

## Platform-to-business trading practices

The European Commission promotes fairness and transparency for businesses on online platforms.

Does the P2B apply to you? An explainer for businesses  
fix-empty

### The Regulation

The EU Regulation on platform-to-business relations (P2B Regulation) is the first ever set of rules for creating a fair, transparent and predictable business environment for smaller businesses and traders on online platforms.

The Commission created the Observatory on the online platform economy along with the new rules in order to monitor the latest trends in this sector. Platforms had to ensure they complied with the P2B Regulation before it started to apply on 12 July 2020.

### Why it matters

Platforms offer unparalleled efficiencies in access to cross-border markets and are crucial for millions of successful firms. While the gateway position of online platforms enables them to organise millions of users, it also entails the risk of harmful trading practices, against which businesses have no effective redress.

Direct harm to businesses, as well as the possibility of such harm, undermines the innovation potential of platforms. With the P2B Regulation, the Commission delivers on a commitment to take actions against unfair contracts and trading practices in platform-to-business relations.

The Regulation is accompanied by an impact assessment that incorporates evidence and stakeholders' views collected during a two-year fact-finding exercise.

### Guidelines on the requirements for ranking transparency

The Commission has published guidelines that address the main requirements for online platforms identified in the Regulation. The guidelines cover everything from the need to identify key algorithmic parameters behind ranking to their communication to businesses.

The guidelines will help online platforms to make the right information available to businesses so that they in turn can consider how best to increase and manage their online visibility. Ultimately, this enables consumers to receive the highest quality goods and services.

They guidelines will also provide valuable support for the adequate and effective enforcement of the transparency requirement to ensure online platforms are acting fairly in their ranking practices.

These guidelines are not legally binding.

# Questions and answers

The Commission has prepared a Q&A document (.pdf) that can serve as a checklist for online platforms and search engines, particularly smaller ones, when implementing the new requirements.

The Q&A document can also help businesses get information on their new rights and the options available to resolve problems that may arise in their commercial relationships with online platforms. It contains useful information for online intermediation services, search engines and representative organisations or associations.

**This Q&A is also available in the following languages (opens as a .pdf):**

**BG - CS - DA - DE - EL - ES - ET - FI - FR - HR - HU - IT - LT - LV - MT - NL - PL - PT - RO - SK - SL - SV.**

## Related documents

### Legal documents

- EU Regulation on promoting fairness and transparency for business users of online intermediation services (July 2019)
- Decision on setting up the group of experts for the Observatory on the Online Platform Economy (April 2018)
- Impact assessment and its executive summary, accompanying the proposal for an EU Regulation on promoting fairness and transparency for business users of online intermediation services (April 2018)
- Inception impact assessment: the Commission sought stakeholders' views on a range of policy options and received a large number of position papers
- Communication on the mid-term review of the Digital Single Market Strategy (2017)
- Communication on online platforms and the Digital Single Market (2016)
- Staff working document accompanying the Communication on Online Platforms and the Digital Single Market (2016).

### Studies and reports

- Study on business-to-business relations in the online platform environment
- Study on contractual relationships between online platforms and their professional users
- Study on data in platform-to-business relations
- Reports by the Commission's Joint Research Centre:
  - An Economic Policy Perspective on Online Platforms
  - The Competitive Landscape of Online Platforms
  - Quality discrimination in online multi-sided markets
  - Platforms to business relations in online platform ecosystems.

### Stakeholder consultations

- Public Consultation: Synopsis report with more than 1000 responses
- Workshops and surveys with different stakeholder groups on ranking transparency.
- Focus groups with different stakeholder groups to map and test possible solutions:
  - with business users of platforms;
  - with online platform companies.

- Workshops with different stakeholder groups to collect and test evidence:
  - with business users of platforms: on, respectively, platforms' terms and conditions, data related issues and algorithms, ranking and transparency;
  - with online platform companies: first to exchange views on possible issues reported by business users of platforms;
  - with experts from Member States and academia on effective dispute resolution and the fundamental right to conduct a business.

Press release: Improving fairness in trading practices

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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

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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