

## The Digital Services Act package

The Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act aim to create a safer digital space where the fundamental rights of users are protected and to establish a level playing field for businesses.

CC0 - Europe Fit for the Digital Age: New rules for digital platforms  
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The European Commission proposed two legislative initiatives to upgrade rules governing digital services in the EU: the Digital Services Act (DSA) and the Digital Markets Act (DMA). They form a single set of new rules applicable across the whole EU to create a safer and more open digital space.

The DSA and DMA have two main goals:

1. to create a safer digital space in which the fundamental rights of all users of digital services are protected;
2. to establish a level playing field to foster innovation, growth, and competitiveness, both in the European Single Market and globally.

## What are Digital Services?

Digital services include a large category of online services, from simple websites to internet infrastructure services and online platforms.

The rules specified in the DSA primarily concern online intermediaries and platforms. For example, online marketplaces, social networks, content-sharing platforms, app stores, and online travel and accommodation platforms.

The Digital Markets Act includes rules that govern gatekeeper online platforms. Gatekeeper platforms are digital platforms with a systemic role in the internal market that function as bottlenecks between businesses and consumers for important digital services. Some of these services are also covered in the Digital Services Act, but for different reasons and with different types of provisions.

## Why do we need new rules?

The rapid and widespread development of digital services has been at the heart of the digital changes that impact our lives. Many new ways to communicate, shop or access information online have appeared, and they are constantly evolving. We need to ensure that European legislation evolves with them.

Online platforms have created significant benefits for consumers and innovation, and helped the European Union's internal market become more efficient. They have also facilitated cross-border trading within and outside the Union. This has opened new opportunities to a variety of European businesses and traders by facilitating their expansion and access to new markets.

While there is a broad consensus on the benefits of this transformation, the problems arising have numerous consequences for our society and economy. A core concern is the trade and exchange of illegal goods, services and content online. Online services are also being misused by manipulative algorithmic systems to amplify the spread of disinformation, and for other harmful purposes. These new challenges and the way platforms address them have a significant impact on fundamental rights online.

Despite a range of targeted, sector-specific interventions at EU-level, there are still significant gaps and legal burdens to address.

The accelerating digitalisation of society and the economy has created a situation where a few large platforms control important ecosystems in the digital economy. They have emerged as gatekeepers in digital markets, with the power to act as private rule-makers. These rules sometimes result in unfair conditions for businesses using these platforms and less choice for consumers.

With these developments in mind, Europe requires a modern legal framework that ensures the safety of users online, establishes governance with the protection of fundamental rights at its forefront, and maintains fair and open online platform environment.

## **What was the process up to now and how were stakeholders involved?**

The Commission consulted a wide range of stakeholders in preparation of this legislative package. These stakeholders included the private sector, users of digital services, civil society organisations, national authorities, academia, the technical community, international organisations and the general public. An array of complementary consultation steps were also carried out to fully capture stakeholder views on issues related to digital services and platforms.

The Commission consulted stakeholders to further support its work in this area during the summer of 2020. The evidence was used to identify specific issues that may require EU-level intervention in the context of the DSA and the DMA. European and non-European citizens and organisations were welcome to contribute to this consultation.

## **Impact Assessments and Public Consultations**

- Impact assessment of the proposal for the Digital Services Act
- Impact assessment of the proposal for the Digital Markets Act
- Summary Report on the open public consultation of the Digital Services Act Package
- Open Public Consultation on the Digital Services Act Package
- Open Public Consultation on the Competition Tool
- Inception Impact Assessments on the Digital Services Act
- Inception Impact Assessment on the Ex Ante tool

More on the Digital Services Act

[More on the Digital Markets Act](#)

Press release: Commission proposals new rules for digital platforms

Proposal for the Digital Services Act

Proposal for the Digital Markets Act (.pdf)

Brochure: How do online platforms shape our lives and businesses?

DSA: Questions and answers



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## Latest

PRESS RELEASE | 07 June 2021

Security Union: EU rules on removing terrorist content online enter into force

Landmark EU rules on addressing the dissemination of terrorist content online entered into force this week. Platforms will have to remove terrorist content referred by Member States'

authorities within 1 hour. The rules will also help to counter the spread of extremist ideologies online - a vital part of preventing attacks and addressing radicalisation.

PRESS RELEASE | 03 June 2021

Commission seeks views on data sharing

The European Commission has launched an open public consultation on the announced Data Act aiming to create a fair data economy by ensuring access to and use of data. The consultation seeks to gather views from citizens, businesses, online platforms, academics, civil society, administrations and all interested parties. It is open until 3 September.

DIGIBYTE | 26 February 2021

Final reports of the EU Observatory on the online platform economy

The EU Observatory for the Online Platform Economy, which informs the policy work of the Commission, by providing independent views on some of the key questions that have arisen in connection to the platform economy is today publishing the final reports from the expert group following stakeholder feedback and reactions on the progress reports which were published for consultation in July 2020.

PRESS RELEASE | 08 February 2021

Safer Internet Day 2021: A better internet for children and young people

Last Tuesday, 9 February 2021, was Safer Internet Day. Launched in 2004 and promoted by the EU-funded network of Safer Internet Centres in Member States, the day was celebrated online in more than 170 countries worldwide. The theme 'Together for a better internet' is a call for everyone to join in making the internet a safer and better place, especially for children and young people.

Browse Online platforms

## **Related Content**

### **Big Picture**

Online platforms and e-commerce

The EU wants to ensure businesses and citizens can use online platforms and e-commerce services no matter where they are in the EU.

### **See Also**

e-Commerce rules in the EU

The European Commission breaks down online barriers so that people can enjoy full access to all goods and services offered online by businesses in the EU.

## Online Platforms

The European Commission aims to foster an environment where online platforms thrive, treat users fairly and take action to limit the spread of illegal content.

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