



## Commission imposes interim measures on Meta to preserve free access to WhatsApp for rival AI assistants

Brussels, 9 June 2026

The European Commission has ordered **Meta to restore free access to WhatsApp** for rival general-purpose **AI assistants**, and maintain it until the end of the Commission's antitrust investigation. This will prevent serious and irreparable harm to competition in this growing market by Meta's conduct, which at first sight infringes EU competition rules.

In [December 2025](#), the Commission opened an antitrust investigation into Meta's new policy to block access for AI providers, other than Meta AI, to WhatsApp. In [February 2026](#), the Commission issued a Statement of Objections where it preliminarily concluded that interim measures may be required to prevent Meta's policy change from causing serious and irreparable harm on the market. In [April 2026](#), the Commission issued a supplementary Statement of Objections, setting out its intention to order Meta to reinstate third-party AI assistants' access to WhatsApp.

### The interim measures decision

Today's decision concludes that interim measures are warranted to prevent serious and irreparable damage to competition in the growing market for general-purpose AI assistants. This conclusion is based on the following findings:

- With WhatsApp, Meta has at first sight held a **dominant position** in the EEA-wide market for consumer communication applications since at least January 2023.
- Meta has been, at first sight, abusing this dominant position by preventing competing general-purpose AI assistants from using the WhatsApp for Business Application Programming Interface ('API'). On 15 October 2025 Meta introduced a new policy, banning third-party general-purpose AI assistants from the WhatsApp for Business API. As a result, only Meta's own AI assistant, Meta AI, remained accessible on WhatsApp. The Commission concluded that, at first sight, this constituted a **refusal to provide access** to an infrastructure developed for and previously open to third parties. After a revision of the policy, on 4 March 2026, Meta accepted third-party general-purpose AI assistants again on WhatsApp, but charged a fee which, at first sight, is in practice equivalent to the previous access ban.
- There is an **urgent need** to prevent a risk of serious damage to the competitive structure in the growing market for general-purpose AI assistants. Meta's policy change risks harming competition at a key moment in time for the development of that market, where smaller player and new entrants can challenge large incumbents.

Today's decision orders Meta to **re-instate access for third-party general-purpose AI assistants to the WhatsApp for Business API under the same terms and conditions that were in place before 15 October 2025**, when such access was notably free of charge for all such AI assistants. Meta has to maintain access on those terms and conditions until the Commission adopts a final decision on this case. This is necessary in order to ensure the effectiveness of the Commission's competition law enforcement powers and of any final Commission decision on the legality of Meta's conduct. Meta must comply with these measures within 5 working days.

The substantive investigation on the merits of all parts of the case is still ongoing.

### Background

Meta, headquartered in the US, is a multinational technology company. Its flagship products are its social networks, such as Facebook and Instagram, and consumer communication applications, such as WhatsApp and Messenger. It also operates online advertising services and virtual and augmented

reality products. Meta provides a general-purpose AI assistant, Meta AI.

The WhatsApp for Business API is the interface through which businesses connect their own systems to WhatsApp. Businesses wishing to use WhatsApp to interact with customers are subject to the WhatsApp Business Terms of Service and the WhatsApp Business Solution Terms. Before 15 October 2025, these did not provide for any limitation for third-party general-purpose AI assistants.

[Article 102](#) TFEU and [Article 54](#) of the EEA Agreement prohibits the abuse of a dominant position that may affect trade and prevent or restrict competition within the Single Market. The implementation of Article 102 TFEU is defined in [Regulation 1/2003](#).

Pursuant to Article 8(1) of Regulation 1/2003, interim measures may be imposed if at first sight there is an infringement of competition law rules, as well as an urgent need for protective measures due to the risk of serious and irreparable harm to competition. This is the second decision imposing interim measures under Regulation 1/2003, following the interim measure decision in relation to Broadcom in 2009.

The Commission may impose fines on a company where, either intentionally or negligently, it contravenes the decision ordering interim measures. The fine shall not exceed 10% of the total turnover in the business year preceding the infringement. Moreover, to compel compliance with the decision ordering interim measures the Commission may impose daily periodic penalty payments not exceeding 5% of the average daily turnover in the business year preceding the infringement.

There is no legal deadline for bringing an antitrust investigation to an end. The duration of an antitrust investigation depends on a number of factors, including the complexity of the case, the extent to which the companies concerned cooperate with the Commission and the parties' exercise of the rights of defense.

More information is available on the Commission's competition [website](#), in the public [case register](#) under the case number [AT.41034](#).

IP/26/1276

Quote(s):

*"Today, we require Meta to restore access to WhatsApp for competing AI assistants while we investigate whether the restrictions may infringe EU competition rules. In rapidly evolving markets, competition can be lost long before a final decision is adopted. This is why these interim measures will remain in place for the duration of the investigation, in order to prevent harm that would be almost impossible to repair. These interim measures will safeguard competition in the growing market for AI assistants, by preserving a key entry point to reach consumers in Europe – WhatsApp – and allowing AI companies to innovate, scale up and reach their full potential. With today's decision, we also preserve choice for citizens across Europe on the AI assistants they want to use with WhatsApp, without that decision being made for them. "*

Teresa Ribera, Executive Vice-President for Clean, Just and Competitive Transition

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