



### **Meeting between Commissioner Reynders and Meta – 11 January 2022**

On 11 January 2022, Commissioner Reynders (accompanied by members of his Cabinet and JUST C4) met with Nick Clegg (NC), Head of Global Affairs and Communications at Meta (accompanied by Meta staff). NC first provided an update on recent developments in relation to 'Meta', in particular on ongoing initiatives to develop a so-called 'Metaverse'. In addition, several other topics were discussed.

As regards consumer protection, Commissioner Reynders indicated that in light of widespread online vaccine misinformation in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important for platforms such as Meta to remain vigilant. In addition, the Commissioner mentioned the ongoing work on the General Product Safety Regulation and invited Meta to consider joining the Product Safety Pledge. NC referred to Meta's efforts to provide reliable information on vaccination, including through COVID-19 surveys to assist health specialists and academics. With respect to the Product Safety Pledge, he explained that it would be difficult for Meta to sign up to the current model, because of practical difficulties to comply with certain commitments (e.g. to remove listings under 48 hours).

Concerning online hate speech, Commissioner Reynders informed about the upcoming proposal of the Commission to extend the list of 'EU crimes' to include hate speech and hate crime, with the aim of harmonising definitions and procedural aspects at EU level. NC mentioned that Meta has significantly reduced hate speech on its platforms and is publishing detailed statistics on its prevalence.

NC also referred to the Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act, explaining that it requires a lot of effort to be fully compliant from the outset and expressing concerns about a possible fragmentation of the EU internal market. With respect to the Digital Markets Act, he indicated that it would be helpful to have the possibility of having a dialogue with regulators on questions concerning compliance.

Finally, Meta asked about the state of play of the ongoing negotiations with the US on a successor arrangement to the Privacy Shield. Commissioner Reynders stressed that these negotiations remain a priority on both sides and that regular contacts are taking place, both at technical and political level (including two high-level meetings between the Commissioner and his US counterparts in Washington DC last fall). The Commissioner explained that a lot of progress has been made, but important outstanding issues remain. In this respect, Commissioner Reynders underlined that the Commission will only agree to an arrangement that is fully compliant with the Schrems II judgment, which is also the only way to ensure legal certainty for stakeholders on both sides of the Atlantic.