Commission fines AliExpress €550 million for breaching the Digital Services Act

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Today, the European Commission fined AliExpress €550 million for breaching its obligations under the Digital Services Act (DSA) to diligently assess and mitigate risks relating to the sale of illegal, unsafe or counterfeit products on its e-commerce platform. The Commission has ordered the platform to take action.

Failure to diligently assess risks

AliExpress fell short of its obligation under the DSA to diligently assess the risk of dissemination of illegal, unsafe, or counterfeit products through its services in multiple ways:

- **AliExpress did not properly evaluate whether it had sufficient staff to review potentially illegal products.** The company overestimated the effectiveness of its system in detecting and removing illegal products. Therefore, AliExpress failed to realistically take into account the disproportion between the number of human moderators and their workload.
- **AliExpress inadequately assessed how its recommender and advertising systems exacerbate the spread of illegal products**. Testing by the Commission's services showed that many illegal products were recommended or advertised to consumers before they were effectively removed.
- **AliExpress lacked quantitative metrics in its assessment.** AliExpress relied only on one quantitative indicator, that, however, did not properly measure how well its moderation system prevented the risk of illegal products appearing or reappearing in similar forms. This finding is also supported by testing by the Commission's services, which showed that a high volume of illegal products continued to circulate despite AliExpress' moderation efforts.

Failure to mitigate identified systemic risks

AliExpress failed to take effective measures to reduce the risk of dissemination of illegal products. The Commission identified, in particular, the following shortcomings:

- **AliExpress' system to detect illegal products did not work properly.** Many illegal products, from counterfeit products to unsafe toys and dangerous cosmetics, circulated on the platform and, even if detected, remained online for multiple weeks.
- **AliExpress did not properly enforce its penalty policy for traders selling illegal products.** The penalty policy was not adequately implemented and stores selling illegal products were able to remain active on AliExpress, despite being penalised.
- **AliExpress' product compliance checks could be easily circumvented through mis-categorisation of products.** AliExpress allocated insufficient staff to verify whether products are correctly categorised, and the controls put in place failed to detect the

mis-categorised products before publication. Therefore, malicious traders intentionally placed products in the wrong category to benefit from more flexible requirements, allowing non-compliant products to circulate freely on the platform.

- **AliExpress failed to adequately prevent the spread of counterfeit products.** Counterfeit products represent a significant risk on AliExpress. In addition to potential consequences for consumers' rights, sellers of such products undercut legitimate businesses that invest in design, safety testing, and innovation, forcing them to compete with products that bypass these investments. AliExpress' mandatory ‘brand authorisation' system – intended to prevent counterfeit sales – proved ineffective and understaffed. Therefore, traders easily bypassed this system and published many products that were only later removed for being counterfeit.

The fine issued today was calculated taking into account the nature of the infringements, their gravity in terms of affected EU users, and their duration, which ran at least until June 2025, when the Commission issued preliminary findings against AliExpress. Failing to conduct proper risk assessments and to effectively mitigate systemic risks constitute particularly serious infringements of the DSA.

However, in calculating the fine, the Commission also took into account mitigating circumstances that operate in favour of AliExpress, such as the novelty of the Digital Services Act.

Next steps

As required by the DSA, AliExpress now has until 20 October 2026 to submit an action plan to the Commission. The plan must set out measures to remedy the breach of its obligations to assess and mitigate systemic risks. The European Board for Digital Services will have one month from the receipt of the plan to issue its opinion. The Commission will then have a further month to adopt its final decision and set a reasonable period for implementation.

Failure to comply with the non-compliance decision may lead to periodic penalty payments. The Commission continues to engage with AliExpress to ensure compliance with the decision and with the DSA more generally.

Background

On 14 March 2024, the Commission opened formal proceedings to assess whether AliExpress may have breached the Digital Services Act in areas covering the assessment and mitigation of risks, content moderation and the internal complaint handling mechanism, the transparency of advertising and recommender systems, the traceability of traders and data access for researchers.

On 18 June 2025, the Commission accepted and made binding a series of commitments offered by AliExpress in order to address the majority of the concerns at the basis of the opening of the investigation, such as the notice and action mechanism, the platform's transparency on advertising and recommender systems. On the same day, the Commission adopted its preliminary findings, reaching a preliminary conclusion of non-compliance for the assessment and mitigation of systemic risks of dissemination of illegal products, two grievances not covered by the commitments.

The non-compliance decision issued today is based, amongst others, on AliExpress' 2023 and 2024 risk assessment reports; additional data provided by the platform, in particular in reply to the Commission's formal requests for information on 6 November 2023 and 18 January 2024; information shared by third parties; as well as the Commission's own investigative actions.