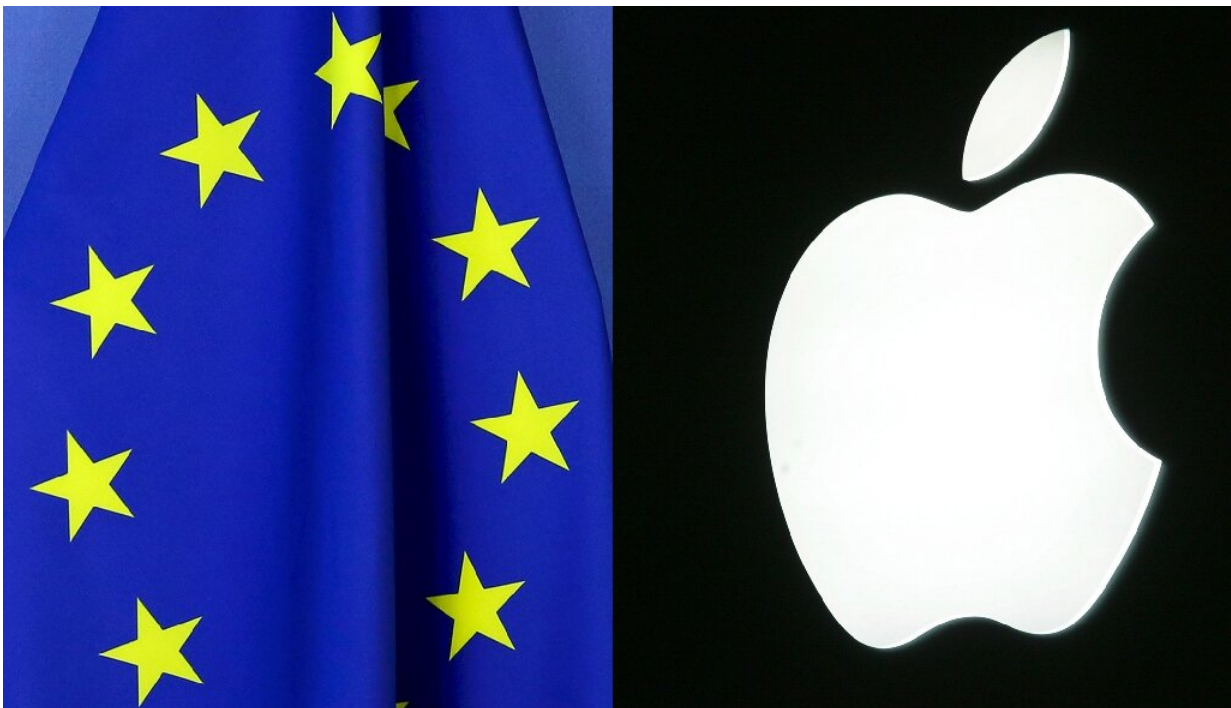


EU narrows probe into Apple's restrictions on apps

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European regulators are now only looking into how Apple prevents third-party apps from giving users information about rival music subscription options.

The EU on Tuesday narrowed its landmark antitrust case against Apple to focus on how the iPhone-maker prevents apps from giving users information about rival music subscription options.

The European Union's executive arm, the European Commission,

launched the original case against Apple over alleged anti-competitive behaviour in 2021.

It had been based on a 2019 complaint brought by Sweden-based Spotify and others that accused Apple of making unfair use of the App Store to promote its own Apple Music.

With the latest announcement, the Commission has withdrawn a charge against Apple over in-app purchase rules that force developers to use the company's own payment technology.

The Commission, in a statement, now says only that Apple restricts iPhone and iPad users from seeing other music subscription options at lower prices outside of the app.

These policies are, it added, "neither necessary nor proportionate for the provision of the App Store on iPhones and iPads and are detrimental to users of [music](#) streaming services on Apple's mobile devices who may end up paying more."

Apple said it was "pleased" the Commission narrowed the case.

"Apple will continue to work with the European Commission to understand and respond to their concerns, all the while promoting competition and choice for European consumers," a spokesperson said in a statement.

The company has firmly opposed the case and said it hoped the "Commission will end its pursuit of a complaint that has no merit".

In its app review guidelines, Apple says "developers can send communications outside of the app to their user base about purchasing methods other than in-app purchase".

Apple faces scrutiny in the United States and Europe to relax its hold on the App Store, which has been bashed by others including Fortnite maker Epic Games, and Twitter owner Elon Musk.

Spotify on Tuesday welcomed the Commission's announcement and its [general counsel](#), Eve Konstan, called on the Commission to reach a "swift decision".

"Today, the European Commission sent a clear message that Apple's anti-competitive behaviour and unfair practices have harmed consumers and disadvantaged developers for far too long," she said in a statement.

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