

EU says latest Google anti-trust remedies 'not acceptable'

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Attendees work on laptops during the Google I/O developers conference at the Moscone Center on May 15, 2013 in San Francisco, California

The latest remedies offered by US giant Google to complaints that it abuses its dominant position in the Internet search market do not go far enough, the European Commission said on Friday.

"The latest proposals are not acceptable in the sense that they are not

proposals that can eliminate our concerns regarding competition," EU Competition Commissioner Joaquin Almunia told Spanish national radio.

However, it was too early to talk of sanctions although that time will come soon, Almunia said.

"At this moment there is little time left but the ball is still in Google's court," he said.

"But within a short timeframe, the ball will then be there and then it will be the moment to take decisions," he added.

Google, under anti-trust investigation since 2010, submitted revised remedies in September which Almunia at the time said showed "significant improvements."

The Commission has four main grievances against Google.

These are that it gives unfair preference in [search results](#) to its own services, copies content without permission, ties up publishers with exclusivity deals, and discourages clients from using other advertising platforms.



Joachim Almunia gives a press conference on December 4, 2013 at EU Headquarters in Brussels

Almunia, said on Friday that the company's offer did not meet the Commission's concerns, "in particular, regarding the way Google's rivals in vertical [search](#) – search for products and price comparison, restaurants, etc. – are being treated."

Google reiterated on Friday that it had made significant changes to meet such concerns.

"We have made significant changes to address the (EU's) concerns, greatly increasing the visibility of rival services and addressing other specific issues."

Earlier this month, a group of major Google competitors said they were unhappy because its proposed remedies meant the company could still

"present its search results in a way that distorts user choice".

"The proposal does not fix the problem the (European) Commission identified back in 2012. It hurts consumers," said Thomas Vinje, spokesman for industry group FairSearch Europe.

Google rejected those charges.

If found at fault in an EU anti-trust probe, a company risks a fine equal to up to 10 percent of annual sales.

Google holds about 70 percent of the search engine traffic in the United States and 90 percent in Europe.

In January, US authorities absolved Google of anti-competition practices in a similar case.

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