



# DIGITAL SERVICES ACT

**General objective:** Ensure a safe, transparent and fundamental rights respecting online environment

**Application to universities/academics:** as **data users** and **users of digital infrastructure**

Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market For Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC ([Digital Services Act](#))

**Relevant provisions:**

<b>Individual access provisions</b>	Contain certain <b>data access rights for individual platform users</b> on e.g., statements of reasons (Article 17) or internal complaint-handling (Article 20) that can be interesting for data altruism purposes.
<b>Public transparency provisions</b>	Contain several <b>public transparency obligations</b> for (Very Large Online) platforms on e.g., content moderation (Article 15), a database with statements of reasons (Article 24(5)), and systemic risk management (Article 42(4))
<b>Article 39</b>	Requires Very Large Online Platforms to install a publicly available <b>ad library</b> with information on the advertisements presented on the platform
<b>Article 40</b>	Contains a right for both “ <b>vetted researchers</b> ” and a broader category of researchers to request Very Large Online Platforms to provide access to platform data related to systemic risks (management)

**Anticipated impact on universities:**

Topic	Capacity	Impact	Explanation
Data access for individual platform users	Data user	Medium	The provisions giving platform users data access rights generate ‘individual-level’ data, which is relatively granular and potentially detailed. Such data combined can be interesting to academics in platform governance, and can be obtained through data donation.
Public transparency obligations	Data user	High	Compared to other public transparency provisions (e.g., GDPR, P2BR), the DSA’s public transparency provisions are quite detailed (e.g. Article 42(5)) and may generate large amounts of information and certain information may be of interest to not only researchers in platform governance, but to a wide scope of research areas (given the broad notion of ‘systemic risks’).
Advertisement repository	Data/digital infrastructure user	High	The ad library may yield a large amount of quite detailed and granular information on advertisements presented on Very Large Online Platforms, and it shall be publicly available.
Data access for vetted researchers	Data user	High	Article 40 DSA has very high potential to benefit academics’ potential to access data of Very Large Online Platforms, albeit data related to systemic risks (management). It is the only provision in all of the frameworks that explicitly provides researchers with a right to (request) access (to) third-party data. Details on Article 40 DSA are expected to be laid down in a delegated act.

**Interactions with other frameworks & potential (consistency) issues:**

<b>Interaction</b>	Rules and obligations applicable to online platforms in relation to their ‘business users’, including individual access rights, are also laid down in the <b>Platform to Business Regulation</b> . Additionally, the <b>proposed Political Advertising Regulations</b> similarly contains requirements related to information on political advertisements in the DSA’s ad library, and it also contains a (form of) access right for ‘vetted researchers’ to data.
<b>Issue</b>	The DSA does not exclude explicitly “not-for-profit educational and scientific repositories” from its scope, which leads to uncertainty about the application of the DSA to hosting infrastructure operated by universities.

This factsheet is part of the project: Information Law and the Digital Transformation of the University. Please see the [high-level summary](#) for more information.