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# The digital levy

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

#### Introduction

The objective of the initiative is to introduce a measure that allows for a fairer contribution from companies that operate in the digital sector, in order to support the economic recovery and provide a more stable medium-term outlook.

The questionnaire should take about 30 minutes to complete. The questionnaire is accessible in English in a first instance, but will be made available in all official EU languages shortly. You can submit your reply in any of the official EU languages.

Some of the questions are conditional on the type of respondent you represent, so you might not see all the questions and the numbering will seem interrupted. This is normal.

In addition to the introduction, the consultation is structured as follows:

- The 2nd section presents some general background information on the digital economy.
- The 3rd part of the questionnaire asks for some background information about you, the respondent. This is in order to better understand your perspective.
- The 4th part covers the current international taxation framework and its shortcomings.
- The 5th part covers possible solutions to address those shortcomings.
- The final section allows you to upload a position paper or any kind of document that you think is relevant to better explain your views.

#### Context

The European Commission has set out strategic objectives on how to shape Europe's digital future and to help ensure that Europe is fit for the Digital Age. Technological advancements and digitalisation are profoundly changing the way we work, do business, how people travel, communicate and relate. These changes give rise to innovation, growth, and new business models, but also to important challenges. The COVID crisis has been a catalyst and accelerator of change, hastening the transition towards a more digital world and triggering important changes in behaviour that could have lasting effects.

Against this backdrop, the EU needs a modern, stable regulatory and tax framework to appropriately address the developments and challenges of the digital economy. Recently, the Commission adopted the <u>Digital Services Act package</u>, which aims at better protecting consumers and their fundamental rights online, and at promoting fairer and more open digital markets for everyone. This new proposal covers digital

services, including social media, online market places, and other online platforms that operate in the EU. While digitalisation can increase productivity and consumer welfare, and should thus be fostered and nurtured, it is also of paramount importance to ensure that digital companies contribute their fair share to society, since a prolonged unequal distribution of rights and responsibilities undermines the social contract.

Work is ongoing at the G20 and OECD level to find a global solution that can support a reform of the international corporate tax framework in order to address some of the challenges related to the digitalisation of the economy. A number of elements remain to be agreed, but there are indications that the OECD agreement will focus on large, multinational enterprise groups and a limited number of pre-defined activities linked to digitalisation. In the absence of a global agreement, some Member States have in the meantime introduced certain temporary tax measures affecting businesses that are part of the digital economy.

In its conclusions of 21 July 2020, and in view of a need to support the EU's borrowing and repayment capacity, the European Council tasked the Commission with putting forward proposals for additional own resources. The digital levy is one of them. The new initiative will help address the issue of fair taxation related to the digitalisation of the economy but will not interfere with the ongoing work at G20 and OECD level on a reform of the international corporate tax framework.

The main objective of the initiative is to come forward with a measure that allows for a fairer contribution from the companies that operate in the digital sphere for the purposes of the recovery and to support a more stable medium-term outlook. Modernising tax rules to better fit current circumstances and the expected increase in digitalisation should ensure that the measure fits the reality of the digital economy better and addresses future developments head on, limiting the risk of short-term solutions and distortions across businesses of different types and origins.

The initiative will be designed in a way that is consistent with the Digital Services Act package and the Commission's digital strategy for ensuring a fair and competitive digital economy, as announced in the Communication 'Shaping Europe's digital future'.

## About you

*1 Language of my contribution	
Bulgarian	
Croatian	
Czech	
Danish	
Dutch	
English	
Estonian	

	Greek
0	Hungarian
0	Irish
0	Italian
0	Latvian
0	Lithuanian
0	Maltese
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0	Portuguese
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0	Company/business organisation
0	Consumer organisation
0	EU citizen
0	Environmental organisation
0	Non-EU citizen
	Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
0	Public authority
0	Trade union
0	Other
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5 En	nail (this won't be published)

### \*9 Organisation name

255 character(s) maximum

European Business Initiative on Taxation (EBIT)

## \*10 Organisation size

- Micro (1 to 9 employees)
- Small (10 to 49 employees)
- Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- Large (250 or more)

### 14 Transparency register number

255 character(s) maximum

Check if your organisation is on the <u>transparency register</u>. It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

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### \*15 Country of origin

Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.

Afghanistan	Djibouti	Libya	Saint Martin
Åland Islands	Dominica	Liechtenstein	Saint Pierre
			and Miquelon
Albania	Dominican	Lithuania	Saint Vincent
	Republic		and the
			Grenadines
Algeria	Ecuador	Luxembourg	Samoa
American	Egypt	Macau	San Marino
Samoa			
Andorra	El Salvador	Madagascar	São Tomé and
			Príncipe
Angola	Equatorial	Malawi	Saudi Arabia
	Guinea		
Anguilla	Eritrea	Malaysia	Senegal
Antarctica	Estonia	Maldives	Serbia

<ul><li>Antigua and Barbuda</li></ul>	Eswatini	Mali	Seychelles
Argentina	Ethiopia	Malta	Sierra Leone
Armenia	Falkland Islands	<ul><li>Marshall</li><li>Islands</li></ul>	Singapore
Aruba	Faroe Islands	Martinique	Sint Maarten
Australia	Fiji	Mauritania	Slovakia
Austria	Finland	Mauritius	Slovenia
Azerbaijan	France	Mayotte	<ul><li>Solomon</li><li>Islands</li></ul>
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<ul><li>British Indian</li><li>Ocean Territory</li></ul>	Guinea-Bissau	Nicaragua	Thailand
British Virgin Islands	Guyana	Niger	The Gambia
Brunei	Haiti	Nigeria	Timor-Leste
Bulgaria	<ul><li>Heard Island and McDonald Islands</li></ul>	Niue	Togo
Burkina Faso	Honduras	Norfolk Island	Tokelau
Burundi	Hong Kong	<ul><li>Northern</li><li>Mariana Islands</li></ul>	Tonga
Cambodia	Hungary	North Korea	Trinidad and
Cameroon	Iceland	North	Tobago  Tunisia
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Canada	India	Norway	Turkey
© Cape Verde	<ul><li>India</li><li>Indonesia</li></ul>	Oman	<ul><li>Turkey</li><li>Turkmenistan</li></ul>
© Cayman Islands	<ul><li>Iran</li></ul>	<ul><li>Pakistan</li></ul>	Turks and
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Central African	Iraq	Palau	<ul><li>Tuvalu</li></ul>
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China	Israel	Papua New	United Arab
		Guinea	Emirates
Christmas	Italy	Paraguay	United
Island			Kingdom
Clipperton	Jamaica	Peru	United States
Cocos (Keeling)	Japan	Philippines	United States
Islands			Minor Outlying
			Islands
Colombia	Jersey	Pitcairn Islands	Uruguay
Comoros	Jordan	Poland	US Virgin
			Islands
Congo	Kazakhstan	Portugal	Uzbekistan

0	Cook Islands	Kenya	Puerto Rico		Vanuatu
0	Costa Rica	Kiribati	Qatar		Vatican City
0	Côte d'Ivoire	Kosovo	Réunion		Venezuela
0	Croatia	Kuwait	Romania		Vietnam
0	Cuba	Kyrgyzstan	Russia		Wallis and
					Futuna
0	Curaçao	Laos	Rwanda		Western
					Sahara
0	Cyprus	Latvia	Saint		Yemen
			Barthélemy		
0	Czechia	Lebanon	Saint Helena		Zambia
			Ascension and		
			Tristan da		
			Cunha		
	Democratic	Lesotho	Saint Kitts and	0	Zimbabwe
	Republic of the		Nevis		
	Congo				
	Denmark	Liberia	Saint Lucia		

The Commission will publish all contributions to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would prefer to have your details published or to remain anonymous when your contribution is published. Fo r the purpose of transparency, the type of respondent (for example, 'business association, 'consumer association', 'EU citizen') country of origin, organisation name and size, and its transparency register number, are always published. Your e-mail address will never be published. Opt in to select the privacy option that best suits you. Privacy options default based on the type of respondent selected

### \*17 Contribution publication privacy settings

The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

## Anonymous

Only organisation details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published as received. Your name will not be published. Please do not include any personal data in the contribution itself if you want to remain anonymous.

## Public

Organisation details and respondent details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published. Your name will also be published.

I agree with the personal data protection provisions

### Current problems

18 To what extent are the tax systems in the EU adapted to the challenges of a global and digital economy?

- To a great extent
- To some extent
- To a little extent
- Not at all
- Don't know

19 To what extent do you agree with the following statements on digital companies:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don' t know
Digital companies have created useful innovations and it is justified that they make large profits.	•	•	0	0	©	0
Users participate in the creation of value of digital companies, e.g. by sharing their data.	©	©	0	0	©	•
Many digital companies are emerging from the Covid-19 health crisis more profitable and with larger market shares.	0	0	•	0	0	0
Digital companies benefit from the EU single market.	0	0	•	0	0	0
Digital companies are treated differently by governments than non-digital companies of similar size.	0	0	0	•	0	0

20 To what extent do you agree with the following statements regarding taxation in the digital economy:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	l don' t know
In the digital economy some digital activities are taxed less than non-digital economic activities.	0	0	0	•	0	0
The sale of user data by digital companies should be taxed.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Many digital companies do not pay their fair share of taxes.	0	0	0	•	0	0
Tax authorities are not able to appropriately collect taxes on digital activities.	0	0	0	•	0	0

# 21 What are the most important taxation challenges that digitalisation brings **for businesses**?

Please rank from 1 to 5 (1 being the most important challenge)

	1 (most important)	2	3	4	5 (least important)
Disadvantage for traditional businesses compared to digital competitors because of a different tax treatment.	0	0	0	0	•
Uncertainty related to tax obligations when operating in different countries.	0	•	0	0	0
Uncertainty related to future taxation solutions for new business models.	0	0	•	0	0
Difficulties in identifying profits for different digital activities.	0	0	0	•	0
Other (please specify)	•	0	0	0	0

### 22 Please specify:

lack of understanding at governments/tax administrations of constantly changing business models and the fact that there is no separate digital economy: increasingly all businesses are digital

# 23 What are the most important taxation challenges that digitalisation brings **for national tax systems**?

Please rank from 1 to 5 (1 being the most important challenge)

	1 (most important)	2	3	4	5 (least important)
Companies can easily service customers across various markets, without being located or resident in those market jurisdictions.	0	0	0	0	0
Businesses acquire new sources of revenue (e.g. through gathering/exploitation of data, cloud computing, hosting, etc.) that are not properly taxed.	©	0	0	0	•
Unfair advantage of companies operating cross-border over local companies, due to increased tax-planning opportunities.	0	0	0	0	0
Difficulties to establish the tax liability of a company due to the complex value chain.	0	0	0	0	0
Other (please specify)	•	0	0	0	0

### 24 Please specify:

lack of understanding at governments/tax administrations of value creation and of constantly changing business models and the fact that there is no separate digital economy: increasingly all businesses are digital

25 There are several national approaches now to taxing digital companies. Are you aware of such measures?

0	Yes

O No

Don't know

26 For which EU countries are you aware of national approaches to the taxation of digital companies?

(Multiple choices possible)

- Austria
- Belgium
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czechia
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland

France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Netherlands
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Slovak Republic
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
7 Which measures taken by EU countries at national level to tax the digital conomy do you consider are most effective, and why?

1000 character(s) maximum

Legislation and guidance need to be clear for measures to be effective but it is too early say how it is working.

28 How do you view the effort by individual EU countries to tax the digital economy?

To what extent do you agree with the following statement:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	l don' t know
EU countries face a specific, domestic context when it comes to digital activities on their territory and should be addressing these issues at national level.	•	0	•	•	•	•

EU countries' policies would be more effective if coordinated on an EU level.	0	•	0	0	0	0
A divergence between national policies risks fragmenting the European single digital market, and making these policies less effective.	0	•	0	•	•	•

### Possible solutions

29 On what level do you think the problem of taxation of the digital economy is best solved?

Please respond by ranking options in the order of importance/appropriateness (1 being the most important/appropriate)

	1 (most important)	2	3	4	5 (least important)
Subnational level	0	0	0	0	•
National level	0	0	•	0	0
EU Level	0	•	0	0	0
Multilateral agreement involving countries beyond the EU	•	0	0	0	0
A combination of the above	0	0	0	•	0

30 Work is ongoing at the OECD and G20 to find a global consensus-based solution to the tax challenges arising from the digitalisation of the economy. One part of this discussion (Pillar 1) focuses on the reallocation of profits by expanding the taxing rights of market jurisdictions to compensate the digital activities performed remotely and directed at those market jurisdictions.

To what extent do you see the objectives of these negotiations on Pillar 1 as complementary to the objectives of the digital levy?

- Strong complementarity
- Limited complementarity
- No complementarity
- Don't know

# 31 To what extent do you think the following approaches would be useful as complementary actions to meet the objectives of this initiative?

	Very useful	Useful	Not useful	Don' t know
An increase in the current corporate income tax (top-up) for all companies conducting certain digital activities in the EU.	0	0	•	0
A new tax on revenues created by certain digital activities conducted in the EU.	0	0	•	0
A new tax on all digital business-to-business transactions conducted in the EU.	0	0	•	0

# 32 How important do you consider the following objectives of the digital levy proposal?

	Very important	Important	Not important	Don't know
To increase legal certainty for companies.	0	0	0	0
To ensure equal treatment among digital companies – both foreign and EU-based – operating in the EU.	0	0	0	•
To level the playing field between traditional companies and digital companies operating in the EU.	0	0	0	•

33 Please select from the following list the activities which you think should be considered as digital activities in the context of a legislative measure:

ii isiuc	red as digital activities in the context of a legislative measure.
Or	nline social networking services financed by advertisement or sale of user
da	ta
Or	nline social networking services financed by subscription fees
Or	nline search engines
Or	nline advertising services
■ Nu	umber-independent interpersonal communication services
Or	nline gaming financed by advertisement or sale of user data
Or	nline gaming financed by subscription fees
Sta	andardised online teaching financed by advertisement or sale of user data
Sta	andardised online teaching financed by subscription fees
Or	nline intermediation services
Or	nline intermediation platforms for accommodation
Or	nline intermediation platforms for mobility

Online intermediation platforms for utilities and communication (price
comparison platforms for gas, electricity, phone etc.)
Streaming of content (music and/or video) financed by subscription fees
Streaming of content (music and/or video) financed by advertisement
Online news outlets financed by subscription fees
Online news outlets financed by advertisement
Online sale of physical goods
Online sale of physical services (plane ticket, hotel room, cleaning lady etc.)
Online sale of software
Cloud computing services
Sale of user data
Other (please specify):

35 How important do you see the following issues in the design of the taxation measure under consideration?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	I don' t know
The definition of digital activities or digital companies, which are subject to the tax.	•	0	0	0
The type of tax envisaged (e.g. whether it would be a tax on specific activities, transactions, turnover or profits).	•	0	0	0
The ability of the tax to cover companies with residency inside and outside of the EU.	0	0	0	•
Fairness considerations, taking into account the possible impact on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), digital companies with a dominant versus weak market position, or consumers.	0	•	0	0
Potential behavioural reactions to avoid the payment of the new tax.	0	0	0	•
Potential additional tax reporting requirements on companies.	•	0	0	0
Additional administrative requirements for relevant tax authorities.	•	0	0	0

36 The accelerated development of the Digital Union will be characterised by the creation of fast growing companies albeit often accompanied by multiple failures.

Against this background please indicate how you consider that Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) should be treated by the current digital levy proposal.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I don' t know)
SMEs should be excluded from the scope of the tax.	0	0	•	0	0	0
SMEs should benefit from an exemption.	0	0	•	0	0	0
SMEs should face a lower tax burden (e.g. though an allowance) than larger companies.	0	0	•	0	0	0
SMEs should not be treated differently than larger companies.	0	0	•	0	0	0

37 What would you consider the minimal economic activity (in terms of revenue) a digital company should have in the EU in order to be liable to the digital levy?

- EUR 500 thousand
- EUR 1 million
- EUR 5 million
- EUR 10 million
- EUR 20 million
- Other, please specify
- Don't know

39 In order to identify where the revenues/profits are generated and how to determine the place of taxation, which of the following options do you consider the most appropriate.

- IP address of the user
- One method of geolocation, to be chosen by the taxable person
- One method of geolocation chosen by the taxable person from a preestablished list
- Two methods of geolocation chosen by the taxable person
- Two methods of geolocation chosen by the taxable person from a preestablished list
- Don't know

#### Final remarks

Please feel free to upload a concise document, such as a position paper or study that could supports or details your position. The maximal file size is 1MB.

Please note that the uploaded document will be published alongside your response to the questionnaire which is the essential input to this open public consultation. The document is an optional complement and serves as additional background reading to better understand your position.

In case you have chosen to remain anonymous, please make sure you remove any personal identification data from the document.

### 40 Please upload your file

Only files of the type pdf,txt,doc,docx,odt,rtf are allowed

#### Contact

TAXUD-DIGITAX@ec.europa.eu