



Work on Demand: Contracting for Work in a Changing Economy

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Gig work as a manifestation of short termism – the sustainability problem?

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There are some interesting studies of gig work which link these intermittent and insecure working practices to a particular manifestation of short termism in contemporary capitalism (e.g. Flanagan, 2019; and Stanford, 2017). This is achieved by a legal framework which appears to prioritise individual contractual notions of consent at the expense of more durable constitutional values. My aim in this paper will be to juxtapose the idea of ‘sustainability’ with current acceptance of short term ‘flexibility’ in work on demand (as evident in the UK Taylor Review <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/good-work-the-taylor-review-of-modern-working-practices> and on the international stage in the World Bank World Development Report 2019: The Changing Nature of Work <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/30435>). My aim would be to consider the rhetorical commitment to durable protection of the people, planet and prosperity in the 2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and its potential implications for regulation of work. In this context, the compromises made in drafting the SDG 8 targets and the European Pillar of Social Rights 2018 will be examined.