

Google / DG Comp antitrust investigation 25.04.13

BEUC reaction

“The crux here is ensuring fair and non-discriminatory choices for EU consumers while eradicating the current anti-competitive behaviour in what is essentially a monopoly market. Our initial reaction is one of disappointment as we do not think today’s proposals can credibly achieve these targets.

“Labelling results will do little or indeed nothing to prevent Google from manipulating search results and discriminating against competing services. It may even shepherd consumers towards clicking on Google services now highlighted in a frame. Labelling should not be the sole solution. Infringements of competition rules call for strong and rigorous structural remedies where needed, going beyond the halfway house of consumer information. Labelling an infringement of competition law doesn’t prevent it being an infringement.

“The proposal to display links to three rival specialised services raises the natural question of who decides the promotional criteria. If that is Google, it leaves too much discretion in their lap while most importantly, not solving the problem of non-discriminatory choices for consumers.

“We will of course examine this in the closest of detail and present our analysis to the Commission. We hope we can iron out an improved end-result.”

BEUC has recently published its proposed remedies to the problems which you can view [here](#).