

RESHAPING THE FUTURE OF WORK

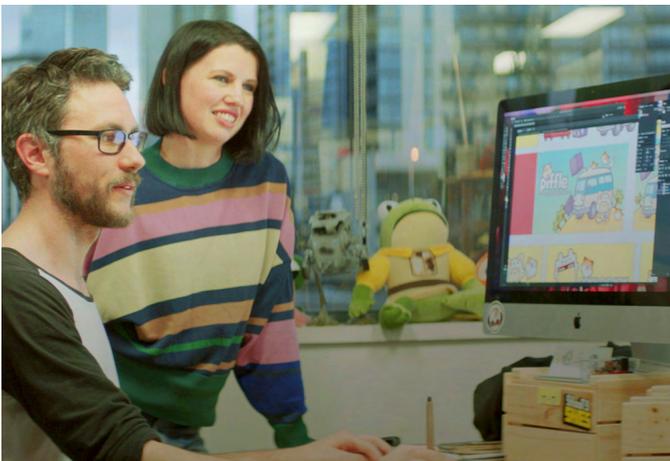
Establishing a Future of Work Commission

The very nature of work is changing before our eyes. From casualisation, automation, flat wages, overworked or underutilised staff - we need to plan for a better working future. Australians should have access to meaningful work, alongside the freedom to pursue meaning outside of work. A specialised, independent Future of Work Commission will help us to chart a pathway forward so that we can all work to live and not just live to work.



THE GREENS WILL:

- Establish an independent **Future of Work Commission**
- **Ensure technology and automation make people's lives better**, not more insecure
- **Better match the hours people want to work** with the hours they actually work



AN INDEPENDENT FUTURE OF WORK COMMISSION

Job security is at crisis levels for younger and older workers alike.¹ Underemployment remains at the stubbornly high level of 8%, and an even higher 17% for young people² - and this is contributing to the fact that wages are stuck at record low levels.³

Meanwhile, instead of making people's lives better, many of the benefits of technology and automation are accruing to big corporations in the form of higher profits, while everyday people are left feeling more insecure.

While 16% of people want to work more hours, 26% of people want to work less to pursue the things that are more important to them than work.⁴

We are doing a bad job at matching the hours people want to work with the hours they actually work. We need to do better at sharing the available hours of work around, while also creating sustainable and meaningful work for everyone who wants it.

Underemployment can be reduced with job creation programs, as well as policies targeted at those who are overworked, like a shorter working day or a four day working week, with secure employment conditions.

By re-orienting our industrial relations system to prioritise work-life balance, we can improve the problems of flat wages, share productivity gains and the help people manage the difficulty of juggling work with family and caring responsibilities.

Given the challenges of automation, which some research shows could threaten up to 22% of Australia's jobs nationally⁵, it is reckless not to plan for the future of work.

The Greens refuse to ignore the big challenges of the future. That is why we need a specialised, independent Future of Work Commission.

This independent Commission would examine the challenges we face and guide a pathway forward to both seize new opportunities and minimise the negative impacts of disruption on Australia's workforce.

The Greens have already announced several policies to address these issues, including changes to the law to rein in job insecurity and casualisation as well as lifting the minimum wage.

However, we may also need to make broader changes to our social security laws, our training and education system and industrial relations law so that people's security and well-being is paramount. We need an integrated, not piecemeal approach, through the Future of Work Commission.

The Future of Work Commission will investigate:

- How to ensure technology and automation are used to make people's lives better, not worse;
- How government can overcome the persistent threats of insecure work, casualisation, flat wages and record profits;
- How a Jobs Guarantee could be delivered through boosting government services in order to lift wages and improve the quality of life for communities;
- How to ensure productivity gains flow through to higher wages or more time off for people to pursue the things that they value;
- The opportunities available from technological advances to free up time if we share the benefits;
- A model for tackling underemployment by moving to a four day work week without loss of pay for full time workers in Australia;
- How to enshrine work-life balance as a workplace right for employees;
- Further development of an evidence-base for implementing a universal basic income in Australia.
- A new blueprint for social services and income support to ensure everyone's standard of living is lifted and poverty is ended.

1 ACTU, *Australia's insecure work crisis: Fixing it for the future*, 2018

2 ABS, 6202.0 - Labour Force Australia, September 2018. <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0main+features10September%202018>

3 https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/library/prspub/6609740/upload_binary/6609740.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf#search=%22library/prspub/6609740%22

4 <https://theconversation.com/push-for-longer-hours-makes-headlines-but-more-australians-want-to-work-less-73341>

5 Regional Australia Institute, How Will the 'Rise of the Machines' Transform Jobs In Your Region, 3 September 2018, <http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/2018/09/will-rise-machines-transform-jobs-region/>