



DRAFT BACKGROUND NOTE

IOTA Webinar “Debt Recovery Challenges in E-Commerce and the Sharing Economy”

17 April 2026 from 11:00 - 12:30 (CET)
Digital Event via Microsoft Teams

BACKGROUND

Digitalisation has changed how income is earned through e-commerce and digital platforms, creating **new challenges for tax administrations**, particularly in the area of **tax debt recovery**. In many cases, taxpayers active in the digital economy generate taxable income but **hold few assets that can be used to secure or recover tax debts**.

Tax administrations increasingly encounter taxpayers who receive irregular income through one or more platforms and pay it via electronic channels. These taxpayers often have **limited tangible assets and no fixed place of business**, making traditional recovery tools such as asset seizure, business closure, or employer-based withholding difficult to apply in practice.

Value linked to digital activities is frequently held in non-traditional forms, including platform account balances, digital wallets, future payments, or continued access to online marketplaces. However, **tax administrations may not always have timely or complete information on these income flows**, which can limit the effectiveness of debt recovery actions. Legal and operational constraints on accessing platform data further complicate recovery efforts.

Cross-border activity adds to these challenges. Platforms often operate across jurisdictions, and taxpayers can easily change platforms, payment methods, or locations. While **exchange of information** remains essential, it **can be time-consuming**, reducing the effectiveness of enforcement where income or balances are moved before recovery action can be taken.

Together, these factors contribute to a growing stock of tax debts that are difficult to recover. They highlight the need for tax administrations to reassess debt management approaches, including the use of withholding mechanisms, enhanced platform reporting, simplified arrangements for small earners, and more systematic debt segmentation to determine which debts should be pursued, monitored, or written off.



The aim of this webinar is to examine the implications of e-commerce and the gig economy for tax debt recovery, with a particular focus on asset-light and hard-to-recover taxpayers, and to explore how tax administrations can adapt their alternative and preventive approaches to this evolving compliance landscape.

OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the webinar are to:

- Highlight the key characteristics of e-commerce freelancers and gig workers that make tax debt recovery difficult.
- Explore why traditional asset-based recovery tools are often ineffective for this category of taxpayers.
- Identify emerging risks associated with the growth of difficult-to-recover tax debts in the digital economy.
- Encourage discussion on alternative and preventive approaches to managing tax debts with limited or difficult-to-recover assets.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes of this Webinar are:

- Better understanding of the key challenges associated with recovering tax debts arising from e-commerce and platform-based activities.
- Greater awareness of the main limitations faced by tax administrations in identifying, collecting and recovering tax debts from taxpayers with limited or non-traditional assets.
- Learn new approaches and methods to improve the effectiveness of tax debt recovery in the context of the digital economy.

METHODOLOGIES

The Webinar will be conducted via the Microsoft Teams meeting platform on **17 April 2026 (11:00 to 12.30 Central European Time)**.

The Webinar will be delivered through a combination of **country presentations, poll questions and Q&A sessions**. The **presentations** will provide insights into the key challenges tax administrations face when recovering tax debts from freelancers and gig economy workers who have limited or non-traditional assets. The attendees will have the opportunity to raise questions and explore the topic further during the **Q&A sessions**.

There is **no limit** to the number of participants who can attend the IOTA Webinar.

Joining instructions are provided on how to join and participate in the IOTA Webinar using the Microsoft Teams platform. There will be an opportunity for delegates to test their connection 30 minutes before the start of the Webinar.

The IOTA Webinar will be recorded and made available on the IOTA website (only for registered users) to watch on demand after the event.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience is IOTA member tax administrations experts who are involved in the process of tax debt collection and recovery.

REQUIRED INPUT

Please note that IOTA expects that all participants will have **sufficient language skills** for active participation in English.