

Contact: Sébastien Pant press@beuc.eu | Tel: +32 (0)4 70 13 47 38

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Consumer groups plead before EU Court that Google abused its dominance in Android case

The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) represented the interests of consumers at a hearing today at the Court of Justice of the European Union to defend the [2022 General Court ruling](#) (known as the Google Android case) which found that Google had broken European competition law.

In the 2022 ruling, the General Court largely confirmed the European Commission's [July 2018 antitrust decision against Google](#) that the tech giant had abused its dominance in general internet search services and Android-related markets to strengthen the dominance of Google's search engine.

At the hearing, BEUC argued that Google's agreements with phone manufacturers to make Google Search the pre-installed search engine on those mobile devices, combined with status quo bias, deterred users from turning to competing apps. De facto, Google's agreements excluded its competitors and consolidated and perpetuated Google's market dominance in general internet search services.

The European Court of Justice will now rule on Google's appeal to overturn the 2022 General Court ruling.

Agustín Reyna, Director General of the European Consumer Organisation (BEUC), said:

"Google has itself recognised that 'most users just use what comes on the device'. That is why these agreements with manufacturers were so damaging – they effectively shut out rival search engines from offering their services to consumers and cemented Google's dominance in search services. We believe that the European Court of Justice should reject Google's appeal, confirm that the tech giant broke EU competition law, and put an end to this case which has dragged on for so long."

Background

BEUC contributed to the Commission's Google Android investigation as an interested third party and intervened at the General Court in support of the Commission's July 2018 antitrust decision.

The General Court ruled that the pre-installation conditions Google imposed on manufacturers of mobile devices, requiring manufacturers to pre-install the Google search app and browser app (Chrome) as a condition for licensing Google's app store (the Play Store), were indeed abusive and in breach of EU antitrust rules on abuse of a dominant market position.

In addition, the General Court upheld the Commission's decision that Google illegally abused its dominant market position by imposing restrictions on manufacturers wishing to pre-install Google apps that prevented them from selling even a single smart mobile device running on alternative versions of Android that were not approved by Google.