



World Employment 📢 and Social O Outlook 🔨

Key workers

"I heard nothing mentioned about truck drivers getting the vaccine. I'm like, wow, we're frontline, front and center. If it wasn't for us, you wouldn't even have the vaccine."

- truck driver, United States



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Who are the key workers?





- Countries issued sectoral lists of essential activities that needed to continue operating
- Report considers sectors mentioned by 90 countries; excl. teleworkable occupations



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8 broad occupations:

















Figure 1.5 Key workers among employed population by country income group, with and without agriculture (percentage)

All key workers	Excluding agriculture
World	52.0 40.3
Low income	73.6 52.1
Lower-middle income	58.0 42.0
Upper-middle income	47.9 38.6
High income	34.2 32.6

Source: Analysis based on ILO Harmonized Microdata (ILOSTAT). See Appendix for more details.



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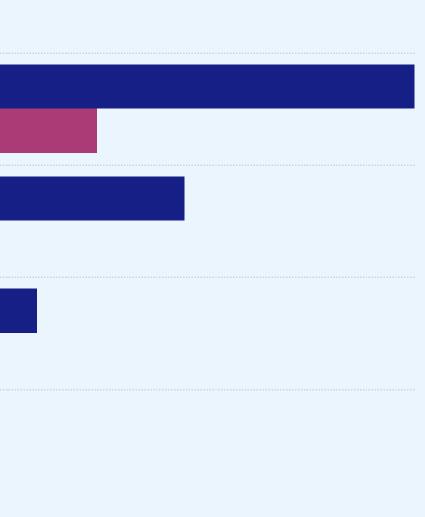
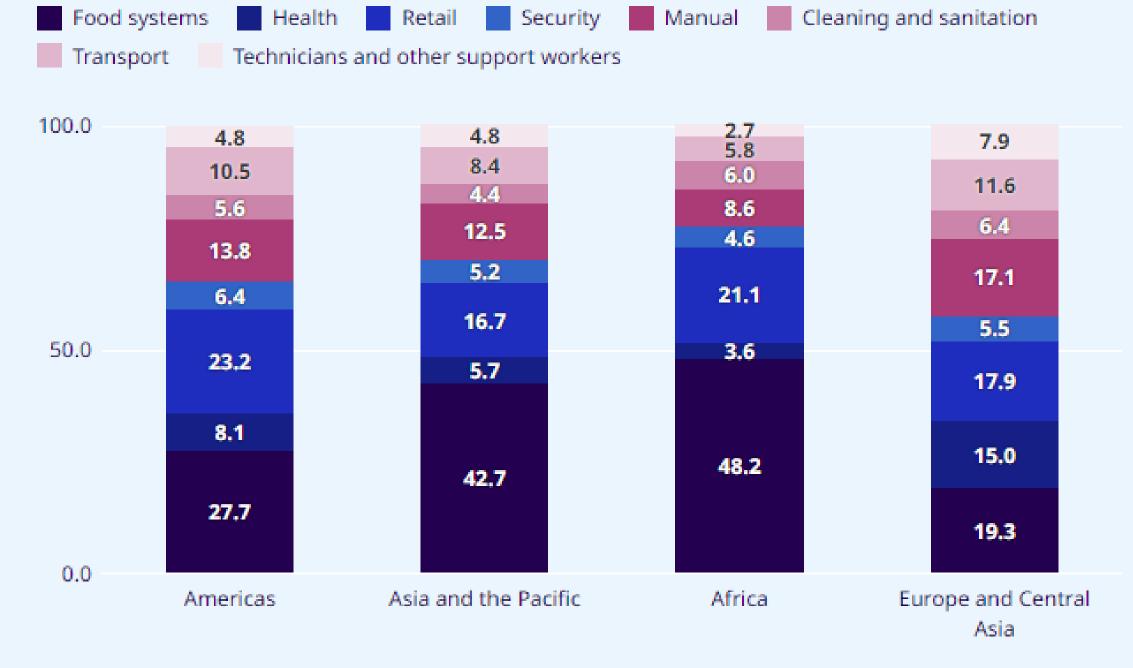


Figure 1.6. Distribution of occupations among key workers by region (percentage)



Note: Due to data limitation, the "technicians and other support workers" category includes key personal service workers (ISCO code 51), including those that fall under other occupational groups (for example, food system workers, such as cooks).



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Globally: 38% of key workers and 42% of non-key workers are women

Figure 1.11. Sex of key workers by occupational group, percentage average across countries

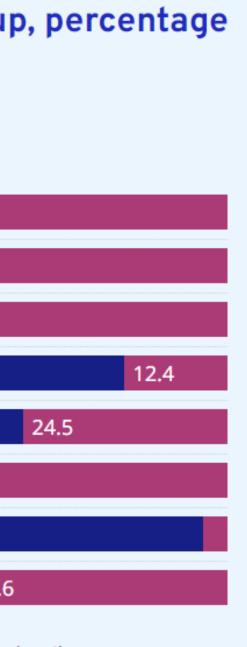
Male Female

Food systems	68			32
Health	33.7	66.3		
Retail	41.6	58.4		
Security	87.6			
Manual	75.5			
Cleaning and sanitation	53.6		46.4	
Transport	97.1			
Technicians and clerical	68.4			31.6

Source: Analysis based on ILO Harmonized Microdata (ILOSTAT). See Appendix for more details.



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Ucoret Nogen Bus Operator 1954 - 2020

Bur Or

105.6 . 2020







David Hamilton and Superintenders, Signatu 1965 - 2029

Gen

La-Citer Orswin Dispatcher Rapid Transit Operations 1904 - 2020



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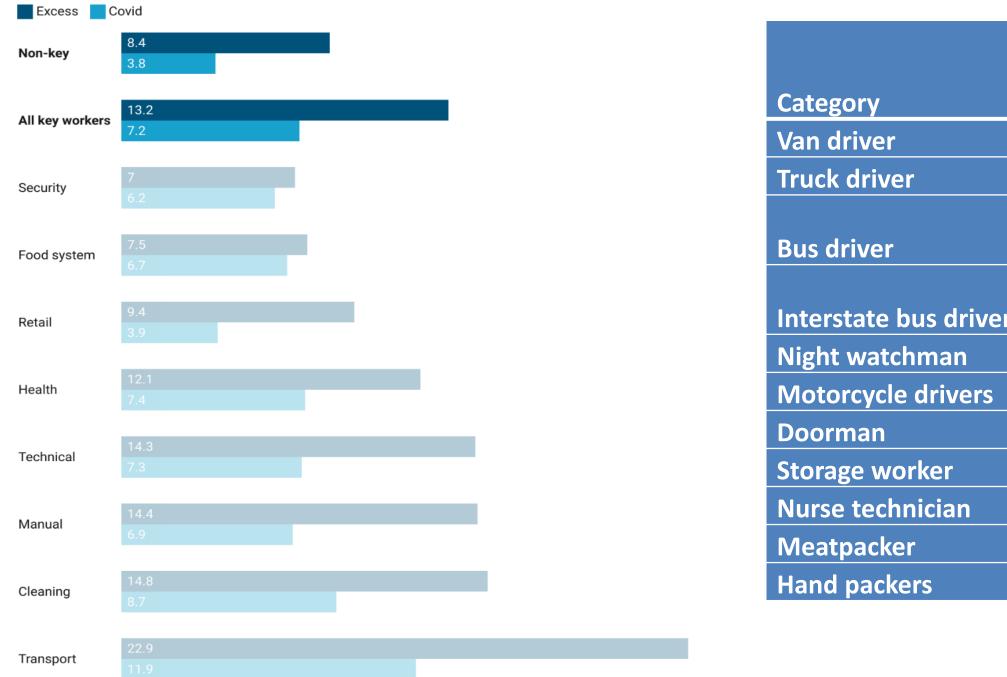
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Key workers suffered greater mortality from COVID-19, some occupations were less protected than others

United States:

Brazil:

Monthly excess and Covid-19 mortality by occupation group, April to December, 2020



Source: CPS and NVSS microdata.



Excess monthly Mortality per 1 000 formal workers in 2020

	Excess mortality	Category	Excess mortality
	2.94	Gas station attendant	0.42
	2.77	Maintenance technicians	0.42
		Other warehouse	
	2.26	workers	0.39
		Administrative	
r	1.85	supervisor	0.39
	1.05	Production line worker	0.38
	1.03	Caretakers	0.38
	1.02	Cleaner	0.36
	0.73	Cook	0.34
	0.66	Manager	0.29
	0.58	Building maintenance	0.25
	0.42	Car mechanic	0.24

Source: Pereira Galindo, Pereira Silva, and Pedreira Júnior (2020).

Greater incidence of adverse social behaviour during the pandemic in Europe and US



Verbal abuse

Non-key

Threats

Non-key

Key

Key

2015

13.4

2015

2.8

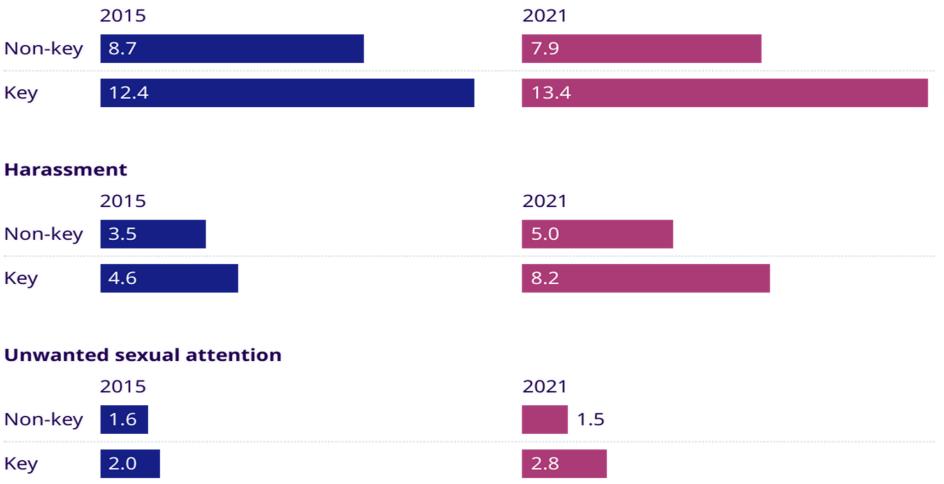
3.9

9





Source: Analysis based on the American Working Conditions Survey, 2015, and follow-up questions on American Life Panel, 2021. See Appendix for more details. • Created with Datawrapper



Source: EWCS.





► Figure 3.1. Percentage of key and non-key workers reporting verbal abuse, harassment or unwanted sexual attention during the past month, Europe, 2015 and 2021





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Deficiencies in working conditions

Working conditions

Deficiencies in working conditions reflect the undervaluation of key workers



Elevated OSH risks.





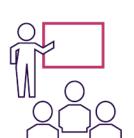
Long and irregular working hours.



Over-reliance on temporary contracts.







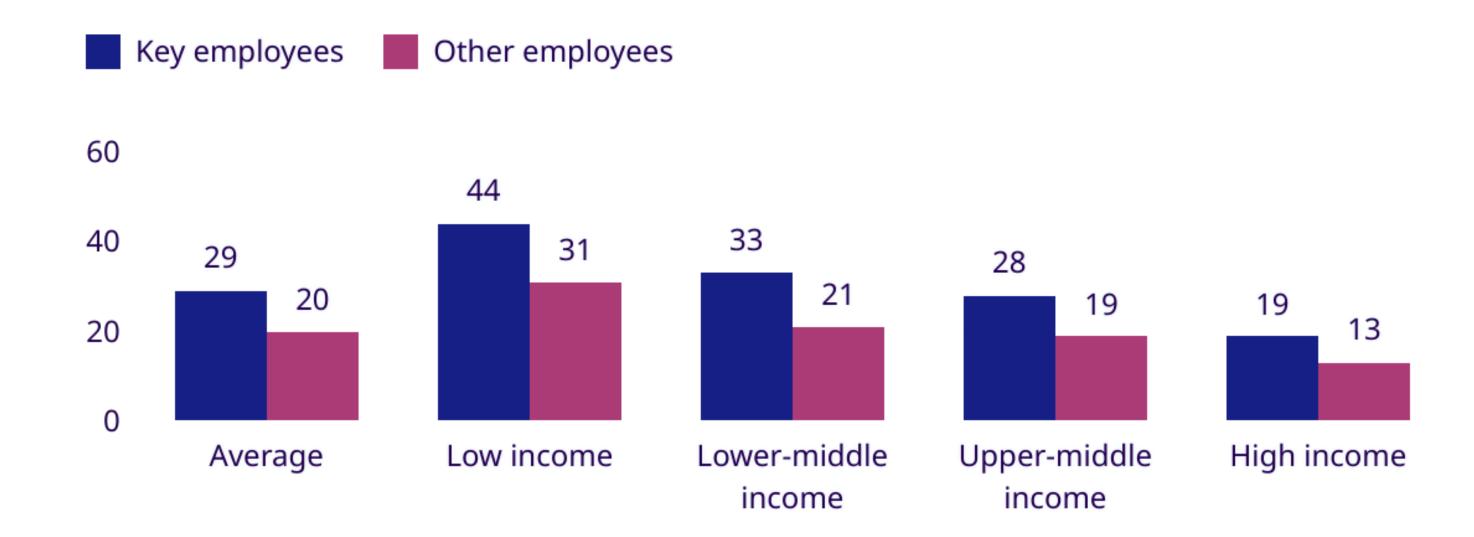
Low pay.



- Under-representation, especially in a few key sectors.
- Deficits in social protection, including paid sick leave.

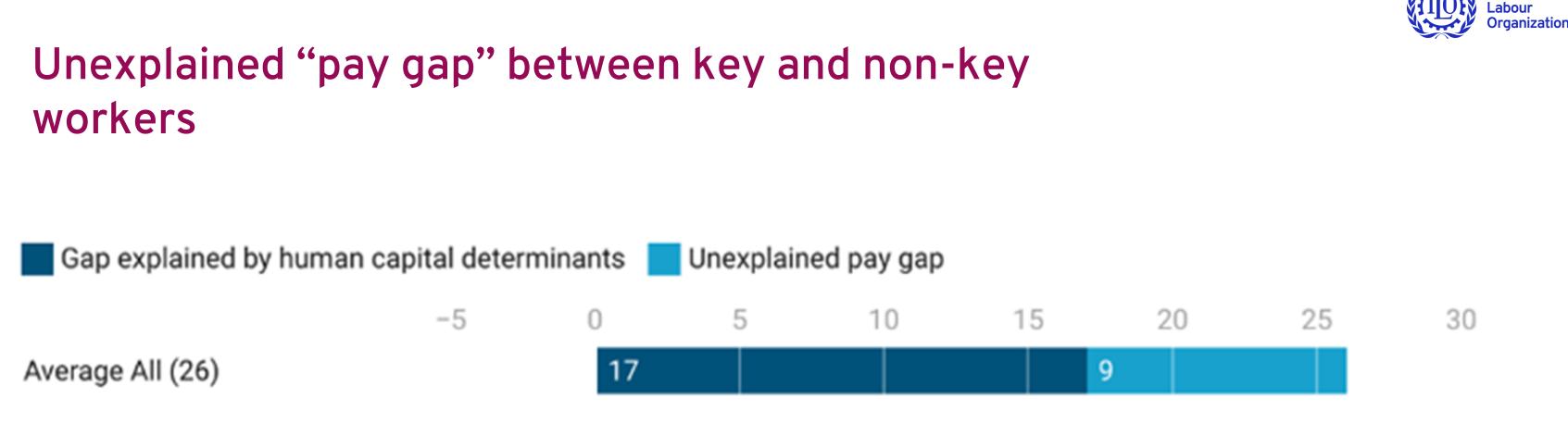
Insufficient training.

Figure 3.11. Share of low-paid workers among key and other wage employees, by country income group (percentage)



Source: Analysis based on ILO Microdata Repository (ILOSTAT), 2019 or latest year. See Appendix for more details. • Created with Datawrapper





On average, key employees earn 26 per cent less than other employees, of which only 17 percent is accounted for by education and experience.

The substantial pay gap, even after controlling for education and experience, reflects the low valuation of the work performed by key workers



Recommendations

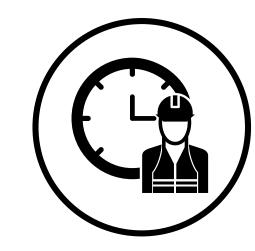
Investing in the institutions of work improves working conditions







Equality of treatment and other safeguards for all contractual arrangements



Safe and predictable working hours



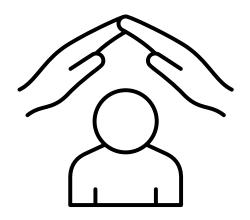
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Wage policies that support the valuation of key work

Recommendations

Investing in the institutions of work improves working conditions



Extending social protection for a resilient workforce



Training for an adaptive and responsive key workforce



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Turning law into practice through compliance and enforcement

Recommendations

Skills valuation – a contested terrain

Problems with measuring skills objectively, important gender and ethnicity biases.

Studies have shown how «social skills» command a premium in professional and mangerial occupations, but are negatively related to pay at the bottom of the wage distribution.

Biases prominent in care work and among occupations performed by migrants.

Act

Result of a case brought by a care worker to the Employment Court of New Zealand arguing that there was systemic undervaluation of care and support workers as it was mainly performed by women

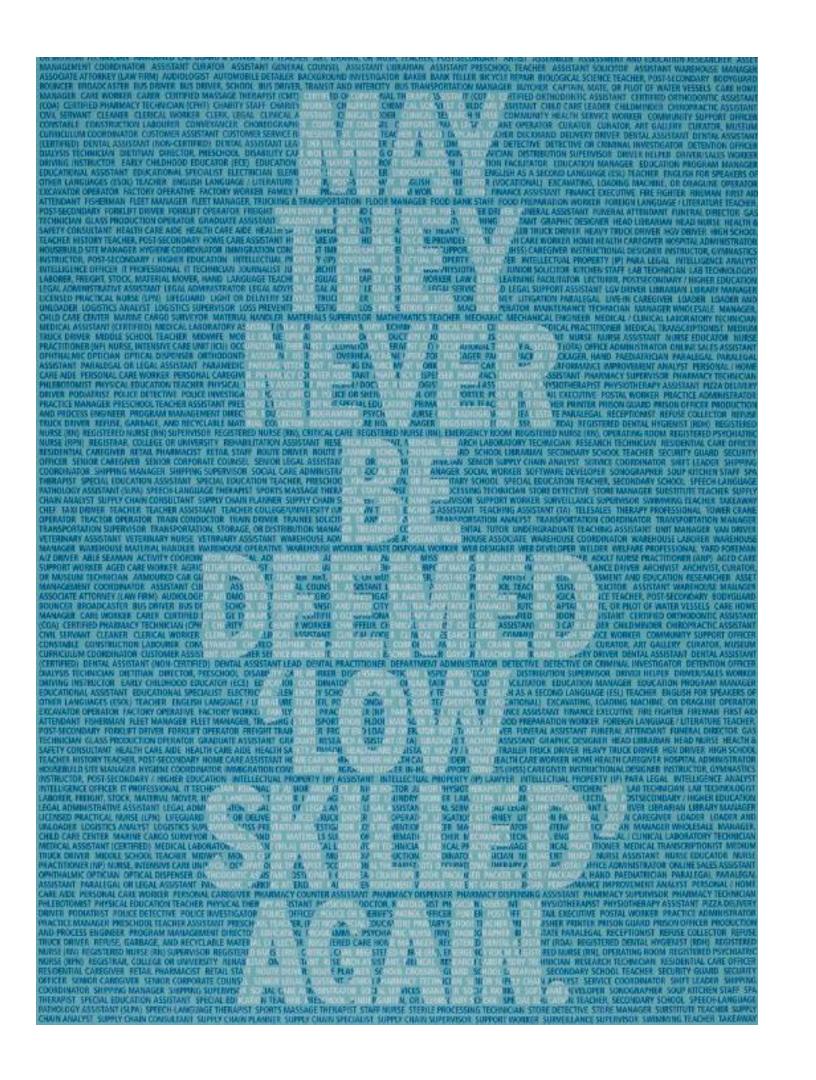
Government settled with trade unions out-of-court, passed Act in June 2017.

Care workers received increases of 15 and 50 percent depending on their qualifications and experience.



New Zealand – Care and Support Worker (Pay Equity)

Thank you





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