

First look at the Digital Services and Markets Acts

Do they live up to the expectations?

Wednesday 16 December (13:30 – 14.45)

What?

The European Commission will publish its proposals for the regulation of online platforms on 15 December. Join us for a first assessment of the proposals the day after!

Covid-19 again underscored the importance of digital services, both for our economy and society. But they are controlled by a select few online platforms that have great power, but little responsibility. This power concentration is unhealthy as such, but the way it has been exercised has also undermined citizens' fundamental rights, poisoned our information ecosystem, and suffocated alternative business models.

To respond to these developments, the European Commission will propose measures to curb what systemic online platforms - gatekeepers - can and cannot do, and a set of measures to clarify how platforms, notably social media, should treat online content. Finally, the Commission likely wants new enforcement powers for authorities, so they have the means to effectively constrain big tech when it matters.

During the webinar, we will provide a first, rough assessment of the new proposals, together with policy-makers, civil society and academics, with a specific focus on democracy and media. Do they live up to the expectations?

Agenda

13:30 – 14:45 **Content, media and democracy**

Paul Tang, Member of European Parliament (confirmed)

Catalina Goanta, Assistant Professor in Private Law, University of Maastricht (confirmed)

Alexander Fanta, Journalist at Netzpolitik.org (confirmed)

Moderation: **Justin Nogarede**, Digital Policy Adviser, FEPS

Background

In the past decades, digitalisation and the 'web' have taken flight, with many benefits, such as better access to information, faster communication, and a lot of innovation. And yet, the democratic promise of the early Internet has not come to pass. Instead of an online environment without middlemen, we have seen the rise of a select few online platforms that now perform central roles in how we communicate, gather information, do business, work and learn.

The EU has taken many steps, from the General Data Protection and Platform-to-Business Regulations, to updates to copyright, audio-visual media and anti-terrorism laws (the effects of which are yet to be felt and assessed). And this is without mentioning the competition cases, notably against Google/Alphabet. But even by the EU's own account, this will not be sufficient. That is why the European Commission (EC) has announced new rules for the governance of online platforms, on 2 December 2020.

This is a key moment, as these rules have the potential to significantly alter the nature of the 'Internet' for decades to come. Therefore, the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS), together with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, the Fondation Jean-Jaurès, the Fundación Pablo Iglesias, and the Fondazione Pietro Nenni, will present a policy paper, and organise this webinar on the future rules for the governance of online platforms.