

# Regulatory environment for platforms, online intermediaries, data and cloud computing and the collaborative economy

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

## Objectives and General Information

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**The views expressed in this public consultation document may not be interpreted as stating an official position of the European Commission. All definitions provided in this document are strictly for the purposes of this public consultation and are without prejudice to differing definitions the Commission may use under current or future EU law, including any revision of the definitions by the Commission concerning the same subject matters.**

You are invited to read the privacy statement attached to this consultation for information on how your personal data and contribution will be dealt with.

This public consultation will close on 6 January 2016 (13 weeks from the day when all language versions have been made available).

The Commission invites all interested parties to express their views on the questions targeting relations between platform providers and holders of rights in digital content (Question starting with "[A1]"), taking account of the Commission Communication "Towards a modern, more European copyright framework" of 9 December 2015. Technical features of the questionnaire have been adapted accordingly.

**Please complete this section of the public consultation before moving to other sections.**

- Respondents living with disabilities can request the questionnaire in .docx format and send their replies in email to the following address: CNECT-PLATFORMS-CONSULTATION@ec.europa.eu.
- If you are an association representing several other organisations and intend to gather the views of your members by circulating the questionnaire to them, please send us a request in email and we will send you the questionnaire in .docx format. However, we ask you to introduce the aggregated answers into EU Survey. In such cases we will not consider answers submitted in other channels than EU Survey.
- If you want to submit position papers or other information in addition to the information you share with the Commission in EU Survey, please send them to

CNECT-PLATFORMS-CONSULTATION@ec.europa.eu and make reference to the "Case Id" displayed after you have concluded the online questionnaire. This helps the Commission to properly identify your contribution.

- Given the volume of this consultation, you may wish to download a PDF version before responding to the survey online. The PDF version includes all possible questions. When you fill the survey in online, you will not see all of the questions; only those applicable to your chosen respondent category and to other choices made when you answer previous questions.

\* Please indicate your role for the purpose of this consultation

- ☐ An individual citizen
- ☐ An association or trade organization representing consumers
- ☐ An association or trade organization representing businesses
- ☐ An association or trade organization representing civil society
- ☐ An online platform
- ☐ A business, including suppliers using an online platform to provide services
- ☐ A public authority
- ☐ A research institution or Think tank
- ☒ Other

\* Please specify

*100 character(s) maximum*

Internet Commerce Coalition represents leading network operators, Internet and advertising companies.

\* Please indicate your country of residence

Non-EU country

\* Please specify the Non-EU country

U.S.

\* Please provide your contact information (name, address and e-mail address)

Patrick Van Eecke; 106 Avenue Louise, 1000-Brussels;  
patrick.vaneecke@dlapiper.com

\* Is your organisation registered in the Transparency Register of the European Commission and the European Parliament?

*Note: If you are not answering this questionnaire as an individual, please register in the Transparency Register. If your organisation/institution responds without being registered, the Commission will consider its input as that of an individual and will publish it as such.*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☒ Non-applicable

If you are an economic operator, please enter the NACE code, which best describes the economic activity you conduct. [You can find here the NACE classification.](#)

*Text of 3 to 5 characters will be accepted*

The Statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community, abbreviated as NACE, is the classification of economic activities in the European Union (EU).

★ I object the publication of my personal data

☐ Yes

☒ No

## Online platforms

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### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ROLE OF ONLINE PLATFORMS

Do you agree with the definition of "**Online platform**" as provided below?

"Online platform" refers to an undertaking operating in two (or multi)-sided markets, which uses the Internet to enable interactions between two or more distinct but interdependent groups of users so as to generate value for at least one of the groups. Certain platforms also qualify as Intermediary service providers.

Typical examples include general internet search engines (e.g. Google, Bing), specialised search tools (e.g. Google Shopping, Kelkoo, Twenga, Google Local, TripAdvisor, Yelp,), location-based business directories or some maps (e.g. Google or Bing Maps), news aggregators (e.g. Google News), online market places (e.g. Amazon, eBay, Allegro, Booking.com), audio-visual and music platforms (e.g. Deezer, Spotify, Netflix, Canal play, Apple TV), video sharing platforms (e.g. YouTube, Dailymotion), payment systems (e.g. PayPal, Apple Pay), social networks (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Tuenti), app stores (e.g. Apple App Store, Google Play) or collaborative economy platforms (e.g. AirBnB, Uber, Taskrabbit, Bla-bla car). Internet access providers fall outside the scope of this definition.

☐ Yes

☐ No

What do you consider to be the key advantages of using online platforms?

Online platforms...

- ☐ make information more accessible
- ☐ make communication and interaction easier
- ☐ increase choice of products and services
- ☐ create more transparent prices and the possibility to compare offers
- ☐ increase trust between peers by providing trust mechanisms (i.e. ratings, reviews, etc.)
- ☐ lower prices for products and services
- ☐ lower the cost of reaching customers for suppliers
- ☐ help with matching supply and demand
- ☐ create new markets or business opportunities
- ☐ help in complying with obligations in cross-border sales

- ☐ help to share resources and improve resource-allocation
- ☐ others:

Have you encountered, or are you aware of problems faced by **consumers** or **suppliers** when dealing with online platforms?

"Consumer" is any natural person using an online platform for purposes outside the person's trade, business, craft or profession.

"Supplier" is any trader or non-professional individual that uses online platforms to provide services to third parties both under their own brand (name) and under the platform's brand.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

## TRANSPARENCY OF ONLINE PLATFORMS

Do you think that online platforms should ensure, as regards their own activities and those of the **traders** that use them, more transparency in relation to:

a) information required by consumer law (e.g. the contact details of the supplier, the main characteristics of products, the total price including delivery charges, and consumers' rights, such as the right of withdrawal)?

"Trader" is any natural or legal person using an online platform for business or professional purposes. Traders are in particular subject to EU consumer law in their relations with consumers.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

b) information in response to a search query by the user, in particular if the displayed results are sponsored or not?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

c) information on who the actual supplier is, offering products or services on the platform

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

d) information to discourage misleading marketing by professional suppliers (traders), including fake reviews?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

e) is there any additional information that, in your opinion, online platforms should be obliged to display?

500 character(s) maximum

Have you experienced that information displayed by the platform (e.g. advertising) has been adapted to the interest or recognisable characteristics of the user?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Do you find the information provided by online platforms on their terms of use sufficient and easy-to-understand?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you find reputation systems (e.g. ratings, reviews, certifications, trustmarks) and other trust mechanisms operated by online platforms are generally reliable?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

What are the main benefits and drawbacks of reputation systems and other trust mechanisms operated by online platforms? Please describe their main benefits and drawbacks.

1500 character(s) maximum

## USE OF INFORMATION BY ONLINE PLATFORMS

In your view, do online platforms provide sufficient and accessible information with regard to:

a) the personal and non-personal data they collect?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

b) what use is made of the personal and non-personal data collected, including trading of the data to other platforms and actors in the Internet economy?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

c) adapting prices, for instance dynamic pricing and conditions in function of data gathered on the buyer (both consumer and trader)?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ I don't know

Please share your general comments or ideas regarding the use of information by online platforms

*3000 character(s) maximum*

## RELATIONS BETWEEN PLATFORMS AND SUPPLIERS/TRADERS/APPLICATION DEVELOPERS OR HOLDERS OF RIGHTS IN DIGITAL CONTENT

Please provide the list of online platforms with which you are in regular business relations and indicate to what extent your business depends on them (on a scale of 0 to 3). Please describe the position of your business or the business you represent and provide recent examples from your business experience.

	Name of online platform	Dependency (0: not dependent, 1: dependent, 2: highly dependent)	Examples from your business experience
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

How often do you experience the following business practices in your business relations with platforms?

The online platform ...

\* A parity clause is a provision in the terms of use of an online platform or in an individual contract between the online platform and a supplier under which the price, availability and other conditions of a product or service offered by the supplier on the online platform have to maintain parity with the best offer of the supplier on other sales channels.

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
requests me to use exclusively its services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
applies "parity clauses" *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
applies non-transparent fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
applies fees without corresponding counter-performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
applies terms and conditions, which I find unbalanced and do not have the possibility to negotiate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

unilaterally modifies the contractual terms without giving you proper notification or allowing you to terminate the contract	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
limits access to data or provides it in a non-usable format	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
puts significant constraints to presenting your offer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
presents suppliers/services in a biased way	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
refuses access to its services unless specific restrictions are accepted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
promotes its own services to the disadvantage of services provided by suppliers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you do experience them, what is their impact on your business activity (on a scale from 0 to 3).

Impact on my business:

The online platform ...

\* A parity clause is a provision in the terms of use of an online platform or in an individual contract between the online platform and a supplier under which the price, availability and other conditions of a product or service offered by the supplier on the online platform have to maintain parity with the best offer of the supplier on other sales channels.

	0 – no impact	1 – minor impact	2 – considerable impact	3 – heavy impact
requests me to use exclusively its services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
applies "parity clauses" *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
applies non-transparent fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
applies fees without corresponding counter-performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
applies terms and conditions, which I find unbalanced and do not have the possibility to negotiate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
unilaterally modifies the contractual terms without giving you proper notification or allowing you to terminate the contract	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
limits access to data or provides it in a non-usable format	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

puts significant constraints to presenting your offer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
presents suppliers/services in a biased way	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
refuses access to its services unless specific restrictions are accepted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
promotes its own services to the disadvantage of services provided by suppliers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you are aware of other contractual clauses or experience other potentially problematic practices, please mention them here

*1000 character(s) maximum*

[A1] Are you a holder of rights in digital content protected by copyright, which is used on an online platform?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

Is there a room for improvement in the relation between platforms and suppliers using the services of platforms?

- ☐ No, the present situation is satisfactory.  
☐ Yes, through market dynamics.  
☐ Yes, through self-regulatory measures (codes of conducts / promotion of best practices).  
☐ Yes, through regulatory measures.  
☐ Yes, through the combination of the above.

Are you aware of any dispute resolution mechanisms operated by online platforms, or independent third parties on the business-to-business level mediating between platforms and their suppliers?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

#### CONSTRAINTS ON THE ABILITY OF CONSUMERS AND TRADERS TO MOVE FROM ONE PLATFORM TO ANOTHER

Do you see a need to strengthen the technical capacity of online platforms and address possible other constraints on switching freely and easily from one platform to another and move user data (e.g. emails, messages, search and order history, or customer reviews)?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No



Should there be a mandatory requirement allowing non-personal data to be easily extracted and moved between comparable online services?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

Please share your general comments or ideas regarding the ability of consumers and traders to move from one platform to another

*3000 character(s) maximum*

## ACCESS TO DATA

Please share your general comments or ideas regarding access to data on online platforms

*3000 character(s) maximum*

## Tackling illegal content online and the liability of online intermediaries

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Please indicate your role in the context of this set of questions

Terms used for the purposes of this consultation:

"Illegal content"

Corresponds to the term "illegal activity or information" used in Article 14 of the E-commerce Directive. The directive does not further specify this term. It may be understood in a wide sense so as to include any infringement of applicable EU or national laws and regulations. This could for instance include defamation, terrorism related content, IPR infringements, child abuse content, consumer rights infringements, or incitement to hatred or violence on the basis of race, origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, malware, illegal online gambling, selling illegal medicines, selling unsafe products.

"Hosting"

According to Article 14 of the E-commerce Directive, hosting is the "storage of (content) that has been provided by the user of an online service". It may for instance be storage of websites on servers. It may also include the services offered by online market places, referencing services and social networks.

"Notice"

Any communication to a hosting service provider that gives the latter knowledge of a particular item of illegal content that it transmits or stores and therefore creates an obligation for it to act expeditiously by removing the illegal content or disabling/blocking access to it.. Such an obligation only arises if the notice provides the internet hosting service provider with actual awareness or knowledge of illegal content.

"Notice provider"

Anyone (a natural or legal person) that informs a hosting service provider about illegal content on the internet. It may for instance be an individual citizen, a hotline or a holder of intellectual property rights. In certain cases it may also include public authorities.

"Provider of content"

In the context of a hosting service the content is initially provided by the user of that service. A provider of content is for instance someone who posts a comment on a social network site or uploads a video on a video sharing site.

- ☐ individual user
- ☐ content provider
- ☐ notice provider
- ☒ intermediary
- ☐ none of the above

Have you encountered situations suggesting that the liability regime introduced in Section IV of the E-commerce Directive (art. 12-15) has proven not fit for purpose or has negatively affected market level playing field?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Do you think that the concept of a "mere technical, automatic and passive nature" of information transmission by information society service providers provided under recital 42 of the ECD is sufficiently clear to be interpreted and applied in a homogeneous way, having in mind the growing involvement in content distribution by some online intermediaries, e.g.: video sharing websites?

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Please explain your answer.

*1500 character(s) maximum*

Online intermediaries with storage or hosting capabilities have some degree of involvement with their users (e.g. providing tools to allow users to upload/store photos). Where the intermediary provides content neutral functionalities but has no knowledge of the content that users choose to provide, it retains a neutral, passive role.

Only when procedures/tools require e.g. staff to obtain knowledge of user data by screening information before publication, can service providers gain knowledge of the user data which may deprive them of the protection provided by the E-Commerce Directive. This is made sufficiently clear in practice and in the current provisions of the Directive.

The CJEU has clarified the concepts used in the E-Commerce Directive, hereby harmonising its application by national courts (e.g. SABAM; C-291/13). Further clarification does not seem necessary at this time.

Video sharing websites do not raise specific issues and should not be treated differently compared to other hosting service providers. Some have developed specific, automated systems to prevent the uploading of copyright infringing content, for example DailyMotion's signature or YouTube's Content ID. These avoid the need for rightsholders who work within these systems even to issue copyright notices to the platform.

The development of such systems is only possible because the flexible and proportionate framework offered by the E-Commerce Directive sets the incentives and space to engineer them.

Mere conduit/caching/hosting describe the activities that are undertaken by a service provider. However, new business models and services have appeared since the adopting of the E-commerce Directive. For instance, some cloud service providers might also be covered under hosting services e.g. pure data storage. Other cloud-based services, as processing, might fall under a different category or not fit correctly into any of the existing ones. The same can apply to linking services and search engines, where there has been some diverging case-law at national level. Do you think that further categories of intermediary services should be established, besides mere conduit/caching/hosting and/or should the existing categories be clarified?

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

### On the "notice"

Do you consider that different categories of illegal content require different policy approaches as regards notice-and-action procedures, and in particular different requirements as regards the content of the notice?

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

Do you think that any of the following categories of illegal content requires a specific approach:

- ☐ Illegal offer of goods and services (e.g. illegal arms, fake medicines, dangerous products, unauthorised gambling services etc.)
- ☐ Illegal promotion of goods and services
- ☐ Content facilitating phishing, pharming or hacking
- ☐ Infringements of intellectual property rights (e.g. copyright and related rights, trademarks)
- ☐ Infringement of consumer protection rules, such as fraudulent or misleading offers
- ☐ Infringement of safety and security requirements
- ☐ Racist and xenophobic speech
- ☐ Homophobic and other kinds of hate speech
- ☒ Child abuse content
- ☐ Terrorism-related content (e.g. content inciting the commitment of terrorist offences and training material)
- ☐ Defamation
- ☐ Other:

Please explain what approach you would see fit for the relevant category.

*1000 character(s) maximum*

One limited exception: child abuse images and videos, unlike the other categories, inherently involve profound physical or psychological harm to

victims, are not limited by rights of freedom of expression, and often can be automatically detected based upon known hash values. However, detecting the age of subjects of these images can be very difficult and content must be identified by public law enforcement authorities.

Child abuse material can be identified by a public authority with expertise in the matter using automated tools and the public authority can then work with intermediaries, in a lawfully appropriate manner, to remove or disable access to the identified child abuse material.

### On the "action"

Should the content providers be given the opportunity to give their views to the hosting service provider on the alleged illegality of the content?

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

★ Please explain your answer

*1500 character(s) maximum*

Under the current framework, upon obtaining actual knowledge or awareness of illegal activities, the service provider has to act to remove or to disable access to the information concerned (taking freedom of expression and national implementing requirements into account).

Content providers are typically already able to share their views with the service provider on the alleged illegality of the content.

Complainants could be required to make reasonable effort (making use of the means and information publicly available) to contact the user, webmaster or other content provider regarding the legality of the content and request removal / access to be disabled. This requirement would provide effective notice to the person most capable of controlling further dissemination of the challenged content: the person who initially made the material available online.

Intermediaries are not best placed to judge / mediate cases where suspected "illegal activities" are not obvious and undeniable. In addition, they may not have the resources to act as a mediator, passing third party complaints to a content provider and passing the content provider's reply back to the complainant and so on.

The greater the pressure that is placed on intermediaries in terms of liability and the requirement to use resources to mediate or judge third party disputes, the greater will be the incentive to remove content without carefully reviewing, or otherwise testing the veracity of the notices received.

If you consider that this should only apply for some kinds of illegal content, please indicate which one(s)

*1500 character(s) maximum*

Should action taken by hosting service providers remain effective over time ("take down and stay down" principle)?

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

Please explain

The E-Commerce Directive introduced a protection for internet service providers, in order to prevent them from being obliged to monitor the acts or information from their users for possible infringements, or to proactively search their systems for such infringements, while leaving room for private codes of conduct.

This was further confirmed by the CJEU in SABAM v. Scarlet and SABAM v. Netlog where it was held that general monitoring obligations are both inconsistent with the letter of the E-Commerce Directive and with important underlying rights of users, including the rights of freedom of expression and access to information.

The Internet enables communication by large numbers of users. This means that even when an intermediary has removed or disabled access to illegal material, it might be available elsewhere through other channels. A suggested way to prevent future violations is to terminate the accounts of subscribers of hosted services who have a record of re-posting content that has been adjudged by a court to be unlawful after the subscriber's initial post of that content was taken down.

#### **On duties of care for online intermediaries:**

Recital 48 of the Ecommerce Directive establishes that "[t]his Directive does not affect the possibility for Member States of requiring service providers, who host information provided by recipients of their service, to apply duties of care, which can reasonably be expected from them and which are specified by national law, in order to detect and prevent certain types of illegal activities". Moreover, Article 16 of the same Directive calls on Member States and the Commission to encourage the "drawing up of codes of conduct at Community level by trade, professional and consumer associations or organisations designed to contribute to the proper implementation of Articles 5 to 15". At the same time, however, Article 15 sets out a prohibition to impose "a general obligation to monitor".

(For online intermediaries): Have you put in place voluntary or proactive measures to remove certain categories of illegal content from your system?

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

Could you outline the considerations that have prevented you from putting in place voluntary measures?

*1500 character(s) maximum*

Not uniformly: Members' experiences vary based upon the types of services that they provide.

Do you see a need to impose specific duties of care for certain categories of illegal content?

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No  
☐ I don't know

Please specify for which categories of content you would establish such an obligation.

*1500 character(s) maximum*

Please specify for which categories of intermediary you would establish such an obligation

*1500 character(s) maximum*

Please specify what types of actions could be covered by such an obligation

*1500 character(s) maximum*

Do you see a need for more transparency on the intermediaries' content restriction policies and practices (including the number of notices received as well as their main content and the results of the actions taken following the notices)?

- ☐ Yes  
☒ No

Do you think that online intermediaries should have a specific service to facilitate contact with national authorities for the fastest possible notice and removal of illegal contents that constitute a threat for e.g. public security or fight against terrorism?

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

Do you think a minimum size threshold would be appropriate if there was such an obligation?

- ☒ Yes  
☐ No

Please share your general comments or ideas regarding the liability of online intermediaries and the topics addressed in this section of the questionnaire.

*5000 character(s) maximum*

In response to the earlier question on "conduit/caching/hosting", technical evolutions have taken place since the adoption of the E-Commerce Directive, such as cloud computing and providing access to content through hyperlinks on a wide variety of new platforms. Such services represent the future of information technology and are key facilitators of U.S. investments in the European IT sector that our members are making or are considering making.

We believe that both types of services fit within the hosting category in Article 14 of the Directive. For example, cloud computing is simply hosting on a broader scale. This approach ensures that the protection regime offered by the E-Commerce Directive can continue to apply to new technologies without requiring a change in legislation to keep up with new technological trends.

While we believe that clarification of the status of such services would be somewhat helpful to encouraging future investment in European IT, on balance we see a significant potential drag on the European IT sector if the Directive is reopened in a way that would narrow existing protections.

General comments:

Our organisation includes the largest U.S. Internet service providers. Several of our members are contemplating or have made significant investments in the European IT sector. Requiring online services to monitor content or imposing disproportionate liability on them would discourage U.S. investments in the European market and severely undermine European values of fostering a strong environment for innovation, free expression, and data protection.

The presence of user generated content on the Internet offers huge benefits to European Internet users, expanding choice and providing a medium for free expression of unprecedented utility.

This is analogous to the offline world; telecoms companies are not forced to monitor people's calls to make sure they are not doing something illegal, and they are not held legally responsible for callers who plan a crime over their phone lines.

Imposing liability on online intermediaries would stifle innovation by creating legal uncertainty and risk for content-neutral services. It would, for example, inject huge disincentives to the development of a European cloud.

In addition, if intermediaries were liable for illegal content under the sorts of very low thresholds implied by the questions in this consultation, they would be much more likely to remove all sorts of controversial (though legitimate) speech, for fear of facing legal penalties.

The intermediary liability limitations in the Directive are found in many comparable legal systems (US, CA, JP, Korea, AU, etc.). It would be a fundamental barrier to Internet investment in Europe if companies that invest there would be subject to a more severe liability regime, and in particular, a burden on European startups that could not compete on an equal basis with companies abroad.

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## Data and cloud in digital ecosystems

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### FREE FLOW OF DATA

#### ON DATA LOCATION RESTRICTIONS

In the context of the free flow of data in the Union, do you in practice take measures to make a clear distinction between personal and non-personal data?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable

Have restrictions on the location of data affected your strategy in doing business (e.g. limiting your choice regarding the use of certain digital technologies and services?)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you think that there are particular reasons in relation to which data location restrictions are or should be justifiable?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

#### ON DATA ACCESS AND TRANSFER

Do you think that the existing contract law framework and current contractual practices are fit for purpose to facilitate a free flow of data including sufficient and fair access to and use of data in the EU, while safeguarding fundamental interests of parties involved?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

In order to ensure the free flow of data within the European Union, in your opinion, regulating access to, transfer and the use of non-personal data at European level is:

- ☐ Necessary
- ☐ Not necessary

When non-personal data is generated by a device in an automated manner, do you think that it should be subject to specific measures (binding or non-binding) at EU level?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please share your general comments or ideas regarding data access, ownership and use

*5000 character(s) maximum*

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## ON DATA MARKETS

What regulatory constraints hold back the development of data markets in Europe and how could the EU encourage the development of such markets?

*3000 character(s) maximum*

## ON ACCESS TO OPEN DATA

Do you think more could be done to open up public sector data for re-use in addition to the recently revised EU legislation (Directive 2013/37/EU)?

Open by default means: Establish an expectation that all government data be published and made openly re-usable by default, while recognising that there are legitimate reasons why some data cannot be released.

- ☐ Introducing the principle of 'open by default'[1]
- ☐ Licensing of 'Open Data': help persons/ organisations wishing to re-use public sector information (e.g., Standard European License)
- ☐ Further expanding the scope of the Directive (e.g. to include public service broadcasters, public undertakings);
- ☐ Improving interoperability (e.g., common data formats);
- ☐ Further limiting the possibility to charge for re-use of public sector information
- ☐ Remedies available to potential re-users against unfavourable decisions
- ☐ Other aspects?

Do you think that there is a case for the opening up of data held by private entities to promote its re-use by public and/or private sector, while respecting the existing provisions on data protection?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

## ON ACCESS AND REUSE OF (NON-PERSONAL) SCIENTIFIC DATA

Do you think that data generated by research is sufficiently, findable, accessible identifiable, and re-usable enough?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you agree with a default policy which would make data generated by publicly funded research available through open access?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

## ON LIABILITY IN RELATION TO THE FREE FLOW OF DATA AND THE INTERNET OF THINGS

As a provider/user of Internet of Things (IoT) and/or data driven services and connected tangible devices, have you ever encountered or do you anticipate problems stemming from either an unclear liability regime/non –existence of a clear-cut liability regime?

The "Internet of Things" is an ecosystem of physical objects that contain embedded technology to sense their internal statuses and communicate or interact with the external environment. Basically, Internet of things is the rapidly growing network of everyday objects—eyeglasses, cars, thermostats—made smart with sensors and internet addresses that create a network of everyday objects that communicate with one another, with the eventual capability to take actions on behalf of users.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

If you did not find the legal framework satisfactory, does this affect in any way your use of these services and tangible goods or your trust in them?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

Do you think that the existing legal framework (laws, or guidelines or contractual practices) is fit for purpose in addressing liability issues of IoT or / and Data driven services and connected tangible goods?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

As a user of IoT and/or data driven services and connected tangible devices, does the present legal framework for liability of providers impact your confidence and trust in those services and connected tangible goods?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

In order to ensure the roll-out of IoT and the free flow of data, should liability issues of these services and connected tangible goods be addressed at EU level?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

## ON OPEN SERVICE PLATFORMS

What are in your opinion the socio-economic and innovation advantages of open versus closed service platforms and what regulatory or other policy initiatives do you propose to accelerate the emergence and take-up of open service platforms?

*3000 character(s) maximum*

## PERSONAL DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

The following questions address the issue whether technical innovations should be promoted and further developed in order to improve transparency and implement efficiently the requirements for lawful processing of personal data, in compliance with the current and future EU data protection legal framework. Such innovations can take the form of 'personal data cloud spaces' or trusted frameworks and are often referred to as 'personal data banks/stores/vaults'.

Do you think that technical innovations, such as personal data spaces, should be promoted to improve transparency in compliance with the current and future EU data protection legal framework? Such innovations can take the form of 'personal data cloud spaces' or trusted frameworks and are often referred to as 'personal data banks/stores/vaults'?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

## EUROPEAN CLOUD INITIATIVE

What are the key elements for ensuring trust in the use of cloud computing services by European businesses and citizens

"Cloud computing" is a paradigm for enabling network access to a scalable and elastic pool of shareable physical or virtual resources with self-service provisioning and administration on-demand. Examples of such resources include: servers, operating systems, networks, software, applications, and storage equipment.

- ☐ Reducing regulatory differences between Member States
- ☐ Standards, certification schemes, quality labels or seals
- ☐ Use of the cloud by public institutions
- ☐ Investment by the European private sector in secure, reliable and high-quality cloud infrastructures

As a (potential) user of cloud computing services, do you think cloud service providers are sufficiently transparent on the security and protection of users' data regarding the services they provide?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable

As a (potential) user of cloud computing services, do you think cloud service providers are sufficiently transparent on the security and protection of users' data regarding the services they provide?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable

As a (potential) user of cloud computing services, do you agree that existing contractual practices

ensure a fair and balanced allocation of legal and technical risks between cloud users and cloud service providers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What would be the benefit of cloud computing services interacting with each other (ensuring interoperability)

- ☐ Economic benefits
- ☐ Improved trust
- ☐ Others:

What would be the benefit of guaranteeing the portability of data, including at European level, between different providers of cloud services

- ☐ Economic benefits
- ☐ Improved trust
- ☐ Others:

Have you encountered any of the following contractual practices in relation to cloud based services? In your view, to what extent could those practices hamper the uptake of cloud based services? Please explain your reasoning.

	Never (Y[es] or N[no])	Sometimes (Y / N)	Often (Y / N)	Always (Y / N)	Why (1500 characters max.)?
Difficulties with negotiating contractual terms and conditions for cloud services stemming from uneven bargaining power of the parties and/or undefined standards					
Limitations as regards the possibility to switch between different cloud service providers					
Possibility for the supplier to unilaterally modify the cloud service					
Far reaching limitations of the supplier's liability for malfunctioning cloud services (including depriving the user of key remedies)					
Other (please explain)					

What are the main benefits of a specific European Open Science Cloud which would facilitate access and make publicly funded research data re-useable?

- ☐ Making Science more reliable by better quality assurance of the data
- ☐ Making Science more efficient by better sharing of resources at national and international level
- ☐ Making Science more efficient by leading faster to scientific discoveries and insights
- ☐ Creating economic benefits through better access to data by economic operators
- ☐ Making Science more responsive to quickly tackle societal challenges
- ☐ Others

Would model contracts for cloud service providers be a useful tool for building trust in cloud services?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Would your answer differ for consumer and commercial (i.e. business to business) cloud contracts?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Please share your general comments or ideas regarding data, cloud computing and the topics addressed in this section of the questionnaire

*5000 character(s) maximum*

## The collaborative economy

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The following questions focus on certain issues raised by the collaborative economy and seek to improve the Commission's understanding by collecting the views of stakeholders on the regulatory environment, the effects of collaborative economy platforms on existing suppliers, innovation, and consumer choice. More broadly, they aim also at assessing the impact of the development of the collaborative economy on the rest of the economy and of the opportunities as well as the challenges it raises. They should help devising a European agenda for the collaborative economy to be considered in the context of the forthcoming Internal Market Strategy. The main question is whether EU law is fit to support this new phenomenon and whether existing policy is sufficient to let it develop and grow further, while addressing potential issues that may arise, including public policy objectives that may have already been identified.

### **Terms used for the purposes of this consultation:**

#### **"Collaborative economy"**

For the purposes of this consultation the collaborative economy links individuals and/or legal persons through online platforms (collaborative economy platforms) allowing them to provide services and/or exchange assets, resources, time, skills, or capital, sometimes for a temporary period and without

transferring ownership rights. Typical examples are transport services including the use of domestic vehicles for passenger transport and ride-sharing, accommodation or professional services.

**"Traditional provider"**

Individuals or legal persons who provide their services mainly through other channels, without an extensive involvement of online platforms.

**"Provider in the collaborative economy"**

Individuals or legal persons who provide the service by offering assets, resources, time, skills or capital through an online platform.

**"User in the collaborative economy"**

Individuals or legal persons who access and use the transacted assets, resources, time, skills and capital.

Please indicate your role in the collaborative economy

- ☐ Provider or association representing providers
- ☐ Traditional provider or association representing traditional providers
- ☐ Platform or association representing platforms
- ☐ Public authority
- ☐ User or consumer association

Which are the main risks and challenges associated with the growth of the collaborative economy and what are the obstacles which could hamper its growth and accessibility? Please rate from 1 to 5 according to their importance (1 – not important; 5 – very important).

- Not sufficiently adapted regulatory framework

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

- Uncertainty for providers on their rights and obligations

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

- Uncertainty for users about their rights and obligations

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

- Weakening of employment and social rights for employees/workers

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

- Non-compliance with health and safety standards and regulations

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

- Rise in undeclared work and the black economy

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

- Opposition from traditional providers

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

- Uncertainty related to the protection of personal data

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

- Insufficient funding for start-ups

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

- Other, please explain



How do you consider the surge of the collaborative economy will impact on the different forms of employment (self-employment, free lancers, shared workers, economically dependent workers, tele-workers etc) and the creation of jobs?

- ☐ Positively across sectors
- ☐ Varies depending on the sector
- ☐ Varies depending on each case
- ☐ Varies according to the national employment laws
- ☐ Negatively across sectors
- ☐ Other

Do you see any obstacle to the development and scaling-up of collaborative economy across borders in Europe and/or to the emergence of European market leaders?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you see a need for action at European Union level specifically to promote the collaborative economy, and to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in its context?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What action is necessary regarding the current regulatory environment at the level of the EU, including the Services Directive, the E-commerce Directive and the EU legislation on consumer protection law?

- ☐ No change is required
- ☐ New rules for the collaborative economy are required
- ☐ More guidance and better information on the application of the existing rules is required
- ☐ I don't know what is the current regulatory environment

## Submission of questionnaire

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End of public consultation

### Background Documents

BG\_Въведение (/eusurvey/files/17798068-07b6-4cfb-8c80-a8e6a4f75e29)

BG\_Декларация за поверителност (/eusurvey/files/0b5a7e6a-5c26-47ca-b263-9ece4aa566ca)

CS\_Prohlášení o ochraně osobních údajů (/eusurvey/files/a93fa8dd-757e-421e-81f9-e1c9bca745af)

CS\_Úvod (/eusurvey/files/af54c429-c5bf-482f-8525-c156be285051)

DA\_Databeskyttelseserklæring (/eusurvey/files/5dd2c272-17fa-47f4-b0c7-2c207a86235f)

DA\_Introduktion (/eusurvey/files/05c0d888-2d35-4e19-a314-65e8092597d6)

DE\_Datenschutzerklärung (/eusurvey/files/b5e037cf-0350-40c3-b803-04f6357f9603)

DE\_Einleitung (/eusurvey/files/300a2e87-e030-422a-b678-33fe2c7520a6)

EL\_Δήλωση περί απορρήτου (/eusurvey/files/b408fd27-c292-4fc0-9c2d-fd70c74062c4)

EL\_Εισαγωγή (/eusurvey/files/0be38358-a600-4568-bfd0-fd9697b1810f)

EN\_Background Information (/eusurvey/files/0873ffeb-56b2-40d7-bf56-5aadb176c3c)

EN\_Privacy Statement (/eusurvey/files/8861750d-baa1-4113-a832-f8a5454501b5)

ES\_Declaración de confidencialidad (/eusurvey/files/edd31f1e-fe9d-493a-af5e-7a7c793295a9)

ES\_Introducción (/eusurvey/files/600be540-eef2-4bde-bd3a-436360015845)

ET\_Privaatsusteave (/eusurvey/files/294d2e58-3a3d-4e32-905f-74e8b376c5e6)

ET\_Sissejuhatus (/eusurvey/files/4bc0f8b9-febc-478a-b828-b1032dc0117f)

FI\_Johdanto (/eusurvey/files/a971b6fb-94d1-442c-8ad7-41a8e973f2d5)

FI\_Tietosuojaseloste (/eusurvey/files/28a1f27e-3a8e-41f3-ae27-201e29134555)

FR\_Déclaration relative à la protection de la vie privée (/eusurvey/files/1341b7cb-38e5-4b81-b3bc-bd0d5893d29)

FR\_Introduction (/eusurvey/files/308a1cf7-5e78-469c-996a-372b33a1992b)

HR\_Izjava o zaštiti osobnih podataka (/eusurvey/files/618120e1-286a-45d4-bbbd-2493d71617fb)

HR\_Uvod (/eusurvey/files/6bfc9d48-cd5c-4603-9c68-5c45989ce864)

HU\_Adatvédelmi nyilatkozat (/eusurvey/files/76f442e6-3e2d-4af3-acce-5efe8f74932b)

HU\_Bevezetés (/eusurvey/files/3ea8491d-429d-4c8f-be30-82db40fa59c5)

IT\_Informativa sulla privacy (/eusurvey/files/e2eb5a94-9e5e-4391-a8e3-35f9e151310b)

IT\_Introduzione (/eusurvey/files/aa3bf020-9060-43ac-b92b-2ab2b6e41ba8)

LT\_Pareiškimas apie privatumo apsaugą (/eusurvey/files/ab30fabd-4c4e-42bc-85c5-5ee75f45805d)

LT\_Ivadas (/eusurvey/files/d5a34e68-4710-488a-8aa1-d3b39765f624)

LV\_Ievads (/eusurvey/files/3a9bd2b1-7828-4f0e-97f1-d87cf87b7af1)

LV\_Konfidencialitātes paziņojums (/eusurvey/files/7156fdc0-b876-4f73-a670-d97c92e6f464)

MT\_Dikjarazzjoni ta' Privatezza (/eusurvey/files/03139a3f-7b5f-42c0-9d2f-53837c6df306)

MT\_Introduzzjoni (/eusurvey/files/ceb27908-207c-40cf-828a-6cf193731cdf)

NL\_Inleiding (/eusurvey/files/ca756d80-8c02-43e1-9704-3148a13c8503)

NL\_Privacyverklaring (/eusurvey/files/83d9394e-b179-442f-8a1b-41514ad072df)

PL\_Oświadczenie o ochronie prywatności (/eusurvey/files/15612e0b-807d-4c6e-af1c-d65fe4ec9ddb)

PL\_Wprowadzenie (/eusurvey/files/df9e1828-bbd0-4e4a-90bb-ec45a8bf46da)

PT\_Declaração de privacidade (/eusurvey/files/50a6e820-91bc-4531-9a0f-47b3685753d7)

PT\_Introdução (/eusurvey/files/003979c0-5277-41e9-8092-2de66d57ca00)

RO\_Declarație de confidențialitate (/eusurvey/files/25c135c6-ce01-4081-a83e-53e86086797e)

RO\_Introducere (/eusurvey/files/4334379b-e465-43a5-a944-8602090b0bf5)

SK\_Vyhlasenie o ochrane osobných údajov (/eusurvey/files/7fab071c-85f9-47eb-aaa9-949f2239701d)

SK\_Úvod (/eusurvey/files/e45df825-5e71-4172-b2ec-e07789cc3966)

SL\_Izjava o varstvu osebnih podatkov (/eusurvey/files/498ec1f0-3405-4454-9aa6-40607efe118f)

SL\_Uvod (/eusurvey/files/1b0b239a-630d-4d36-a92f-d4b758d41ddc)

SV\_Inledning (/eusurvey/files/e9111c5b-4637-4ea1-b235-ece85ef8fe1a)

SV\_Regler för skydd av personuppgifter (/eusurvey/files/0d8275b2-8344-4895-8c09-51d075671061)

