
Digital industry: strong pressure on EU institutions. 97 million a year for lobbying. Google and Facebook lead the pack

The digital industry spends almost €100 million on lobbying in Brussels. The goal is to influence the EU institutions' new digital legislation. These are the findings of a report by Corporate Europe Observatory and Lobby Control. Indeed, the two NGOs denounce the Big Tech's growing pressure on two EU regulations - the Digital Services Act (DSA) and the Digital Market Act (DMA). According to the report, tech is the "biggest lobby sector" in Brussels, "spending, ahead of pharma, fossil fuels, finance, or chemicals". The data shows that a network of 612 companies, think tanks and associations is "lobbying the EU's digital economy policies". Together, these groups spend over €97 million annually lobbying the EU institutions. Almost a third of the total tech lobby spending (€32 million) is attributable to 10 tech giants: Vodafone, Qualcomm, Intel, IBM, Amazon, Huawei, Apple, Microsoft, Facebook and Google. At least 20% of all the tech companies lobbying the EU are based in the US. Less than 1% are based in China or Hong Kong. "Chinese firms have so far not invested in EU lobbying quite as heavily as their US counterparts", the report reads. "Commission high-level officials held 270 meetings since November 2019", 75 percent of which "were with industry lobbyists". "Google and Facebook led the pack in terms of numbers of meetings".

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