

Commercial radio reacts to the publication of the Digital Markets Act (DMA) and Digital Services Act (DSA) proposals

Commercial radios from across Europe welcome the European Commission's ambition to set strong rules for the digital world for the next decade. With these proposals for a Digital Markets Act (DMA) and for a Digital Services Act (DSA), we hope to see commercial radio's priorities at the heart of the European policymakers' efforts.

Radio content is a mix of music, news, entertainment and talk that brings great economic, societal and cultural value to a wide variety of Europeans on a local and national level. To remain relevant to its listeners, commercial radio has innovated, developed its content and presence in an extremely competitive digital environment. In addition to linear radio broadcasting (FM, AM and DAB), radio listeners can now access the radio content of their choice, and benefit from a personalised listening experience, thanks to the growing popularity of voice enabled connected listening platforms, including smart speakers, tablets, and in-car infotainment systems. As a result, most radio stations, if not all, are today accessible on these smart devices and voice platforms.

AER welcomes the Commission's intention, with these proposals, to make the online world a safer and fairer environment, for users and businesses alike, by updating the existing e-commerce and P2B (Platform-to-Business) frameworks and subjecting large online platforms in a gatekeeping position to ex ante regulation.

Over recent years there has been a rapid rise in listening to radio (and audio) over devices connected to the internet. This has presented an opportunity to radio broadcasters in ensuring radio is available to access by listeners wherever and whenever they wish. But at the same time, increasing distribution on connected devices like smart speakers presents potential threats to radio broadcasters as their services are mediated through powerful platform operators who are 'gatekeepers' to the audiences through their control of the platform and devices.

AER supports the Commission's stated ambition of "fairer and more open digital markets for everyone" and its intention to "prohibit unfair conditions imposed by online platforms that have become or are expected to become gatekeepers". Indeed, Europe's commercial radio sector has been calling upon the Commission to ensure that none of the risks associated with gatekeepers arises, so that listeners can continue to discover and enjoy unfettered access, free at the point of use, to radio over the long term. We will be reviewing the Commission's proposals in this light, and making proposals to this effect, should the Commission's proposals not cater sufficiently to the radio industry and our listeners' needs.

The case of intervention is not just economic, it is also cultural and societal. Radio delivers a broad range of public value to listeners, including through its output of trusted local and national news bulletins that reach an audience of hundreds of millions of listeners on a daily basis, at a time when fake news is rife on social media networks. Radio is consistently found to be among the most trusted sources of news and information, and in so doing plays a key role in supporting media pluralism in Europe. Radio is also a source of companionship (for example supporting people who may be lonely or feel isolated), entertainment and music discovery (providing cultural enrichment), and an amplifier of charitable causes and issues of major importance to society.

We look forward to continuing our dialogue with the EU Institutions on the DSA and DMA, to ensure that commercial radio can continue to support media plurality and improve social cohesion through the promotion of shared cultural and democratic values, thanks to a fit for purpose EU framework that ensures that none of the risks associated with gatekeepers arises.

[AER response to the consultation on the Digital Services Act.](#)

[AER's annex to the submission to the Digital Services Act package public consultation.](#)

[AER position on the Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act. Executive summary of the submission to the European Commission consultation.](#)

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