

# BTO - GdG meeting with [REDACTED] (Facebook), 12 April 2018

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Participants: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

EC: Gerard de Graaf, [REDACTED] (note-taker)

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The meeting was organised at the request of Facebook, to present the developments in the Facebook News Feed.

GdG introduced briefly the portfolio of the Directorate, including the policy approach to online platforms, but also related files such as the policy on disinformation.

[REDACTED] introduced the developments in the News Feed, to enact [Facebook's policy change](#) shifting from consumption of content from publishers to connection between users. [REDACTED] described the different systems involved in ranking the entries in the news feed of a Facebook user, including the selection of the inventory of posts, the signal analysis to assess the users' possible interest in each story, prediction models and scoring of stories.

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He also explained the newsfeed-related processes for proactively and reactively spotting illegal content and the distinction between content violating FB's community guidelines (zero-tolerance policy), and stories reported or identified as 'false news'. For the latter, he nuanced that

a balance ought to be kept between free speech and de-ranking of posts; content is not always deleted, but the intervention can target the interest scoring and lead to not pushing the suspicious content to users' feeds. He nuanced that FB is looking into other measures related to the possibility of valuing quality news and trustworthy journalism (based on scoring and predictions), and possible ways of reducing polarisation; he noted that so-called filter bubbles are largely linked to peoples' natural behaviour of selecting like-minded 'friends' and their studies show that polarisation on Facebook is not higher than the overall polarisation on the Internet.

[REDACTED] emphasised that this was a very delicate field, and FB's will not interfere with ideologies, but has [set up a support programme for research](#) investigating social media's effect on elections.

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He reiterated their interest in collaborating on these issues with the Commission and exploring multi-stakeholder solutions to understanding and addressing societal concerns.

Of interest to [REDACTED], [Restricted Platforms and eCommerce Group](#), [Meeting reports F2](#), [REDACTED]

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