

PRESS RELEASE

Recommendation on Tackling Illegal Content: A Missed Opportunity for Evidence-Based Policy Making

Brussels, March 1, 2018 EDiMA* is dismayed by the European Commission's decision not to engage in crucial dialogues and fact-finding discussions with stakeholders before issuing the Recommendation on Tackling Illegal Content Online today, and regrets that it is a missed opportunity for valuable evidence-based policy making.

EDiMA acknowledges the importance of these issues but feels the need to highlight the fact that the industry has been rising to the challenge. Overall success in tackling terrorism both online and offline is dependent on partnership and collaboration, and our sector has shown leadership in this regard through the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism and wishes to highlight that valuable collaboration is underway via the Hash Sharing Database. Our sector accepts the urgency but needs to balance the responsibility to protect users while upholding fundamental rights – a one-hour turn-around time in such cases could harm the effectiveness of service providers' take-down systems rather than help.

Whereas a harmonised approach at EU level on notice and action procedures would be welcome, EDiMA fails to see how the arbitrary Recommendation published by the European Commission, without due consideration of the types of content; the context and impact of the obligation on other regulatory issues; and, the feasibility of applying such broad recommendations by different kinds of service providers can be seen as a positive step forward.

EDiMA will continue to engage with the stakeholder community at large in the coming months to seek a pragmatic and workable way to tackle illegal content online.

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* EDiMA is the European trade association representing online platforms and other innovative businesses. It is an alliance of new media and Internet companies whose members include Airbnb, Allegro, Amazon EU, Apple, eBay, Expedia, Facebook, Google, King, Microsoft, Mozilla, Oath, OLX, TripAdvisor, Twitter, Veon Digital and Yelp. EDiMA's members provide Internet and new media platforms offering European consumers a wide range of online services, including e-content, media, e-commerce, communications and information/search services.