

Measuring the 'Gig' economy

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Session 4

New Forms of Work and Their Measurement

15:45-16:45 CET

Expert Group Meeting

Measuring the Quality of Employment

The 'gig' economy is hard to measure

- No agreed upon definition
- Analytically there are many components – not just the use of on-line platforms to arrange work or to do work
- Establishment based data are focused on wage and salary workers

The 'gig' economy is hard to measure

- The business model of how businesses arrange to produce their products or provide services is evolving
- Household surveys like the monthly U.S. Current Population Survey (CPS) capture larger aggregates – namely, self employment – but do not measure 'gig' workers

BLS Contingent Worker Surveys

- Supplement to the monthly U.S. Current Population Survey (CPS)
- Measurement objectives:
 - ▶ Contingent jobs
 - ▶ Alternative employment arrangements:
 - independent contractors,
 - on-call workers,
 - temporary help workers, and
 - contract company workers.



BLS Contingent Worker Surveys

- Supplements were conducted in February of 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, and 2005
- All employed persons, except unpaid family workers, are included in the supplement.



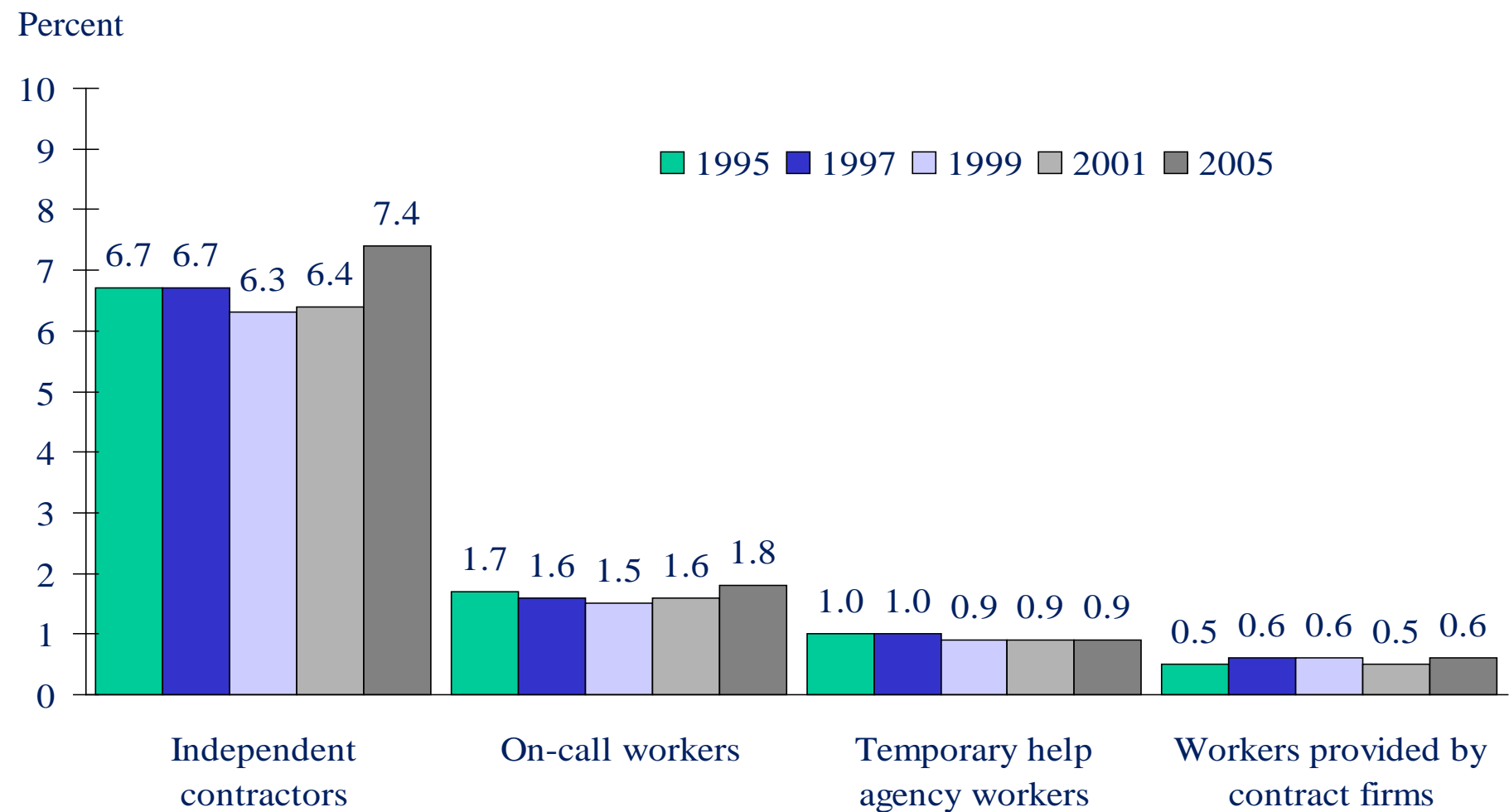
Table 1. Defining and estimating the contingent workforce, February 2005

Alternative estimates of contingent workers	Total	Percent of total employed
1. Wage and salary workers, who have worked at their jobs for a year or less, and expect their jobs to last less than another year	2.5 million	1.8
2. Add self employed and independent contractors to the scope of estimate (1)	3.2 million	2.3
3. Workers who do not expect their jobs to last	5.7 million	4.1

Source: February 2005 Contingent Work Supplement, Current Population Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics



Workers with alternative arrangements as a percent of the total employed, February 1995-2005

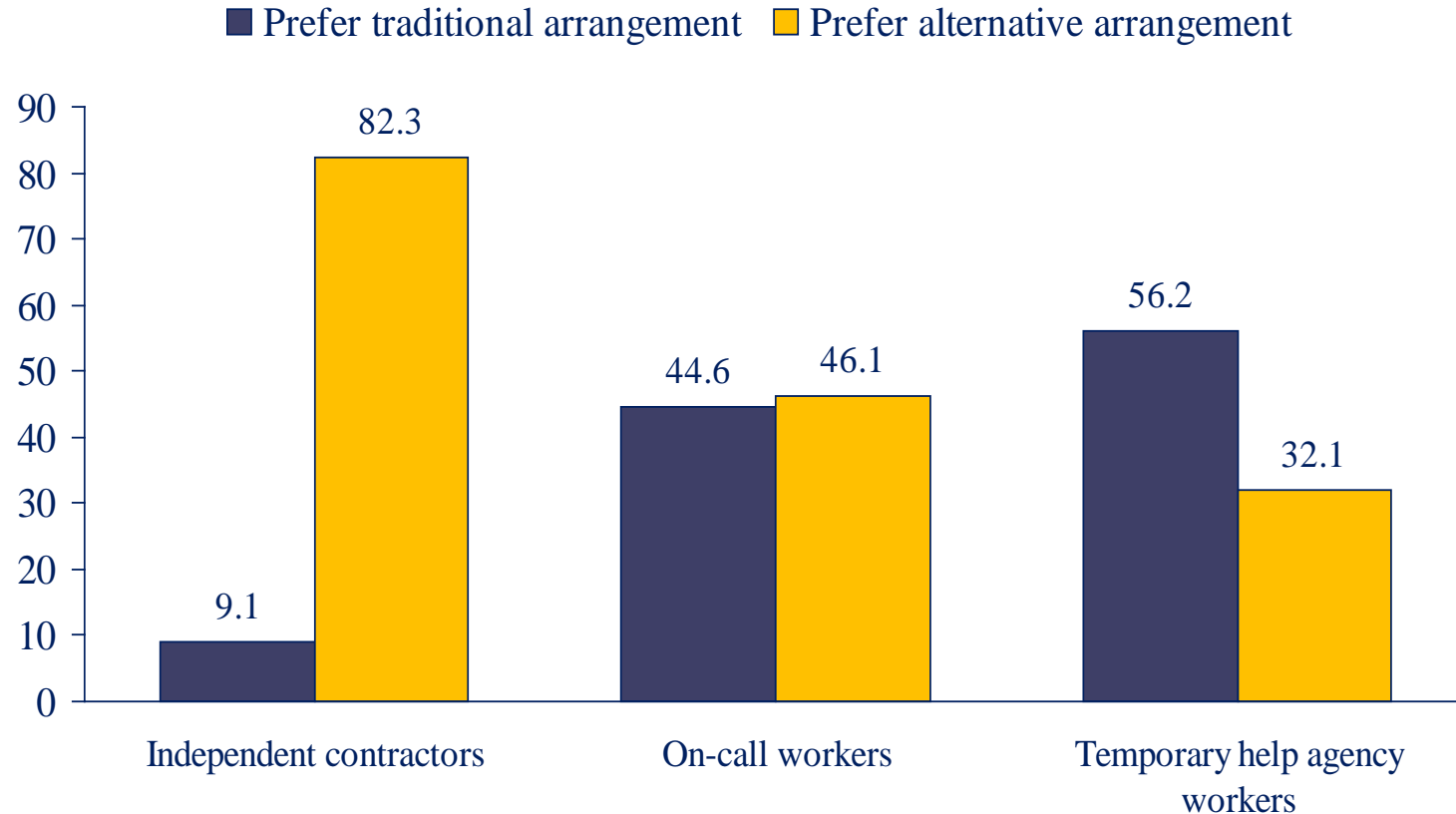


Source: February 1995-2005 Contingent Work Supplements, Current Population Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics



Employed persons in alternative arrangements by their preference for a traditional work arrangement, February 2005

Percent

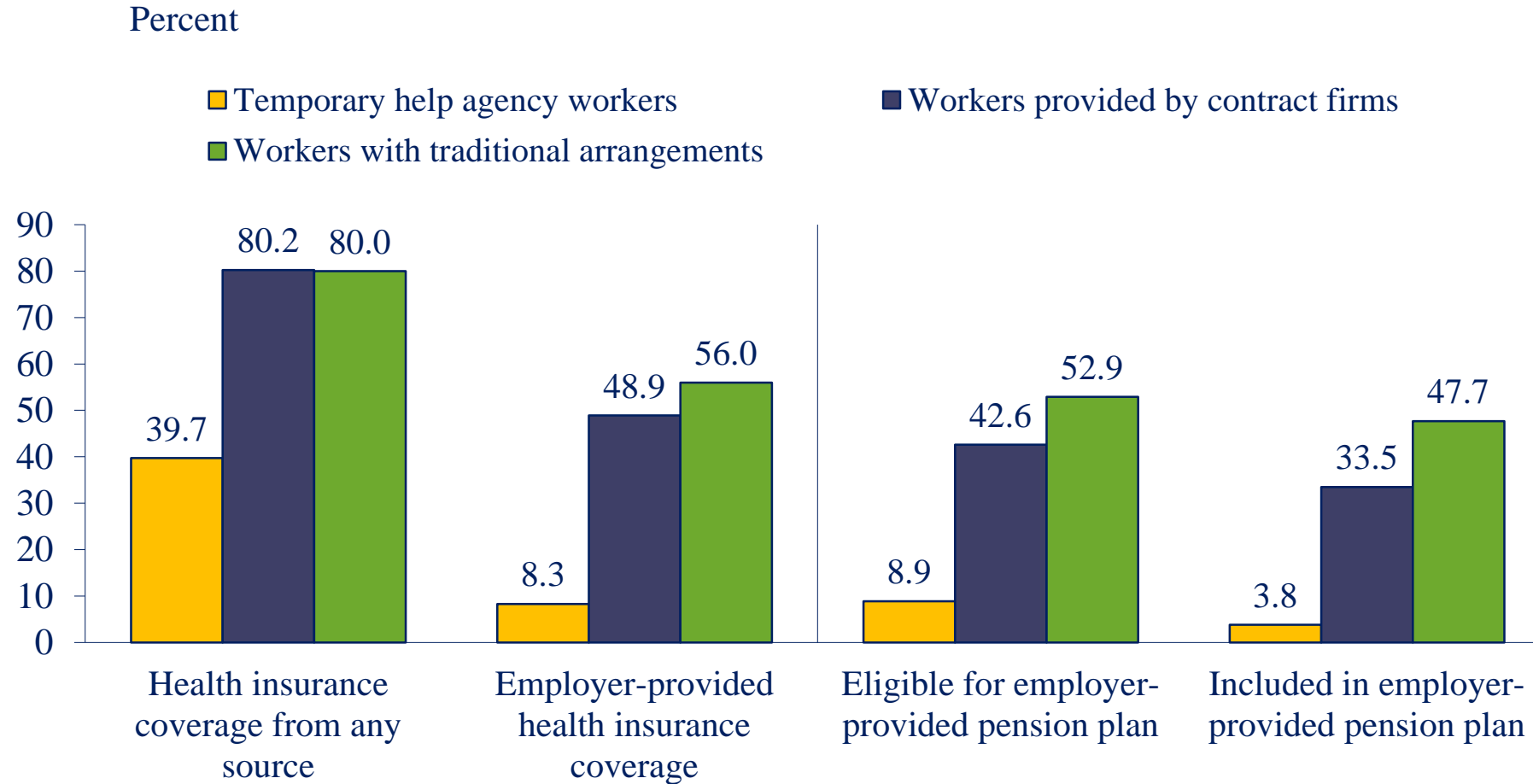


Note: Workers provided by contract firms were not asked about their preference for a traditional arrangement.

Source: February 2005 Contingent Work Supplement, Current Population Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics



Employed persons with traditional and select alternative arrangements by health insurance coverage and eligibility for employer-provided pension plans, February 2005



Source: February 2005 Contingent Work Supplement, Current Population Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics

May 2017 Contingent Worker Supplement



May 2017 Contingent Worker Survey

- 2 distinct types of changes to the survey are being considered

- ▶ Minor changes to the 2005 survey question wording
- ▶ Adding a limited number of new questions (4) to the end of the survey

- Data will be released in the Spring of 2018



May 2017 CWS- new questions

- Do individuals obtain customers or in-person tasks through companies that electronic match them, often through apps
 - ▶ Main job, Second job (if identified previously as a multiple job holder), Additional work for pay
- Do workers complete short, online only tasks posted on electronic lists for pay

What to expect from the May 2017 CWS?

Katz-Kreuger 2016 study



Alternative Work Arrangements	2005 Katz-Krueger estimates*	2016 Katz-Krueger study
Alternative work arrangements	10.1	15.8
Independent Contractors	6.9	8.4
On-Call Workers	1.7	2.6
Temporary Help Agency Workers	0.9	1.6
Workers provided by Contract Firms	0.6	3.1

* Katz/Kreuger estimates using 2005 CPS Contingent Worker Survey data



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