

To: Permanent Representative of the Governments of
the Member States to the European Union

[Letter sent by e-mail]

Dear Permanent Representative,

We are contacting you to emphasize the critical importance of achieving a general mandate on the Directive on improving the working conditions in platform work at the next EPSCO meeting in June.

Although the ETUC has reservations about the proposal of the Swedish presidency, notably in regard to the establishment of criteria and national derogations, our assessment is that there is a need to bring the negotiations into Trilogue quickly and to resolve matters at that stage rather than stay blocked. The millions of workers on platforms cannot afford to wait, their rights and decent working conditions depend on it.

The failure to approve a Council mandate in June and to delegate the discussion to the next meetings chaired by the Spanish Presidency would put the process under extreme time pressure, risking a failure to conclude the negotiations within the current institutional mandate.

This would be unacceptable to the Trade Union movement and the millions of workers we represent who believe that the European Union can act and make a difference where a clear exploitation of workers' rights occurs. The European Commission presented its proposal 18 months ago. Throughout the EU, workers are waiting for years for the effective recognition and enforcement of their rights. These workers delivered during the pandemic and it is time for Member States to allow the Directive to move forward and deliver for them too.

Any further delay in the process would only encourage digital labour platforms to continue to avoid their responsibilities and to spread their business model, based on the denial of employment, minimum wage and health and safety protection to new sectors of our economy.

We fully appreciate the complexity of the issue and we are aware of different situations among Member States, however, we also believe that the next step in the process, the trilogue negotiations, is the right place to bridge the gaps and unite around the strong Directive that will make concrete changes for workers.

Finally, we would like to address you as passionate Europeans. Last week in our Congress attended by more than 2000 delegates, our guest, Commissioner Nicolas Schmit reminded us that in the digital economy guided by algorithms, there is a new innovation every week.

Workers rely on you, the policymakers, to deliver this future-proof employment legislation. The worse possible message that could be sent to European citizens ahead of the next European elections is that the EU failed to guarantee the floor of rights to these vulnerable workers; this would not only be unjust, it would also bring powerful arguments to all Euroskeptics who wish to disrupt our European Union.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We trust in your dedication and leadership in driving forward this important legislative process and reaching an agreement at the EPSCO Council meeting in June.

We remain at your disposal for any further exchange,

Kind regards,



Esther Lynch
General Secretary of ETUC



Ludovic Voet
Confederal Secretary of ETUC