

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 14(2) OF THE DIGITAL MARKETS, COMPETITION AND CONSUMERS ACT 2024 (THE ACT)

The Competition and Markets Authority (**CMA**) hereby gives notice as required by section 14(2) of the Act that, having carried out an initial strategic market status (**SMS**) investigation as required by section 2(4) of the Act (the **SMS Investigation**), it has decided to designate the undertaking known as Apple as having SMS in respect of its Mobile Platform (defined below) pursuant to section 2(1) of the Act (the **SMS Designation**).

This notice (the **SMS Decision Notice**) sets out the matters in respect of the SMS Designation required by section 15(3) of the Act.

Description of the designated undertaking

1. The undertaking subject to the SMS Designation, known as Apple, includes:
 - a. Apple Inc, a public listed company incorporated in California, United States of America headquartered at One Apple Park Way, Cupertino, California 95014, United States of America; and
 - b. Apple Distribution International Limited, a private limited company incorporated in the Republic of Ireland under registered number 470672, with its registered office at Hollyhill Industrial Estate, Hollyhill, Cork, Ireland.

Description of the digital activity with respect to which the SMS Designation has effect

2. The SMS Designation has effect with respect to the following, as provided by Apple:

Smartphone Operating System: the provision of an operating system or equivalent, which acts as an intermediary between hardware and software on a smartphone, enabling software applications and services to run on the smartphone;

Tablet Operating System: the provision of an operating system or equivalent, which acts as an intermediary between hardware and software on a tablet, enabling software applications and services to run on the tablet;

Native App Distribution: the provision of a service which enables the installation, distribution, and operation of native apps on mobile devices, which are apps written to run on the Smartphone Operating System and/or the Tablet Operating System;

and

Mobile Browser and Browser Engine: the provision of a mobile browser and browser engine which comprises:

(a) A software application that enables users of mobile devices to access and search the internet and interact with web content; and

(b) A mobile browser engine, which is the underlying technology which native apps on mobile devices use to transform web page source code into content with which users can engage;

together, a **Mobile Platform**.

3. Each of Smartphone Operating System, Tablet Operating System, Native App Distribution, and Mobile Browser and Browser Engine is a digital activity within the meaning of section 3(1) of the Act. Further, they may be treated as a single digital activity (a Mobile Platform) within the meaning of section 3(3)(b) of the Act, as they can be carried out in combination with each other to fulfil the specific purpose of facilitating interactions between users and providers of digital content and services on mobile devices in order to enable users to access, view and engage with such content and services on their mobile devices.

Reasons for the CMA's decision to designate Apple as having SMS in respect of its Mobile Platform

4. The reasons for the CMA's decisions under section 14(1) of the Act are set out in a decision which accompanies this SMS Designation Notice, a non-confidential version of which is published on the case page for the SMS Investigation.

The period for which the SMS Designation has effect

5. In accordance with section 18(1) of the Act, the SMS Designation has effect for five years beginning with the day after the day on which this notice is given.
6. The SMS Designation will therefore begin on 23 October 2025 and have effect until 22 October 2030 (the **Designation Period**), subject to the provisions in the Act for extension of the Designation Period and revocation of the SMS Designation before the end of the Designation Period.

Circumstances in which the Designation Period may be extended or the SMS Designation revoked before the end of the Designation Period

7. Under section 10(1) of the Act, the CMA may begin a further SMS investigation in relation to the SMS Designation at any point during the Designation Period. Under section 10(2) of the Act, the CMA must begin a further SMS investigation in relation to the SMS Designation not later than nine months before the end of the Designation Period, if it is not already carrying one out at that time under section 10(1) of the Act.
8. Under section 10(3) of the Act, a further SMS investigation is an investigation into whether: (a) to revoke the SMS Designation or to designate Apple again in respect of its Mobile Platform, and (b) to make provision under section 17 of the Act (relating to transitional, transitory or saving provisions in respect of existing obligations). In accordance with section 10(4) of the Act, a further SMS investigation may also include an investigation into whether to designate Apple in respect of a digital activity that the CMA considers to be similar or connected to the Mobile Platform (whether instead of, or in addition to, the Mobile Platform).
9. Section 104(7) of the Act provides that where the CMA is carrying out a further SMS investigation and extends the SMS investigation period under section 104(1) or 104(3) (for special reasons or non-compliance with investigatory powers) such that it would otherwise continue after the end of the Designation Period, the Designation Period will be extended accordingly.

Revised SMS decision notice

10. In accordance with section 15(4) of the Act, the CMA may give Apple one or more revised versions of this notice if it changes its view of (a) the undertaking; or (b) the digital activity, provided that the undertaking or digital activity, as the case may be, remains substantially the same.
11. The giving of a revised version of this notice would not affect the day on which the Designation Period begins, or anything done under Part 1 of the Act in relation to the Apple undertaking.

Publication of this notice

12. As soon as reasonably practicable after giving Apple this notice or any revised version of this notice, the CMA will, in accordance with sections 14(5) or 15(6) of the Act (as relevant), publish the notice on its website.



Competition and Markets Authority

Date 22 October 2025

Annex

Apple products within the scope of the SMS Designation as of the date of the SMS Decision Notice

This Annex sets out which of the existing products offered by Apple (including features and functionalities) are within the scope of the SMS Designation at the point of issuing the SMS Decision Notice. The CMA may update this Annex during the Designation Period.¹

1. As of the date of the SMS Decision Notice, the following are within the scope of the SMS Designation:
 - (a) For the Smartphone Operating System: the operating system currently known as iOS;
 - (b) For the Tablet Operating System: the operating system currently known as iPadOS;
 - (c) For the Smartphone Operating System and the Tablet Operating System (as applicable), features and functionalities which act as an intermediary between hardware and software on the mobile device, enabling software applications and services to run on the device, including in particular:
 - (i) application programming interfaces (**APIs**) providing access to connectivity functionalities;
 - (ii) features and functionalities that enable the operation of voice assistants;
 - (iii) operating-system level functionalities supporting digital wallets.
 - (d) For Native App Distribution:
 - (i) the installation, distribution and operation of native apps through the App Store; and

¹ CMA194, paragraphs 2.107-2.108.

- (ii) features and functionalities such as cloud management tools and APIs that enable the installation, distribution and operation of native apps on mobile devices.
- (e) For the Mobile Browser and Browser Engine: Apple's mobile browser, Safari; and Apple's mobile browser engine, WebKit.