

## The Measurement of the Self-employed in Singapore

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The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we view the concept of work. As digitalization accelerates and industries get disrupted, a rising trend of the gig economy has emerged in recent years. In Singapore, the number of gig workers has increased substantially, especially since the start of the pandemic. It is therefore important to compile accurate statistics of the self-employed to develop policies that protect their employment rights and enhance their retirement adequacy. Singapore is in a unique situation whereby there are various regulatory bodies that regulate the common self-employed occupations, and many of such gig workers need to obtain licenses before they can commence work. For the less regulated occupations, web scraping techniques have been utilized in order to get a sense of their numbers. In addition, self-employed residents in Singapore have to contribute part of their income to the Central Provident Fund, which is a compulsory savings scheme. Hence, there is a wealth of administrative data available which we are able to tap on to supplement our Labour Force Surveys, which is the main source of self-employed statistics. Questions in the Labour Force Survey have also been expanded to cover the qualitative aspects of gig workers, such as their motivations and working conditions. Through a comprehensive suite of quantitative and qualitative measures, Singapore is able to obtain an accurate profile of the self-employed for policy review and development. The paper discusses how the self-employed pool is measured in Singapore, the advantages and limitations of these methods, and how technological advances are able to improve the measurement of the gig economy in future.