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Event | 25.10.2023 | 19:00 - 20:30

Reclaiming our digital future

Shedding light on Big Tech lobbying in the European Parliament

With the EP's mandate coming to an end in 2024, many crucial digital policy files are currently in their finishing stages. Many of them have an impact on our democracies. As the influence of big tech companies onalmost all aspects of our lives has brought challenges for our societies, EU policymaking has increasingly aimed at tackling their monopolistic business model. Unfortunately, big tech has often had a negative impact on consumer protection, workers' rights, freedom of expression or our democracy, which is why the EU has reacted with proposals targeting some of the biggest issues in these areas.

This event will shed light on lobbying practices and allow interested people from the "outside" to learn more about how lobbying has taken place and how it has affected political work during this EP mandate. MEPs from the Greens/EFA group, together with selected participants from civil society, will share anecdotes from their work on digital policy files and, in general, on how big tech lobbying works in Brussels. Finally, potential pathways to tackle external private influence on the EP work in digital policy will be discussed.

Register now to follow the event – either remotely or in person at the EU Parliament! Snacks and drinks will be provided.

When: 25.10.2023 | 19:00 - 20:30
Where: Room SPAAK 6B1, EU Parliament, Rue Wiertz 60, Brussels (the event will also be online livestreamed)

Keynote message by:

- Cory Doctorow (Special Advisor at Electronic Frontier Foundation)

Panelists:

- Bram Vranken (Researcher and campaigner at Corporate Europe Observatory)
- Claire Fernandez (Executive Director at EDRi)
- Clara Helming (Senior advocacy & policy manager at AlgorithmWatch)
- Max Bank (Campaigner at Lobby Control)

- Tanya O'Carrol (Senior Fellow at Fox Glove)

Moderation:

- Alexandra Geese & Kim Van Sparrentak (MEPs Greens/EFA)

Background

In the last couple of months (and years), there has been not only significant backlash of (big) tech companies against some of the digital policy related proposals but also from numerous trade associations, think tanks and not so independent academics that oftentimes become secondary channels of big tech influence on digital files. Ultimately, this has led to an unprecedented level of external lobbying on digital dossiers. As confirmed by a recent report published by Corporate Europe Observatory and Lobby control, tech companies are now spending €113m a year to influence EU decision-making, representing a significant increase of 16.5% since 2021. Specifically, Meta, Apple, Google, and Microsoft are among the top six lobby spenders in Brussels.

These trends highlight the worrying level of private sector influence on digital policymaking at the EU-level and the urgent need for stricter regulations in the lobby sector to tackle unbalanced lobbying in digital policy making.

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Responsible MEPs



Patrick Breyer

Member



Alexandra Geese

Member



Kim Van Sparrentak

Vice-President

Contact person



Nina Walch

Stakeholder Engagement Officer

Venue

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Room SPAAK 6B1

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