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### **New EU rules for platforms and businesses: a first step towards fairer online markets**

The European Commission today publishes a proposal which would oblige online platforms to be more transparent with the companies offering their services on them. BEUC welcomes this initiative which – even though it targets the relationship between companies – should make e-commerce fairer for business and thus better for consumers.

Many companies nowadays rely on app stores (e.g. Google Play or AppStore) or booking and review websites (e.g. Booking.com or Tripadvisor) to reach consumers. Unfair business practices by platforms can harm competition and restrict choice for consumers.

Monique Goyens, Director General of The European Consumer Organisation, commented:

“To get access to digital markets companies increasingly rely on the intermediation of big, powerful platforms. If unchecked, these platforms can distort the market through unfair trading practices. Consumers eventually bear the cost of such unfair practices and there should be rules to stop them.

“The EU should go a step further than only demanding platforms to be more transparent. Being transparent about unfair and discriminatory practices does not correct what is wrong. Platforms should not be allowed to apply tactics that make it more difficult for companies to reach consumers or lead to higher prices.

“Platforms should not hide behind their algorithms when ranking products, services and information on their e-commerce sites or search engines. Companies and consumers have a right to know how they rank for instance hotel offers or search results.”

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