

CALL FOR ACTION: Preserve the work of taxi drivers

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

We send this letter to draw your attention to the serious risks that the Commission's proposal on improving working conditions for platform workers is posing for the taxi industry.

As emerged during our numerous meetings with MEPs and representatives of Member States, it is obvious that taxis were not meant to be targeted by this directive and therefore should not be impacted by it. As there is some uncertainty with current wording, **a clear exclusion of the sector would represent the best solution**. In many cities in Europe, street-hailing represents the majority of taxi rides even if drivers work with dispatch centres with non-exclusive basis. A broad application of the new law would have negative consequences on the taxi market. If drivers were to be employed, they would work exclusively for the dispatch centres, thus reducing offering in taxi stations such as hospital, rail station, airport.

Taxis4SmartMobility (T4SM) and the International Road Transport Union (IRU) welcome the Commission's proposal to fill the legal void created by global digital platforms and to **guarantee platform workers the working rights they are entitled to**. However, the current text risks to have serious consequences for the concept of urban mobility as a whole, **leaving already vulnerable consumers behind**.

T4SM and IRU believe that to ensure adequate social protection for all as well as enable a safe and sustainable mobility framework for all European citizens at local level, a balanced and targeted approach to the Platform Workers Directive is needed.

Therefore, we call on the European Parliament to:

- **Sharpen the definition of Digital Labour Platforms (DLPs)** so as to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach. More specifically, we call for clarification and **exclusion of the taxi sector** from the definition of DLPs. This can be accomplished by specifically excluding taxi industry and/or by **excluding small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)** from the directive's scope, as most taxi dispatch centres are SMEs. SMEs are the backbone of the EU economy, adding value in every sector. Due to their economic size, SMEs tend to be less proficient in dealing with the complexity of excessive regulation and therefore are unable to deal with growing compliance costs. **Furthermore, taxis provide a public service with street-hailing obligations.** Many customers would be excluded as a direct result of the current proposal, as street-hailing would be reduced. This would result in the end of taxi as a public service as we know it today.
- **Clarify the criteria establishing employment.** The text as currently drafted, brings into question the historic intermediation professions such as taxi reservation centres, whose contractual conditions are based on national working law. Hence, the Member States and national social partners are competent for matters related to working conditions based on their social model. What makes the taxi sector successful is its adaptability to national and local realities. As taxis do not function across borders, they have developed in accordance with each unique culture to adapt to the needs of every customer. As also widely agreed in the **TRAN Committee with the adoption of Compromise Amendment 9, keeping regulations at local level allows cities and countries to best deal with existing and arising challenges locally, and allows them to take advantage of the available infrastructure to ensure the provision of the best services to citizens.**

Our challenge is to keep offering an innovative economic model, capable of competing with large multinationals, while being sustainable and guaranteeing high-quality standards in terms of efficiency, punctuality, and safety. As an inseparable part of day-to-day life across Europe for decades, taxis are central to public transport ensuring mobility for all, including pupils, the elderly, tourists, commuters and people with special needs. They have always played a key role in providing an essential public transportation service in cities as well as peri-urban and rural areas. **We call on the European Parliament to take our concern into account and make sure that the taxi sector does not fall under the scope of the directive. We count on you to embrace these recommendations and ensure a safe, efficient, and sustainable future for the taxi industry.**

Yours sincerely,



Gregor Beiner
Chairperson of Taxis4SmartMobility (T4SM)



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