



EFFAT and ETF affiliates call for immediate action to end abuses and social dumping in the food delivery sector



EFFAT and ETF affiliated trade unions representing food delivery workers across Europe held a coordination meeting to discuss the concerning situation facing food delivery workers.

Despite the fact the deadline to transpose the [Platform Work Directive](#) is approaching (December 2026), **abuses and exploitation remain widespread** and we are facing a **dramatic race to the bottom in terms of wages and workers' rights across the sector**. This complicated scenario is mainly driven by opaque business and recruitment practices, including bogus self-employment, illegal labour intermediation, and exploitative contracting and subcontracting arrangements. As a result, food delivery riders face poverty wages, widespread job insecurity, unrecorded working hours, and significant health and safety risks. Evidence shows that some food delivery companies are managing to cut costs and escape employer liabilities through collective bargaining dumping and by exploiting legal loopholes in national legislation. In some cases, even where robust laws are theoretically in place, enforcement remains weak and companies prefer to pay substantial fines rather than comply with applicable labour standards.

Widespread abuse creates unfair competition and unequal treatment, undermining the few companies that use direct employment models. As a result, even those respective applicable labour standards and collective agreements are pressured to adopt exploitative labour practices in order to remain competitive.

For instance, Just Eat Takeaway, one of the very few companies in the sector that mainly employs delivery riders directly, has recently decided to switch to alternative models in some countries, introducing bogus self-employment in Austria and outsourcing/subcontracting to third-party logistics companies in Germany. This change is having drastic consequences for workers, with many having to suffer deplorable wages, gangmaster practices, job insecurity and even mass redundancies. **This situation is no longer sustainable and requires urgent action.**

This is why EFFAT and ETF together with their respective affiliates:

- **Express full solidarity and support with all food delivery workers and their trade unions** who have been made redundant or have seen their working conditions deteriorating as a result of corporate decisions to adopt exploitative business practices such as bogus self-employment or contracting and subcontracting practices.
- **Call on the EU Institutions and national governments** to urgently act to address legal shortcomings by better regulate the sector, restore equal treatment, and ensure a level playing field. It is imperative to ensure the swift and adequate transposition of the 2024 Platform Work Directive, which aims to combat bogus self-employment (Article 5) and establish liability in cases of abusive subcontracting (Article 3).
- **Call on the European Commission to urgently propose a Directive to limit subcontracting**, and tackle gangmaster practices. It is urgent to promote direct employment in the sector, including by prohibiting the contracting of core business activities and introducing a system of joint and several liability.
- **Call on national governments to promote sectoral collective bargaining in the sector**, tackling any attempt to undermine most representative trade unions through yellow collective bargaining agreements.

December 2025