

# Compliance & Risk

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## Google to pay €2.4bn in fines for abuse of search dominance

Brussels has hit Google with an antitrust fine for abusing its dominance in search, a decision with potentially far-reaching implications for both the technology sector and already-strained transatlantic relations.

The European Commission ended its seven-year anti-trust investigation into Google in July 2017, concluding that the global search group had abused its near-monopoly in online search to "give illegal advantage" to its own shopping service.

The EU's competition commissioner, Margrethe

Vestager, said Google had "denied other companies the chance to compete" and left consumers without "genuine choice", and as a result the Commission has imposed a fine of €2.42bn in respect of the abuse.

The Commission has ordered Google to make changes to its working methods within 90 days and to "refrain from any measure that has the same or an equivalent object or effect".

The Google investigation is one of the most complex and politically-charged ever undertaken

by the Commission, and the ruling sets out a new type of anti-competitive behaviour, stipulating that companies with a dominant market share may not favour their own related products or services.

The Commission found that Google systematically put its own in-house service in first place, and demoted rival comparison shopping services in search results, so "even the most highly ranked rival service appears on average only on page four of Google's search results".

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## New data protection rules for UK confirmed in Queen's Speech

The proposed new Data Protection Bill which will implement plans described in the Conservative Party manifesto ahead of the UK general election in June 2017, was highlighted in the Queen's speech, with the Queen saying that the UK would retain its "world-class" data protection regime.

The new bill will replace the Data Protection Act 1998 and, amongst other things, will give young

people the right to demand that social networks delete any personal data they had shared prior to reaching the age of 18.

In a document further detailing its plans, the government said its key priorities for the new bill are ensuring data protection rules are "suitable for the digital age"; empowering individuals to have more control over their personal data; giv-

ing people the "right to be forgotten" when they no longer want a company to process their data - provided there are no legitimate grounds for a company retaining the data; modernising data processing procedures for law enforcement agencies; and allowing police and other authorities to "continue to exchange information quickly and easily with international

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