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Transposing the Platform Work Directive: Comparative Assessment and Good Practices

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Brussels, 21 October 2026 - With the clock ticking towards the 2 December 2026 transposition deadline, European governments have an opportunity to learn from the EU countries already furthest ahead and deliver a Platform Work Directive that protect people performing platform work while supporting cross-border digital services.

A new ECIPE Policy Brief, Transposing the Platform Work Directive: Comparative Assessment and Good Practices, examines draft transposition measures in Austria, Czechia, Estonia, the Netherlands and Sweden. It finds that none provides a complete model. Taken together, however, the drafts reveal how EU countries can make rights effective without imposing unclear, duplicative or disproportionate obligations on platforms, intermediaries, public authorities, platform workers and self-employed persons.

The study calls for clear, evidence-based rules to determine employment status. The law should assess how work is organised, while avoiding automatic or mechanical reclassification. This would give people who are employees in practice a realistic route to challenge misclassification, while safeguarding people who are genuinely self-employed. Where intermediaries are involved, the study recommends assigning each obligation to the entity that controls the relevant function, while ensuring that people can hold either the platform or intermediary accountable where divided responsibilities would otherwise leave them without a practical way to enforce their rights.

"Member states do not have to start from a blank page", said Oscar Guinea, Director at ECIPE and co-author of the study. "***The first national drafts already show which choices make protections clear and enforceable, and which create uncertainty or needless administrative costs. Learning from those experiences is the best way to implement the Directive before the deadline".***

The report also warns the economic benefits of the Directive will depend on how consistently member states apply its provisions. The Directive already establishes rights to information, human oversight and review where automated decisions affect access to work, earnings or an account. Member states should focus on making this framework work, rather than adding national obligations that go beyond it.

"Implementation should strengthen protection without erecting new barriers inside the Single Market", said Dyuti Pandya, Analyst at ECIPE and co-author of the study. ***"When national requirements diverge unnecessarily, smaller platforms face fixed compliance costs that can make it too costly for them to offer services in other EU countries".***

The choices made now will shape legal certainty, enforcement and the cross-border development of Europe's digital labour market for years to come. ECIPE calls on member states to use the final transposition period to adopt rules that are clear, workable and proportionate, delivering the Directive's protections without fragmenting the Single Market.

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