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New EU proposal makes 4 million platform workers eligible for better working conditions

Today the European Commission presented its legislative proposal to offer platform workers, such as Uber drivers or Deliveroo riders, greater social protection. The Commission proposes to introduce a 'legal presumption of employment' for a large number of platform workers. Across Europe, this would make up to 4 million of these workers eligible for an employment contract with rights to a minimum wage, sick leave and paid holidays. Moreover, a reversal of the burden of proof leaves it up to the platform company to prove that whoever works for them is truly self-employed.

The Greens/EFA Group urges for the law to also prohibit algorithms from dismissing employees and to avoid that the legal presumption becomes too burdensome for platform workers to apply in practice. In the coming months, the European Parliament will determine its position, after which the negotiations with Member States will start.

Kim Van Sparrentak, Greens/EFA MEP and shadow in the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, comments:

"We can no longer let platform companies determine on their own the rights employees have. The European Commission's proposal brings us closer to abolishing bogus self-employment and ending the arbitrariness of algorithms. Thanks to this step, it will no longer take platform workers years to receive what they are entitled via cumbersome court proceedings.

"Platforms should no longer be able to hide behind their algorithms. We must stop the constant surveillance and excessive work pressure that comes with having an algorithm as a boss. This proposal represents a major breakthrough with far-reaching implications. By including rules about algorithms in this legislation, an important step is taken towards creating a new category of digital labour rights for the 21st century."

More:
Algorithms determine for platform workers the price of a service and to whom tasks are assigned. In the Commission's proposals, platform workers are given insight into how the algorithms work, how decisions about their work and pay are made, and how their behavior affects the algorithms. The proposal bans constant monitoring of platform workers where it leads to danger to physical or mental health. Workers and unions must also be consulted on their implementation and application. Platform companies will no longer be able to evade their responsibilities for taxes and social security with up to 3.98 billion EUR

potentially added to public budgets as a result of this directive.

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