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Designation of gatekeepers set to bring more choice to consumers in digital markets

Today's [designation](#) of which tech companies legally constitute 'gatekeepers' under the Digital Markets Act should help to bring about more choice and fairer online services for consumers.

It is hoped that companies designated as gatekeepers – which need to comply with the new rules within six months – will be prevented from stifling innovative competitors or using unfair business practices, for example, by:

- Giving consumers genuine choice about which **apps** they want to use rather than allowing Big Tech to steer consumers to their own products. For example, consumers will have to be shown a **choice screen** for search engines and browsers so they can make a meaningful choice when they use their devices.
- Preventing Big Tech gatekeepers from **combining personal data** of users collected through their core platform services with data collected from other sources, unless end users have given their consent and only after having been offered a less privacy-intrusive alternative. For example, Meta will be unable to combine data between its Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp services without obtaining consumers' consent. If they refuse, then Meta cannot ask them to consent again for one year.
- Granting consumers the possibility to **exchange instant messages with somebody on another instant messaging service**, for example WhatsApp users with people on another service, if WhatsApp's rivals decide to use this interoperability opportunity.

Ursula Pachi, Deputy Director General of The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), said: "Today is an important step towards making digital markets work better for consumers. For too long, it has been easy for tech giants to game markets to the detriment of consumers who have not been able to easily access alternatives to Big Tech.

"Consumers are looking forward to seeing real changes in the way gatekeepers operate in Europe and, if they do not comply, expect the Commission to take a strong stance in enforcing the new law. There will also be the possibility for consumers to group together and seek redress from a company if it breaches the rules of the Digital Markets Act, which is a great development."