



## Protecting people working through platforms: Commission launches a first-stage consultation of the social partners

Brussels, 24 February 2021

Today, the Commission launches the first-stage consultation of European social partners on how to improve the working conditions for people working through digital labour platforms. Platform work is developing rapidly in the EU across a growing number of business sectors. It can offer increased flexibility, job opportunities and additional revenue, including for people who might find it more difficult to enter the traditional labour market. However, certain types of platform work are also associated with precarious working conditions, reflected in the lack of transparency and predictability of contractual arrangements, health and safety challenges, and insufficient access to social protection. Additional challenges related to platform work include its cross-border dimension and the issue of algorithmic management.

The coronavirus crisis has accelerated the digital transformation and the expansion of platform business models in the internal market. Some platforms played an important role in ensuring access to services in the midst of the lockdowns. At the same time, the sanitary crisis further highlighted the vulnerable situation of people working in areas such as the platform economy, both in terms of exposure to health and safety risks and limited access to social protection and benefits.

These developments and the cross-border nature of digital platforms have further highlighted the need for an EU initiative to improve the working conditions of people working through platforms.

The purpose of this first-stage consultation of social partners is to invite the views of European social partners on the need and direction of possible EU action to improve the working conditions in platform work. The consultation will be open for at least six weeks.

Margrethe **Vestager**, Executive Vice-President for A Europe Fit for the Digital Age, said: "*The digital age opens up great opportunities for businesses, consumers and citizens. Platforms can help people to find new jobs and explore new business ideas. At the same time we must ensure that our European values are well integrated in the digital economy. We need to make sure that these new forms of work remain sustainable and fair.*"

Nicolas **Schmit**, Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, said: "*In the midst of the digital transition, we cannot lose sight of the basic principles of our European social model. We should make the most of the job creating potential that comes with digital labour platforms, while ensuring dignity, respect and protection for the people that work through them. Social partners' views on this will be key in finding a balanced initiative for platform work in the EU.*"

### Background

In her [Political Guidelines](#), President **von der Leyen** stressed that "digital transformation brings fast change that affects our labour markets". She undertook the commitment to "look at ways of improving the labour conditions of platform workers".

The Communication [A Strong Social Europe for Just Transitions](#) describes the various opportunities and challenges Europe is facing with regard to climate action, digitalisation and demographic change, and underlines the need for these transitions to be fair and social. It also notes that the sustainable growth of the platform economy requires improved working conditions of platform workers.

The [Commission Work Programme 2021](#) announced a legislative initiative on improving the working conditions of platform workers by the end of 2021. This initiative will support the implementation of principles contained in the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#).

Article 154(2) TFEU provides for a two-stage consultation of social partners for proposals in the social policy field based on Article 153 TFEU. Unless social partners decide to enter into negotiations among themselves following the first or the second stage of the consultation, the Commission intends to put forward a legislative initiative by the end of the year.

## For More Information

[First-phase consultation of social partners](#)

[Questions and Answers: First-stage social partners consultation on improving the working conditions in platform work](#)

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### Press contacts:

[Marta WIECZOREK](#) (+32 2 295 81 97)

[Flora MATTHAES](#) (+32 2 298 39 51)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)

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