

Meeting with Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google and Alphabet  
Brussels, 12 November 2020

BRIEFING NOTE *(Commission Internal)*

Scene setter/Context of the meeting:

- Google requested this meeting to discuss:
  - Transatlantic relationships on tech after the US elections
  - Update on tracing apps
  - Covid disinformation
  - DSA/DMA
- Google replied to the **Open Public Consultations** for both the Digital Services Act package, submitting a **135-pages paper** on both legs of the package, and DG COMP's New Competition Tool, submitting another **84-pages reply**.
  - For a summary of Google's position, see Background.
- On the same day that the responses were submitted (3 September), **Google** published an accompanying [blogpost](#) advocating a three pillar focus for the DSA package:
  - *A more responsible internet*: Introducing **clearer rules for notifying platforms of illegal content** while protecting fundamental rights of expression and access to information;
  - *A more innovative internet*: **Encouraging economic growth and innovation** by enabling Europeans to build the next generation of apps, businesses and services, and exporting European creativity and culture around the world;

Personal data

- *A more helpful internet:* **Competition regulation which supports product innovations**, helps people manage their data and provides businesses with the tools to grow.

Article 4(2)  
1st indent

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Objective of the meeting:

- Ensure Alphabet’s constructive role in and contributions to the EU’s legislative process.

Article 4(2)  
1st indent

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KEY messages

- The digital ecosystem has become the central axis around which our societies and economies revolve. How we shape its rules will determine our future for decades to come.

- Getting the regulation of the digital ecosystem right, propagating justice and fairness, transcends the commercial interests of any private company or single country.
- Designing just and effective rules for the digital economy in the EU can set a positive precedent and have a major beneficial impact worldwide.
- Alphabet is a giant in the digital economy and its choices and behaviour have global impact. The responsibility that comes with such power, places a heavy burden on the shoulders of the CEO that leads it.
- Alphabet's motto is to "**do the right thing**". What the right thing is, cannot be determined on the basis of any simplified dogma, economic incentive, scientific formula or computer code. What the right thing is, cannot be unilaterally imposed on the basis of strength or dominance.
- Determining the right thing requires open, **sincere and truthful** dialogue. Alphabet has shown to be a constructive and valuable participant in the dialogue on digital regulation in the past. It should not miss the opportunity to remain so now.
- The main goal of the DSA package is to **ensure a fair, competitive and innovative digital economy**.

Article 4(3)  
1st subp.



- For example, thank you for the help in dealing with the **COVID crisis**. Mention concerns about (new) malpractices that have arisen during it (pricing, disinformation, etc.).

- Emphasize that **with scale and reach come greater responsibilities** – and consequently we will need greater due diligence obligations.

Article 4(3)  
1st subp.

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- Leave no doubt that certain practices that have proven harmful will be regulated. The Commission is determined to **restore contestability** in digital markets.

Article 4(3)  
1st subp.

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Article 4(2)  
1st indent

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Article 4(3)  
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# COVID 19 monitoring and reporting programme

## Scene setter

- Google is reporting on measures taken to respond to COVID-19 related disinformation. It has thus far submitted a baseline report covering actions from the inception of the crisis through July as well as two monthly update reports on actions in August and September. We have published these reports. A further monthly update, covering October, is due on 15 November.

## Main messages

- Thank Google for participating in the monitoring programme established under our June 2020 Communication on Tackling COVID-19 Disinformation. **Recognize the substantial effort** made in preparing these reports.
- **More work remains to be done** to increase transparency and improve accountability:

Article 4(3)  
1st subp.

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Article 4(1)a  
3rd indent

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