



Commission preliminarily finds the addictive design of Instagram and Facebook in breach of the Digital Services Act

Brussels, 10 July 2026

Today, the European Commission preliminarily found Meta in breach of [the Digital Services Act](#) for the addictive design of Instagram and Facebook. The investigation focuses on features such as infinite scroll, autoplay, push notifications, and the platforms' highly personalised recommender systems.

Risk assessment

The Commission's investigation indicates that Meta did not adequately assess the risks of its addictive design on the physical and mental wellbeing of users, including minors and vulnerable adults.

For example, Meta did not consider certain design features of Instagram and Facebook, such as highly personalised recommendations, autoplay and infinite scroll, which constantly show users new content. These features fuel the user's urge to keep scrolling and shift the brain into 'autopilot mode', contributing to unhealthy habits and compulsive use.

Moreover, Meta disregarded available information about the time minors spend on Instagram or Facebook at night and how the optimisation of its different formats - such as reels and stories - could lead to excessive or compulsive use of the services.

Risk mitigation measures

Evidence also shows that Meta's current mitigation measures failed to effectively tackle the risks stemming from its addictive design.

For example, Instagram's and Facebook's time management tools, including those activated by default for teens, can be easily dismissed and do not lead to a meaningful reduction and control of the usage of the service.

Moreover, the Commission considers that Meta's parental controls are only effective if parents and guardians possess adequate technical expertise, as well as devote effort and time to understand them effectively. This undermines the efficiency of such measures in addressing the inherent risks posed by Instagram and Facebook's addictive design.

Meta's awareness-raising measures, such as tips and links to mental health resources available via a separate 'safety centre' page, do not seem to sufficiently mitigate the risk of addictive design on Facebook and Instagram.

At this stage of the investigation, the Commission considers that Meta needs to implement design changes to both Instagram and Facebook. For instance, by disabling key addictive features such as 'autoplay' and 'infinite scroll' by default, implementing effective 'screen time breaks', and adapting its recommender system to make it less engagement-oriented.

These preliminary findings do not prejudice the final outcome of the investigation.

Next steps

Meta now has the possibility to exercise its right to defence. It may examine the documents in the Commission's investigation files and reply in writing to the Commission's preliminary findings. In parallel, the European Board for Digital Services will be consulted.

If the Commission's views are ultimately confirmed, the Commission may issue a non-compliance decision, which can trigger a fine proportionate to the nature, gravity, recurrence and duration of the infringement, capped at 6% of the total worldwide annual turnover of the provider.

Background

The Commission's preliminary findings today are part of its [formal proceedings to investigate Meta's](#) compliance with the Digital Services Act, launched on 16 May 2024.

The Commission's preliminary views are based on an in-depth investigation that included an analysis of Meta's risk assessments reports, internal data and documents and Meta's responses to multiple requests for information, a review of the extensive scientific research on this topic, and interviews with experts in multiple fields, including behavioural addiction.

This investigation also covers concerns about the age assurance measures Meta has put in place for minors below 13 years old, for which [preliminary findings were adopted](#) on 29 April 2026. Separately, the Commission continues its investigation into so-called 'rabbit hole' effects caused by the design of Facebook's and Instagram's recommender systems, which may exploit minors' vulnerabilities and inexperience.

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Quote(s):

"Protecting the physical and mental health of Europeans must be a priority for social media platforms. The Digital Services Act provides a clear framework to hold platforms accountable for the addictive design and effects of their services. We are fully committed to enforcing our legislation in Europe."

Henna Virkkunen, Executive Vice-President for Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy - 10/07/2026

Press contacts:

[Thomas REGNIER](#) (+32 2 29 91099)

[Patricia POROPAT](#) (+32 2 29 80485)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)