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# Italy Publishes Labor Decree That Extends New Protections to Food Delivery Couriers

The rules, effective December 2, require transparent job assignments, human oversight of algorithms and broader social protections

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Italy has published a labor reform for digital platforms that directly affects restaurant delivery, adding new worker protections and tighter rules for the apps and intermediaries used by the food service sector.

Legislative Decree No. 208, dated November 2 and published on Saturday, November 14, in the Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana, sets out rules for work carried out through digital platforms, with special attention to goods delivery, including the restaurant business and food delivery. According to the measure, the new framework takes effect on December 2.

The decree places platform work under a more structured labor regime. It says workers operating through platforms are entitled to basic rights tied to working hours, social security protection, fair working conditions and a guaranteed minimum level of pay. For companies in hospitality, the clearest impact is on the delivery systems that connect restaurants with customers, since those services will now face more explicit legal duties toward the people who carry out the work.

The measure also requires platforms to be transparent about how they assign jobs and to protect worker safety through appropriate preventive steps. That point is significant for food delivery, where access to orders, shifts and earnings is often managed through software. According to the decree details cited in the monitoring summary, the reform also introduces a presumption of an employment relationship when direction and control are present, and it requires human oversight of automated decisions. Those provisions could affect how delivery platforms handle order allocation, performance monitoring, account restrictions and other decisions that shape a courier’s ability to work.

The official text provides for administrative oversight and possible sanctions when platforms fail to comply with the rules in force. It says the provisions apply to all subjects carrying out work through digital platforms, including home food delivery, with full recognition of working conditions and social security protections. That broad wording indicates the government intends to cover the main operating models used in the sector, not only a narrow group of workers.

For restaurants, the decree does not simply concern a distant technology issue. Many businesses depend on third-party delivery platforms to reach customers, especially in urban markets. A stricter labor framework for those platforms can affect service contracts, operating costs, delivery availability and compliance checks throughout the chain. According to the monitoring summary of the reform, liability in subcontracting arrangements also extends to wages and social contributions, which raises the compliance stakes for companies that rely on layered delivery structures.

The publication of the decree marks a regulatory step in a sector that has drawn scrutiny across Europe over pay, employment status and the role of algorithms in managing workers. Italy’s approach, as reflected in the text published in the Official Gazette, combines core labor guarantees with rules on transparency, safety and enforcement. By expressly naming goods delivery and the food sector, the government made clear that hospitality is among the industries at the center of the reform.

The decree’s language suggests that regulators are trying to move platform work away from legal gray areas and toward a clearer set of obligations. For delivery companies serving restaurants, the main questions will now be how to adapt operating models, how to document compliance and how to manage automated systems under human review. For restaurant operators, the immediate issue is likely to be whether the delivery partners they use can meet the new standards without disruption or added legal risk.

The official publication does not present the reform as a limited measure for one platform or one city. Instead, it sets national rules for digital platform work, with food delivery specifically included. That makes the change relevant not only for the platforms themselves, but also for the broader restaurant trade that has come to rely on them as part of daily business.