

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000971/26
to the Commission**

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(9 March 2026)

Subject: Planned restrictions on the distribution of apps on mobile devices running the Android operating system

According to publicly available information ⁽¹⁾, Google plans to introduce new rules for devices running Android from September 2026, according to which only apps from developers who have undergone an identity verification process directly through Google can be installed. This requirement is set to apply not only to the Google Play store, but also to alternative app stores and manual app installation.

Google is justifying this move as an effort to increase user safety and limit the spread of malicious software. However, it is also raising concerns among developers, especially in the open-source community, that it could limit the distribution of apps outside the Google ecosystem and strengthen Google's position in the mobile operating system market.

This raises questions about the compatibility of such measures with EU competition rules and the obligations arising from the Digital Markets Act.

1. In the Commission's view, do Google's proposed measures constitute a breach of EU rules by failing to comply with the Digital Markets Act and EU provisions on competition?
2. Does the Commission feel that requiring developers to undergo mandatory verification for the installation of any apps on certified Android devices may lead to restrictions on the distribution of apps beyond the Google platform and limit independent or open-source developers' ability to access the market?

Submitted: 9.3.2026

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Ribera on behalf of the European Commission
(15 April 2026)

The Commission is aware of Google's announcement to introduce this verification process starting from September 2026 in some jurisdictions (not including the EU based on publicly available information).

The Commission understands that, as a result of this process, Android will require that all applications (apps) are registered by verified developers in order to be installed on certified Android devices.

The Commission is also aware of public campaigns such as 'Keep Android Open' which have emerged in reaction to Google's announcement.

Article 6(4) of the Digital Markets Act (DMA) ⁽¹⁾ obliges gatekeepers like Alphabet to allow and technically enable the effective distribution of apps on their operating system through third party app stores or the web.

At the same time, the DMA also permits Google to introduce strictly necessary and proportionate measures to ensure that third-party software apps or app stores do not endanger the integrity of the hardware or operating system, provided that such measures are duly justified by Alphabet.

The Commission is actively engaged in a regulatory dialogue with Alphabet concerning Article 6(4) DMA and is diligently monitoring Alphabet's compliance with the relevant legal framework to ensure that apps, including open-source apps, can be effectively distributed on Android outside Google Play.

¹ https://www.theregister.com/2025/08/26/android_developer_verification_sideloading/.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/1925/oj/eng>.