

HR Services Industry Calls For Correct Classification Of People Providing Services Through Platform Work

Brussels, 9 December - The World Employment Confederation-Europe (WEC-Europe), the voice of private employment services industry, supports the European Commission's proposal to regulate platform work. While platform work is not a new form of work but a new way of organising work, it creates unfair competition from platforms using bogus self-employment. The Commission's proposal rightly aims to tackle this by creating a level playing field for providers of flexible work solutions like agency work.

However, WEC-Europe is concerned that the proposal fails to consider the immense diversity in platform work in Europe. While some offer business to customer services, others involve business to business services. Sectoral regulations should be applied correctly first by Member States before resorting to a horizontal proposal applicable to all kinds of platforms.

Rather than establishing a presumption of an employment relationship for all platform workers, WEC-Europe would favour a more sensible and feasible solution. A reversal of the burden of proof in cases of disputes at national courts, ideally based on a clear set of criteria to determine employment status at national level, would give people working via online platforms security on their employment status as workers or self-employed.

Meanwhile it will also preserve the option for platforms to operate with truly self-employed workers. This solution will help ensure there is no misclassification of online platform workers and allow workers to gain the most benefit from this fast-growing service of the economy. As the European Commission underlines it in its proposal, the platform economy offers potential and opportunities as the world of work undergoes immense transformation driven by digital technologies and the increasing diversification of the labour market.

While the Commission rightly acknowledges the need for basic labour standards and rights for this form of service provision, it must ensure that it does not introduce overly burdensome or confusing requirements for algorithm management and automated decision making, as these aspects are already covered under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the forthcoming Artificial Intelligence act.

Reacting to the publication of the proposal, Menno Bart, Chairman of WEC-Europe's Public Affairs Committee, said:

"The European Commission accurately recognises the positive role online platform work can play in Europe's economy. In the rapidly changing world of work, new flexible forms of work driven by digital

innovation have become increasingly important. It is crucial therefore that the Commission's proposal contributes to the correct classification of people working via online platforms as workers or self-employed.

The proposed presumption of an employment relationship could harm the diverse platform economy that is developing in Europe, which goes far beyond the delivery and ride-hailing sectors. WEC-Europe agrees that there is a need for social protection for all workers, but we must recognise that there cannot be a one-size-fits-all solution."

WEC-Europe supports the overall ambition of the Commission's proposal and is ready to share its expertise with policymakers to achieve a regulatory framework that protects workers and maximises the potential of the platform economy in Europe.

Read more: WEC-Europe's [reply to the second stage consultation](#) on working conditions in platform work:

For further information, please contact:

Denis Pennel
Managing Director
+32 475 86 75 10
denis.pennel@wecglobal.org

Dr. Michael Freytag
European Public Affairs Manager
+ 32 475 86 33 06
michael.freytag@wecglobal.org

About the World Employment Confederation-Europe

The World Employment Confederation-Europe is the voice of the private employment services industry at the European level, representing national federations as well as large international workforce solutions companies from across Europe. Members of the World Employment Confederation-Europe represent a wide range of HR services, including agency work, direct recruitment, career management, Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) and Managed Service Provider (MSP).

The World Employment Confederation-Europe works to broaden recognition of the positive economic and social role which the private employment services industry plays in enabling work, adaptation, security and prosperity. This role involves building networks with relevant stakeholders such as policy makers, social partners and the academic world; setting high recruitment and employment standards and practices; acting as a thought-leader shaping futureproof and competitive labour markets and providing strategic data on employment issues. The World Employment Confederation-Europe is the recognised, EU sectoral social partner for temporary agency work.

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