE SERVICES DO WORKERS PRIORITISE?

■ healthcare services ■ insurance services ■ education support

PRIORITY 1

Healthcare services

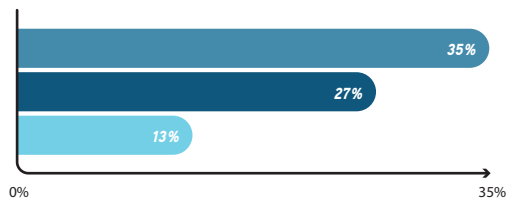
medical consultation, clinics, ambulance services



PRIORITY 2

Insurance services

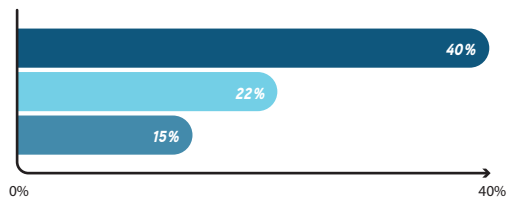
vehicle, medical, accident insurance



PRIORITY 3

Education support

support for children of member workers



TGPWU surveyed 79 workers working for app-based taxi and delivery platforms to understand their perspectives on cooperative societies and different types of unions.

Workers have diverse views on union structures

46%

of workers think unions should function independently

46%

think unions should be either affiliated or be a part of another trade union

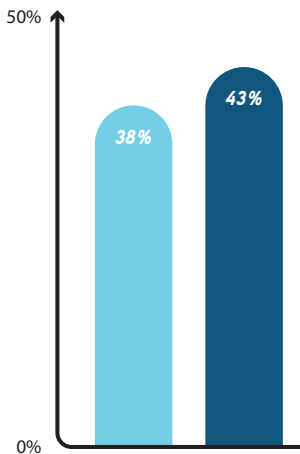
5%

of workers think unions should be affiliated with a political party

Across different union structures, **66%** of workers place high importance on union demands that focus on both platforms and governments.

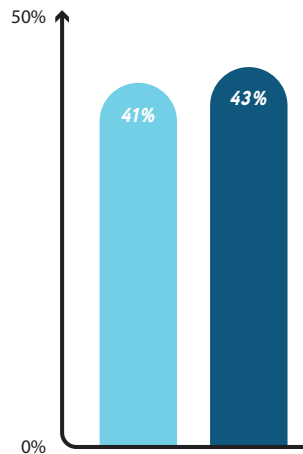
Workers view social protection and negotiation of labour laws and policies as key focus areas across union structures. For demands against platforms, workers view issues of health insurance and deactivation of accounts as key issues.

WHAT ARE WORKERS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIFFERENT UNION STRUCTURES TOWARDS ACHIEVING THESE GOALS?



Putting pressure on the government

Workers find unions tied to another trade union (**38%**) and independent unions (**43%**) as most effective



Promoting worker representation and participation

Workers find unions tied to another trade union (**41%**) and independent unions (**43%**) as most effective

Whom did TGPWU talk to?

79 workers were surveyed, and **51%** were members of TGPWU. They had been engaged in platform work for a median of **5 years**.

Around half of the workers worked on **Uber**. Another 20% worked on **Ola** and 14% worked on **Swiggy**. Other platforms where workers worked include **FlipKart, InDriver, Zomato, and Rapido**.

The median age of workers was **35 years**, and **96%** of workers were men.

47% of workers were from Hyderabad. Other prominent districts included: Medchal-Malkajgiri, Ranga Reddy, Suryapet, Warangal, and Yadadri Bhuvanagiri.

Caste background of workers: OBC (35%); General (29%); SC (18%); ST (6%).

Religious background of workers: Hindu (52%); Muslim (39%); Buddhist, Jain, or Christian (9%).

Acknowledgements

TGPWU is grateful to our volunteers who conducted the surveys with workers on their perspectives on collective action through cooperative societies and unions.

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