

Modern Bigness: the power of Big Tech companies curbed?

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The main questions of the MOBI project are:

Does the power of Big Tech companies represent something new; how should we conceptualize this power; (how) should European competition law respond?

Methodology of the MOBI project

- Establish new conceptualization of Modern Bigness
- Establish shared normative framework
- Engage in several subprojects (Phd's + Postdoc + PI)
- Draw conclusions for competition law (and other regulatory instruments)

Using:

- a multidisciplinary methodology with shared reference points, a lot of teamscience, validation methods for tech-insights, and many interactions with other academics, stakeholders, and interested parties around the world

The outcome of the MOBI project is potentially fundamental:

A clear notion of what 'power' means in the digital age

A clear sense of what that means for the regulatory framework, focusing on competition law

Thus, potentially reshaping how competition law views 'power' and how it views its own role

The main challenge of the MOBI-project is how to conceptualize the power of big technology corporations, map the effects on consumers, citizens and societies, and shape the proper regulatory response

The MOBI project does not engage explicitly a contradiction between legitimacy and effectiveness, though it is present in all subprojects and is fed by the shared normative framework. The normative framework draws from:

- values of open societies;
- EU constitutional values;
- human-centered tech-values;
- competition law values;
- principles of tech-reg;

Distinctive elements of the regulation landscape:

- power is not well understood
- regulatory framework is evolving in EU, Member States + globally
- technology changes constantly;
- enforcement mechanisms are in flux

Key concept: a novel theory of the composite power of big tech companies, called 'Modern Bigness'.

Trust is only in the background: trust in technology, trust in companies, trust within society when power leads to inequality, trust in regulatory frameworks (e.g. of the EU)

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