



# Stakeholder reactions to endorsement in Plenary of new rules to improve fairness and transparency of online platforms

EU Stakeholder - Press Releases

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[European Commission - Digital Single Market: Commission welcomes European Parliament's vote on new rules to improve fairness and transparency of online platforms](#)

Strasbourg, 17 April 2019

**Today, the European Parliament approved the new Regulation on platform-to-business trading practices that is aimed at establishing a fair, trusted and innovation-driven environment for businesses and traders when using online platforms.**

Vice-President for the Digital Single Market, Andrus **Ansip**, Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Elżbieta **Bieńkowska**, and Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, Mariya **Gabriel**, welcomed the outcome of the vote in a joint statement:

*" We are delighted by the overwhelming support to the new rules on online platforms' trading practices among the members of the European Parliament. As the first-ever regulation in the world that addresses the challenges of business relations within the online platform economy, it is an important milestone of the Digital Single Market and lays the ground for future developments. Not only will it improve trust, predictability and legal certainty, it will also offer new and accessible options for redress and resolution of disputes between businesses and platforms.*

*The Regulation was designed with the millions of small and medium enterprises in mind, so that they will no longer be faced with unexplained account suspensions, opaque rankings in search results, unaffordable dispute resolutions and many other unfair practices. It will also greatly benefit consumers by incentivising businesses to become active on online platforms and in turn lead to an increased choice of goods and services, of better quality and at lower prices.*

*We are thankful to all of the parties involved, the EU Institutions and the Member States, for their great efforts to reach a good compromise in a very short period of time. This is yet another positive development ahead of the upcoming European elections. "*

Next steps

The text adopted today by the European Parliament still has to be formally approved by the Council of the European Union. Once approved, the Regulation will enter into force 12 months after its publication in the Official Journal.

The EU has also set up a dedicated [Online Platform Observatory](#) to monitor the evolution of the market and the effective implementation of the rules. The Observatory has already started its work and will advise the Commission on the need for further action.

## For more information

- [Press release](#) : EU negotiators agree to set up new European rules to improve fairness of online platforms' trading practices
  - [MEMO – Questions & Answers](#)
  - [Factsheet: Online platforms – new rules to increase transparency and fairness](#)
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### [EPP Group - EPP Group ensures clarity on how search ranking is determined](#)

The EPP Group has welcomed the European Parliament's approval of the new rules for digital platforms and App stores (like Amazon, Google or eBay) that will end unfair practices and ensure a fair and transparent online environment for businesses using online platforms.

The EPP Group successfully protected Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) that are up against the big internet platforms. Businesses that sell their goods on online platforms and rely on search engines to attract customers will have clear parameters for their rankings in the lists.

Philippe Juvin MEP, who negotiated the agreement on behalf of the EPP Group, stressed the importance of the fact that this is the first legislation of this kind at EU level. "The Digital Single Market is getting another boost with these new transparency rules. We want to create the right environment in Europe for the digital economy to grow and new business models to develop."

The new rules also foresee that Terms and Conditions between platforms and a business have to be in a plain and intelligible language and users have to be notified of any modifications.

On an EPP Group initiative, the new rules will also include drawing up so-called blacklists of unfair practices that customers and businesses can be aware of and be better protected against.

"The EU has set a global standard here to help businesses deal with the growing power of the big platforms", said Juvin, stressing the advantages for business of the new transparency rules.

At the request of MEPs, the European Commission is obliged to review the rules after 18 months after the entry-into-force.

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### [S&D Group - S&Ds secure first-EU wide rules to make Amazon and other internet platforms fairer and more transparent](#)

After years of S&D calls to ensure a balanced digital environment in the European Union, the European Parliament today approved new EU-wide rules to make online platforms such as Amazon, eBay or Skyscanner fairer and more transparent. Together with other recently completed initiatives, the EU is truly delivering a Digital Single Market for its citizens and businesses.

#### **S&D MEP and European Parliament negotiator on the new rules, Christel Schaldemose MEP, said:**

"Increasingly we are searching for deals and the lowest prices on platforms like Amazon, Google shopping or eBay. This has brought us lower prices but has also given these companies huge market shares and power over the businesses that trade on their platforms. This has often led to unfair trading practices and a lack of transparency, which can make or break a small business. It is essential that the rules governing the relationships between these platforms and their traders are fair and transparent.

"Today the European Parliament has again shown it is not afraid of taming the internet giants. The online platform economy offers many opportunities to traders and consumers, but we cannot allow the internet to be an unregulated 'wild west.' These new proposals will help small businesses and ultimately benefit consumers. Thanks to S&D efforts, we have ensured that this Regulation has a genuine bite to it. These rules will start to apply directly in the member states already next year, so our businesses will start to see the benefits of a fairer online economy very soon."  
**S&D Group spokesperson for the internal market and consumer protection, Nicola Danti MEP, added:**

"When booking a hotel, flights, or buying a new TV, you will likely start looking on Skyscanner, Booking.com, Amazon or another online platform. For companies this means that appearing near the top of the ranking for products and services is essential. However, too often platforms have not been clear on how they formulate these rankings. These new rules will change that and ensure that there is genuine transparency and more information for EU consumers.

"This is a significant step forward to protect the interests of small businesses in the digital age. We must now continue our work complete the digital single market to ensure there are fair rules for everyone and to boost European competitiveness in the global economy."

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#### [ALDE Group - Parliament votes for more transparency of online intermediation services](#)

The European Parliament voted today in favour of a European Commission proposal that aims to **establish a fair, predictable, sustainable and trusted online business environment within the internal market**. Many online businesses rely on online platforms to conclude transactions with consumers, which often puts business users in a dependent position towards these platforms.

Some of the key points of the proposal are to ensure that **terms and conditions** are drafted in clear and plain language, a **mandatory complaint mechanism** for traders and establishing **a right for judicial proceedings** to be brought by representative organisations, associations or public bodies if needed.

**ALDE 's Dita Charanzová, Vice Chair of the Internal Market Committee and shadow rapporteur on this file** commented:

*" We have found a good and balanced deal. Transparent terms and conditions are positive for all businesses and should be a hallmark of best practices in both the online and offline world. I am glad this is now crystal clear in the law.*

*Moreover, we have made sure that the small trader's biggest problem is addressed. Today, many platforms do not have a mechanism to address complaints and problems quickly and effectively. This regulation fixes this problem. Every website presentation error, every administrative error or delay, is less income for our small traders. Even one day can be the difference between success and bankruptcy for these businesses.*

*At the same time, I am also pleased that we have prevented attempts by some to massively overregulate the ecommerce marketplace. The vast majority of traders online are happy with how the market works. We would have been adopting strict regulations in an attempt to fix a problem that does not exist."*

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