

EU approves Microsoft buyout of LinkedIn with conditions (Update)

December 6 2016



The European Union on Tuesday approved Microsoft's mega buyout of the professional networking site LinkedIn, provided the US tech giant meets commitments to allow fair competition.

The European Commission, the EU executive, said it approved the merger after Microsoft offered promises, including leaving personal computer manufacturers and distributors free not to install LinkedIn on Windows operating systems.

"The European Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the proposed acquisition of LinkedIn by Microsoft," the commission said.

Microsoft's \$26 billion acquisition of LinkedIn was announced in June, the biggest-ever deal for a social media company.

"Today's decision ensures that Europeans will continue to enjoy a

freedom of choice between professional social networks," EU competition chief Margrethe Vestager said.

Data has increasingly become a major driver for big acquisitions in the digital world, including the blockbuster buyout of messaging service WhatsApp by Facebook in 2014 that was waved through at the EU by Vestager's predecessor.

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Citation: EU approves Microsoft buyout of LinkedIn with conditions (Update) (2016, December 6) retrieved 2 May 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2016-12-eu-microsoft-buyout-linkedin-conditions.html>

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