

Fourth Study Commission
Public and Social Law

Questionnaire 2024

Digital Revolution Impact on the Labor Market: Platform or Gig Economy and
Artificial Intelligence

Deadline July 15, 2024

Please send responses to: Secretariat@iaj-uim.org

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Dramatic changes in the economy and in labor markets have resulted in dramatic changes in the relationship between employers and employees/independent contractors.

At the same time, increased computerization has impacted the marketplace. We will explore the “gig” or “platform” economy — such as short-term contracts or freelance work in contrast to permanent jobs, including ride sharing, delivery services, remote work via the Internet — and the impact on the employment relationship. We will also consider the impact of artificial intelligence on employment.

1. Provide a brief description of the presence of the “gig” or “platform” economy in your country. If possible, base your answer on official public data or academic reports, although we recognize that in some cases data may not be available.

Answer:

While we maintain that there is not official public data on the presence of “gig” or “platform” economy in Liberia, the public is aware of limited online business transactions. In areas such as transportation, food deliveries, real estate, rental services and sales of fewer goods; are carried out online with the aid of and other online platform. These limited activities basically occur in the urban setting like Monrovia. The vast majority of the population are still engaged with traditional mode of business transactions.

2. How does this development affect the traditional employee/employer relationship? What is the status of platform or gig workers in your country: employees, independent contractors or a third category? Is there any jurisprudential divergence regarding the status of these workers? Cite relevant examples.

Answer:

As indicated in question 1 above, because the use of “gig” or “platform” economy is at its minimal, its impact on the traditional employee/employer relationship is not really visible and there has been no jurisprudence to the effect.

3. What is the impact of artificial intelligence on the labor market of your country? If possible, base your answer on official public data or academic reports. Outline the positive and negative impacts.

Answer:

There is no indicator of artificial intelligence (AI) impacting the labour market of Liberia predicated upon the fact that limited number of persons in Liberia use the internet. According to the World Bank report, as at 2021, about 33.63% of the population of Liberia uses the internet. ([Liberia Indicators \(tradingeconomics.com\)](https://tradingeconomics.com/indicators/ly)) As it stands, bulk of the works are done manually with few workers using computers. In this regard, AI arguably has no impact on the labour market of Liberia.

4. Do you have any laws regulating and/or relevant judicial decisions about artificial intelligence on the labor market? What are the challenges for employers, such as privacy, transparency, secrecy, plagiarism, and the claim that artificial intelligence will be replacing workers? What are the concerns of employees?

Answer:

There is neither a law nor judicial decision about artificial intelligence on the labor market in Liberia and because the use of artificial intelligence has not gained traction in Liberia, challenges posed to employers or claims of AI replacing workers remain unnoticeable.

Relating to privacy rights, Article 15(e) of the Constitution of Liberia (1986) frowns at the invasion of rights of privacy and publicity or in the commercial aspect of expression in deception, false advertising and copyright infringement where redress is sought in the court of law. Section 7.3 of the Decent Work Act of Liberia (2018) provides for privacy protection of information gathered from persons at the workplace for statistics purposes while section 26.4 of the same Act provides for protection of commercial secrets. More besides, privacy rights are exclusively protected by Chapter 19 of the New Penal Code of Liberia whereby violators bear criminal penalties.