**Collective bargaining agreements for self-employed – scope of application of EU competition rules**

Acta is the Italian association that brings together solo self-employed professionals (without employees) working in the advanced service sector (trade excluded). For years, we have been reporting the ongoing decline in the fees earned by these workers, for whom no minimum rates are currently set or legally established. Therefore, we welcome as commendable and urgent the Commission’s initiative, in line with our Position Paper, submitted in September 2020, on the occasion of the Open Public Consultation on the Digital Services Act.

Concerning the four Initiative’s policy options, we deem **Option 4** to be preferable: **all solo self-employed providing their own labour through digital labour platforms or to professional customers of any size**, based on the following reasons:

1. In our experience, only a small portion of the self-employed work on, or with the intermediation of, a digital platform, but all self-employed workers, expecially after the 2008 crisis, have seen their compensation and income progressively reduced;
2. in our opinion, as confirmed by our experience and knowledge of the labour market, it is important to cover all professionals exercising regulated/liberal professions, since even for these workers, and particularly for the youngest ones among them, equitable fees may be difficult to negotiate for (e.g. journalists, architects and even young lawyers)

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| 1. having no restrictions as regards the size of the counterpart in the collective bargaining/agreement would make it possible to apply minimum rates even when negotiating with small and very small enterprises (as it happens in the case of collective agreements for employees). As a matter of fact, enterprises (whatever their size) can generally count on a stronger bargaining power against individual professionals. However, the introduction of fee benchmarks would help both parties to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement.
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