

Law & Policy Group

GRIST

European Union consults on digital labor platforms

By Fiona Webster and Stephanie Rosseau
25 Feb 2021

The European Commission has issued a “first-stage consultation” with European Union (EU) social partners on the working conditions of people who work through digital labor platforms — including gig economy workers. The consultation, which will last for six weeks until mid-April, follows the commission’s 2020-21 work program announcement that it would publish measures aimed at improving the working conditions of platform workers.

Social partner consultation highlights

- The commission’s FAQs identify the key challenges associated with the gig economy, including the definition of platform work; employment status; working conditions; access to adequate social protection; access to union representation and bargaining; cross-border dimension of platform work; issues concerning algorithmic management; and access to training and professional opportunities.
- The commission has asked the social partners if they agree with the issues highlighted and if they think EU-level action is required; and if so, what rights and obligations should be included in any EU measure.
- As part of the consultation, the social partners must confirm if they are willing to dialogue on any of the issues identified in the commission’s consultation, with a view to reaching an agreement. If they don’t agree to dialogue, the commission says it will publish legislative proposals “by the end of the year.”

Related resources

Non-Mercer resources

- [Protecting people working through platforms](#) (European Commission, 24 Feb 2021)

European Union consults on digital labor platforms

- [FAQs](#) (European Commission, 24 Feb 2021)

Mercer Law & Policy resource

- [EU court rules on independent contractors' employment status](#) (13 May 2020)

Note: Mercer is not engaged in the practice of law, accounting or medicine. Any commentary in this article does not constitute and is not a substitute for legal, tax or medical advice. Readers of this article should consult a legal, tax or medical expert for advice on those matters.