

Why Europe won't have the new Siri

Editoriale

In the name of fairness and competition, Europe has written laws that leave its citizens as the only people in the free world without access to the most advanced technology.

Case in point: Apple's newly announced artificial intelligence assistant, Siri AI, will launch on iPhones and iPads this fall in London and Toronto, but not in Paris or Berlin. Heavy-handed European tech regulation has produced no European Google, no European Apple and no competitive European AI rival — only the world's most sophisticated machinery for slowing down innovation.

Brussels insists the decision is “[Apple's and Apple's only](#)” and that nothing in its flagship Digital Markets Act forbids the launch. That's technically true and wholly beside the point.

The law requires that the moment Siri AI ships in Europe, any rival AI agent must get the same sweeping access to a user's messages, files and chat history. Apple proposed putting in a software security layer to make that safe and offered a phased rollout to build it. According to Apple, the European Commission [rejected the proposal](#).

The DMA was supposed to [open markets](#). But its legal logic was born in the era of browsers, app stores and messaging apps. These components can be swapped like batteries.

An AI assistant is nothing of the kind. It's woven through the operating system, touching the most sensitive data a person owns. And, as security researchers keep demonstrating, it can be hijacked.

Technology moves fast, and the DMA is already out of step with the times. That's a warning for Americans agitating for more regulation.

Europe's General Data Protection Regulation, the DMA's spiritual predecessor, was sold on the premise that it would empower users and punish tech firms. Its record has

been grim. Venture investment in European start-ups fell by [roughly a quarter](#) relative to America in the year after the law took effect in 2018.

Small firms have been smothered with compliance costs while the well-heeled American tech giants, with their armies of lawyers, consolidated their dominance. Even the privacy-compliance software industry that formed because of the law is [dominated by American firms](#).

Behind all this lies the dream that Europe could be a “[regulatory superpower](#).” It wanted to create a market too big to skip that would, by virtue of its heft, end up exporting its rules to the rest of the world. That hasn’t worked out.

When adapting a product for Europe costs more than European market access is worth, companies no longer comply. They simply leave out the feature.

Former European Central Bank head Mario Draghi’s [celebrated report](#) to the European Commission clearly identified that Europe’s regulatory burden is now a tax on its competitiveness.

Bureaucrats in Brussels read it. Journalists praised it. But nothing changed.

It’s not too late to learn from their mistakes. Europe is wealthy, educated and more than capable of competing at the technological frontier. Some of its politicians are slowly [coming around](#). If only the regulators could get out of the way.