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**Sharing economy — General  
trustworthiness and safety  
requirements for digital platforms**

*Économie du partage — Fiabilité générale et exigences de sécurité  
pour les plateformes numériques*

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CP 401 • Ch. de Blandonnet 8  
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva  
Phone: +41 22 749 01 11  
Email: [copyright@iso.org](mailto:copyright@iso.org)  
Website: [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org)

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 324, *Sharing economy*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at [www.iso.org/members.html](http://www.iso.org/members.html).

## Introduction

A combination of widespread internet use, technological developments, innovation in economic models and demographic shifts has led to the emergence of a new economic model called the “sharing economy”, which enables otherwise unconnected individuals and/or organizations to make transactions of products and assets.

The sharing economy creates opportunities to connect individuals and/or organizations with unused assets and skill with those who wish to utilize them. It enables services and products to reach a wider range of consumers, to support entrepreneurship, and to create new business opportunities through enabling a flexible working style. Through the new model, the possibility of sharing and accessing assets rather than owning them could better optimize their use. The sharing economy is expected to create opportunities providing products and assets and thus positively contributes to social and environmental improvement.

On the other hand, issues such as security, service quality and reliability might not be assured to the same level as with classic business and (inter)national regulation. These potential shortcomings might not just harm users but the same fair competition among providers.

This document aims to encourage more acceptable, trustworthy operations of digital platforms by supporting the management activities of platform operators, both for profit and non-profit.

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# Sharing economy — General trustworthiness and safety requirements for digital platforms

## 1 Scope

This document specifies general trustworthiness and safety requirements applicable to operators of digital platforms within the sharing economy. While this document does not cover system requirements for digital platforms, the document is still beneficial for system development.

## 2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 42500, *Sharing economy — General principles*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 42500 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

### 3.1

#### authentication

provision of assurance with respect to the claimed identity of any provider or user, based on information provided by each of them

Note 1 to entry: Authentication is the responsibility of the platform operator.

### 3.2

#### verification

confirmation by the platform operator that applicable legal and specified contractual requirements for registered users and providers have been fulfilled through the provision of objective evidence

## 4 General requirements

### 4.1 General

Platform operators shall follow the principles below in accordance with ISO 42500:

- a) integrity;
- b) transparency;
- c) accountability and authorization;
- d) accessibility and inclusion;
- e) respect for other affected interest;

f) competence.

## 4.2 Integrity

The platform operator shall put in place and maintain a support mechanism to help providers and users understand relevant norms, which may include cultural norms in the country/region where they are operating through use of the digital platform or industry norms for the type of goods or services they are providing.

The platform operator shall demonstrate their commitment by

- treating all providers and users in an equal, fair and transparent manner,
- respecting legal and ethical obligations, and
- dealing with requests of providers and users in a helpful way.

The platform operator shall build mechanisms that ensure that these maxims are upheld during the operation and the use of the digital platform.

The platform operator should build mechanisms to promote mutually beneficial relationships between relevant parties. The purpose of such a mechanism is to promote the respect of the aforementioned norms by users and providers and enhance the quality of the digital platform and meet user's and provider's expectations.

## 4.3 Transparency

When attracting providers and users to the digital platform, platform operators shall organize and present information supplied by providers and users in a way that ensures that it is findable, usable, relevant and timely and allows providers and users to make informed decisions.

The platform operator shall also make the criteria used to facilitate transactions and how they are executed between providers and users (such as ranking, pricing, ratings and reviews) findable, usable, and relevant. The platform operator shall be transparent and give clear, detailed and accessible information to providers and users on how the business model of the digital platform works.

## 4.4 Accountability and authorization

The platform operator shall establish processes or mechanisms to address any failures by providers to deliver products or assets as described to users, as well as to determine liability that could be incurred by platform participants for any such failure and any corresponding recourse. Responsibility should be determined based on a confirmed agreement between platform operators and providers or users made prior to entry into any transaction.

The platform operator should consider that they might need to make records of decisions and activities and their impacts and opportunities with respect to providers and users available for scrutiny by governing bodies, legal authorities, and other interested parties.

The platform operator should inform providers that they are responsible for

- ensuring that they do not place products that are clearly unsafe on the market,
- warning users of potential risks associated with the products they supply and their use as well as any defects, and
- making sure that their products can be traced so that they can be removed in case they turn out faulty to avoid any risks for users.

The platform operator shall

- a) treat personal information in a confidential manner, respecting the privacy of the providers and users in particular with particular regards to the collection, use, storage and disclosure of personal information, and
- b) remove products and services from the digital platform that are obviously unsafe or illegal.

The platform operator may outsource its operations. The platform operator should ensure that parties to whom it delegates any of the roles and responsibilities meet the requirements to which it is subject.

#### 4.5 Accessibility and inclusion

The digital platform and the relevant information provided by the digital platform about itself should be easy to find, understand and use. The digital platform should be planned, designed, developed, implemented, maintained, and improved to address the needs of different users, including those who may be at greater risk of detriment due to consumer vulnerability, and those with special accessibility requirements.

Platform operators should establish mechanisms to investigate instances of unfair discriminatory behaviour by providers and users that are raised to them through any complaint or dispute resolution mechanisms.

Platform operators should establish a means of tracking the number of such instances by geography, of determining the impact of discriminatory conduct on platform operation, and of limiting providers and users whose conduct is found to be unfairly discriminatory after investigation from participating on the digital platform.

#### 4.6 Respect for other affected interests

The platform operator shall be aware of interests of third parties that are not immediate partners of the digital platform such as providers and users but affected by the operation of the digital platform and the products or assets handled by the digital platform and the way they are produced, delivered, or transported.

This refers to such issues as the protection of

- fair competition,
- environment,
- health,
- safety of workforce, and
- public safety.

Providers, users, products, or assets that might infringe these societal interests shall be subject to check in cooperation with competent authorities or organisations.

#### 4.7 Competence

In adhering to the principles of the sharing economy, platform operators should seek to encourage providers to offer products and assets on their digital platforms in a manner that allows users to make informed decisions.

The platform operator shall ensure that their personnel can deal with the requests of providers and users in an adequate manner. This refers to their qualification in technical and social skills, their number and availability to manage requests without substantial delay.

Some parts of support can be dealt with in an automatized way or with FAQs but there shall be personnel available to personally respond to requests in an adequate time frame.

At least part of the personnel shall be competent to deal with the issues described in 4.2 to 4.6 which go beyond the technical aspect of a transaction.

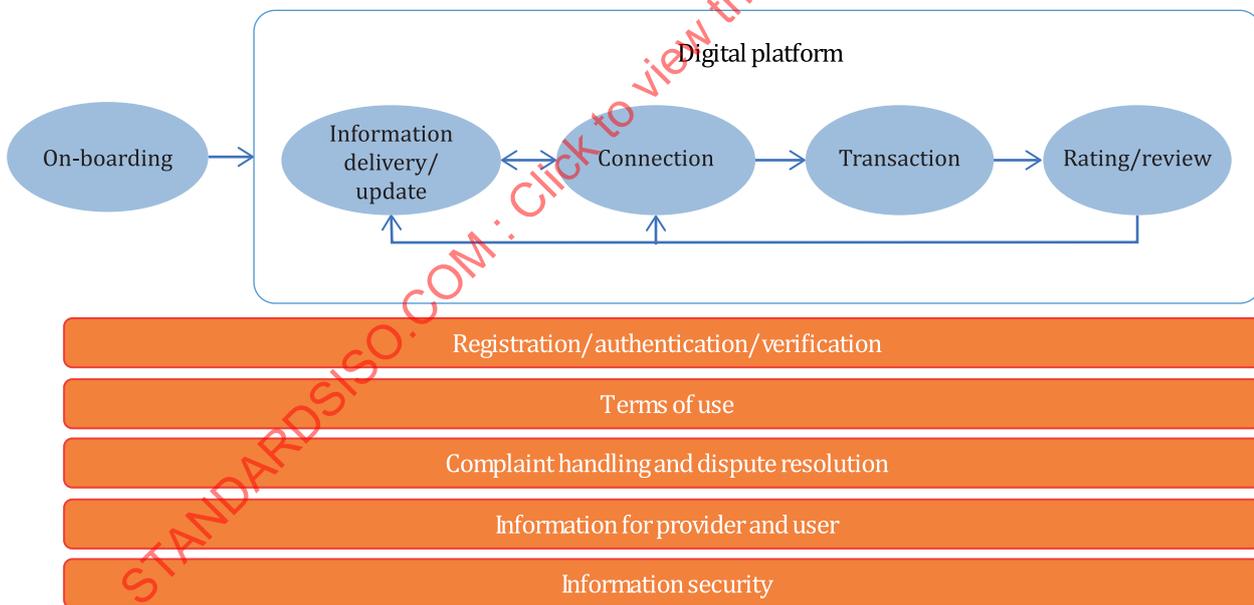
To the extent practical considering the relationship of the platform operator to the providers under applicable labour laws governing the digital platform's activities, platform operators should provide providers and users with the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills about participation in the sharing economy.

## 5 Transaction phases of digital platform

### 5.1 Overview

In the sharing economy, an exchange between providers and users typically goes through the following five distinct phases, see Figure 1:

- on-boarding;
- information delivery/update;
- connection;
- transaction;
- rating/review.



NOTE Providers and users move through different phases in the process along the arrows shown in the chart.

Figure 1 — Transaction phases and managing operations for digital platform

### 5.2 On-boarding

The onboarding phase is where platform operators undertake authentication and verification of providers and users.

The platform operator shall make sure the identification of providers and users occurs in accordance with [6.2](#).

NOTE ISO/TS 42502 provides guidance on provider verification.

### 5.3 Information delivery/update

The information delivery/update phase is where

- providers and users deliver or update the information about themselves on the digital platform, and
- providers deliver and update information on their products and assets provided by them.

The platform operator shall ensure that relevant information is easily accessible and well-organized to allow users to make informed decisions and to reduce misunderstanding about the quality of products or assets offered by providers. If a ranking of products, assets, providers, or users is provided by the platform operator, the platform operator shall ensure that information on the criteria for the ranking is available on the digital platform and easily accessible. If a ranking is based on a combination of multiple criteria, the platform operator shall make information available on the digital platform and easily accessible that it is aware of on what each criterion is, how much weight is placed on each criterion in percentage terms, and whether the ranking was determined using machine-learning. If a product, asset, provider, or user is given an elevated ranking or listing as a result of a payment to the platform operator, the platform operator shall clearly display the ranking or listing as “advertisement” or “promoted.”

NOTE This requirement can be fulfilled by requiring input of certain information or providing answers to frequently asked questions.

The platform operator shall put in place a mechanism that allows both the users and providers to input and update information on the products and assets offered on the digital platform. The information shall be reflected promptly on the digital platform. For requirements on changes of information about providers and users themselves, see [6.2](#).

When products and assets provided by providers are added or changed, the platform operator shall ensure that the information on the products and assets are verified according to [6.2](#).

The platform operator shall provide a list of required information to be made available by the provider about their product or asset. The platform operator should provide a list of additional suggested information that the provider may provide regarding the product or asset. Special attention shall be taken about safety, security and health information.

### 5.4 Connection

The connection phase is where information about the supply and demand of products and assets is exchanged in an effort to reduce information asymmetry. This phase is also where providers and users communicate regarding the details of their proposed transaction.

The platform operator shall put in place a mechanism to connect users with products/assets on the digital platform based on the user’s needs.

NOTE The connection phase typically includes information about the needs of users and details of the providers or their products/assets.

The platform operator shall provide the means to enable communication and inquiries between providers and users before entering into a transaction, if necessary, to complete the transaction based on the type of transaction and product or asset being provided.

### 5.5 Transaction

The transaction phase is where users apply to purchase/use products or assets based on the platform operator’s processes, and providers accordingly provide the products or assets to the users.

The platform operator shall have mechanisms to enable providers and users to exchange products and assets, and to ensure that providers and users fulfil their obligations, when a transaction is agreed upon. These mechanisms can include inventory and schedule management tools.

The platform operator shall ensure that the payment is made properly if the payment and transaction are made on the digital platform itself. If payment is intended to be made before the product or asset is provided to the user, the platform operator should implement a mechanism that prevents the user from accessing the product or asset until after the payment is made. For payments and/or transactions that occur outside of the digital platform, the platform operator shall have mechanisms such as a complaint handling system that allow both providers and users to input details of such a transaction for record keeping, tracking, and dispute resolution.

Where products and assets are bartered or exchanged without the use of any currency, the platform operator's mechanism shall enable the accounting of the exchanges between provider and user. The platform operator should provide resources that allow users and providers to be informed of tax related requirements that they are subject to.

NOTE The platform operator can offer payment security services to ensure the successful completion of the transaction (i.e., releasing payment after confirmation of the transaction by both party).

## **5.6 Rating/review**

The rating/review phase is where users and providers (sometimes mutually) review and evaluate the products/assets provided and actions of providers/users (e.g. behaviours, payments).

The platform operator shall facilitate feedback between providers and users. The platform operator shall make parts of it available to the other participants on the digital platform.

NOTE 1 Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a) peer reviews linked to transactions;
- b) rating systems.

The platform operator shall make its best effort to exclude those who undermine or distort the accuracy of the evaluation mechanisms through disinformation or fraud and delete their incorrect entries.

Except in cases that present serious risks or dangers to other users and/or providers, the platform operator shall ensure that there is no automatic removal of providers and users from the digital platform solely on the basis of reviews or ratings without first providing warnings that they are at risk of being removed.

When public safety factors require it, the platform operator shall seek and facilitate feedback from providers and users.

NOTE 2 This is applicable in cases where there could be safety risks for providers (e.g. when providing a ride sharing service to a user who can pose a threat to the driver).

NOTE 3 ISO 20488 provides principles and requirements on online consumer reviews for their collection, moderation, and publication.

## **6 Requirements for managing operations**

### **6.1 Overview**

This clause specifies the requirements necessary for securing trustworthiness and safety in transactions between providers and users, including the following:

- registration/authentication/verification;
- terms of use;

- complaint handling and dispute resolution;
- information for providers and users;
- information security.

## 6.2 Registration/authentication/verification

### 6.2.1 General

Platform operators shall require users and providers to register using valid means that facilitates the verification of

- the identity of the user or provider, and
- the nature of the products and assets and their conformity with the platform operator's procedures for determining the types of goods that are prohibited, restricted or violate the platform operator's terms of use.

NOTE The user's or provider's identifying information can include their age and ability to lawfully enter into the contemplated transaction in the jurisdiction where the products and assets are made available.

### 6.2.2 Communication methods

Platform operators shall stipulate in the terms of use that providers and users register with valid means that facilitate verification, such as an e-mail address, a social networking service account or a mobile telephone number.

The platform operator shall stipulate in the terms of use that providers and users maintain updated contact details.

NOTE Where there is a requirement to verify the age of a provider or a user, BS/PAS 1296 can be used.

### 6.2.3 Authentication of identity and verification of credentials

The platform operator shall assess the level of risk associated with their operations and verify the credentials of providers and users to a degree commensurate with that risk.

When a provider is required by laws or regulations to have a permit, license, proof of ownership etc. to provide their products or assets to users, the platform operator shall require the provider to submit documents (including electromagnetic records) demonstrating that the provider has the required permits, etc.

Where the operations of platform operators involve providers and users physically meeting, more stringent identity authentication mechanisms such as multi-factor authentication should be established.

The platform operator should have a procedure and an alert system to distinguish between individuals and organizations to avoid status fraud as mentioned in [6.5.4](#).

### 6.2.4 Safety mechanism for minors

The platform operator shall provide a mechanism for parents or guardians to prevent impacts on the safety of minors. The platform operator could establish special rules for protection of minor's personal information, including the proper ways to identify minors and their personal information.

NOTE Minors here mean persons below the age of majority as understood in any particular jurisdiction.

## 6.3 Terms of use

### 6.3.1 General

The platform operator shall develop the terms of use to effectively define requirements for the proper conduct of

- a) providers who offer products or assets, and
- b) users, with due consideration of the nature of the products or assets being provided.

NOTE Terms of use can be referred to other relevant expressions such as terms of service.

### 6.3.2 Developing terms of use

The platform operator shall set out, make accessible and stipulate the binding nature and conditions of their terms of use for providers and users.

### 6.3.3 Requirements for public order and morality

The platform operator shall define requirements and responsibilities for providers and users that cover obligations, rights, liabilities, and consequences for failure to adhere to terms of use.

The terms of use shall prescribe that products and assets offered are based on lawful rights and do not infringe the rights of others.

The terms of use should promote the honest, courteous and respectful use of the digital platform and its associated transactional activities.

### 6.3.4 Summary of terms of use

Where possible, the platform operator shall specifically detail items imperative to the use of the digital platform (e.g. clauses related to safety or compliance) separately in a user-friendly format such as a summary sheet.

Where the provision of such a summary sheet would present unnecessary risk to the platform operator as to potential differences in interpretation between the summary and the full terms of use, the platform operator should, to the extent possible, use plain language in its terms of use.

### 6.3.5 Actions in response to violation of terms of use

The platform operator shall monitor violations of the terms of use by providers and users and establish procedures and mechanisms for reducing the risk of violations and taking action to warn, suspend or disqualify from membership any provider or user who violates the terms of use.

NOTE 1 Violations subject to disciplinary actions can be assessed in terms of the severity of a single occurrence or the number of repeated violations.

NOTE 2 Disciplinary actions can also include communication or warning by the platform operator to the provider or user.

### 6.3.6 Changes to terms of use

The platform operator shall timely inform all relevant parties of changes to the terms of use by making the terms of use and any updates available. For registered users and providers, use of the digital platform following notification of any updates or changes to the terms of use can be considered consent in accordance with applicable laws.

### 6.3.7 Limiting/Suspending/terminating the use of digital platform

The platform operator shall ensure that there is no automatic exclusion of providers, users or entries only by the result of unverified claims or automatic programs (as described or similar to those in 5.6) that might be subject to errors. The platform operator is supposed to review and verify claims on abuse. The platform operator may suspend an entry, a provider or a user until review and verification are completed in due course. The platform operator shall seek input from all involved parties and then decide on the course of action.

When a provider or user is subjected to review and verification of claims of abuse, the platform operator shall notify the provider or user of the fact and reason as soon as possible.

If the platform operator decides to suspend or remove an entry, a provider, or a user, the platform operator shall notify the parties subject to the suspension or removal regarding the decision. An appeals process shall be available to challenge the decision.

After suspension/termination of a provider or user, the platform operator shall provide and inform about mechanisms for providers and users to retrieve, delete, and anonymize their digital assets on the digital platform (including trade secrets and personal information).

Where an account suspension is not the consequence of a provider's personal conduct but instead results from a public safety imperative, notice and explanation of the platform operator's action shall be provided after account suspension as soon as possible.

## 6.4 Complaint handling and dispute resolution

### 6.4.1 General

The platform operator shall have mechanisms and establish, maintain and allocate appropriate resources to receive, handle and manage feedback including enquiries, consultations, evaluations, suggestions, comments and complaints from providers, users and others, and resolve disputes.

NOTE ISO 10002 provides guidelines for the process of complaints handling related to products and services within an organization, including planning, design, development, operation, maintenance and improvement.

### 6.4.2 Rights, redress and guarantees

The platform operator shall set out to providers and users their rights, including available means of redress and whether any service guarantees are offered by providers to users.

Platform operators may consider

- a) the availability of insurance for platform activities, including the contingent risk posed to them from provider activities,
- b) the potential to make insurance available or procure insurance or other protections on behalf of users or providers, as a means of redress, or
- c) making available insurance services adapted to providers or users through outsourcing.

### 6.4.3 Supporting the resolution of issues

The platform operator shall facilitate issue resolutions associated with products or assets exchanged on its digital platform, with the understanding that the resolution usually depends on mutual efforts between the parties concerned.

The platform operator should put in place a mechanism to contribute to the resolution of issues by posting examples in the FAQ if there are any common solutions to an issue that occurs typologically. For uncommon issues, the platform operator shall provide a mechanism for providers and users to inform the platform operator of such issues. In case of an issue between a provider and a user, the platform

operator shall cooperate with them to seek a resolution. The platform operator should also have its own mechanism to resolve the types of disputes between provider and user that would erode trust in the digital platform. These mechanisms may include partial compensation to a provider or user for the loss arising from a transaction issue between them that are provided on a case-by-case basis.

### 6.4.4 Preparing for incidents

The platform operator shall communicate any insurance requirements to providers in its terms of use.

The platform operator shall also notify the providers of the potential utility of having their own insurance to protect their activity and the potential financial risks of doing without.

NOTE Platform operators can also provide "badges" so that users know which providers have insurance to help build trust.

### 6.4.5 Confirmation of provider identification

Where the transaction entails physical user interaction with the provider, the platform operator shall implement mechanisms to facilitate the user's confirmation of the identity or credentials of the provider.

NOTE Such mechanisms can include sending push notifications or providing unique identifier codes.

### 6.4.6 Response to emergency situations

The platform operator shall put in place processes to facilitate communication between providers and users to make arrangements for a planned response to emergency situations or the occurrence of incidents.

Particular care should be taken where vulnerable people (e.g. children in childcare) are involved in receiving or providing the products or assets.

In the case of an emergency where the responsible party fails to provide a solution, the platform operator should provide prompt assistance.

EXAMPLE If a house booked on a digital platform does not exist, the digital platform can help the guest to find alternative accommodation.

### 6.4.7 Report of the status of services to guardians

For services that require that the safety of minors be assured, the platform operator shall encourage providers to produce, on request, reports to parents or guardians on the status of the service whilst the service is being received.

EXAMPLE When a sick minor is taken care of by a babysitter from a babysitting platform, the condition of the minor during the service is reported to their parents or guardians.

### 6.4.8 Report of the results of services to guardians

On completion of services, the platform operator shall require providers to produce reports for parents or guardians for services deemed to have an impact on the safety of minors.

## 6.5 Information for providers and users

### 6.5.1 Information on booking and transaction fees

The platform operators shall be transparent towards providers and users with regards to booking and transaction fees, with the accurate total price displayed as early as possible within the transaction. Platform operators shall indicate at each stage what, if any, other fees have yet to be applied and, where these are fixed fees, provide information on the cost of these fixed fees.

### 6.5.2 Information on dynamic pricing

The platform operators shall be transparent towards providers and users on use of dynamic pricing mechanisms and their major parameters.

### 6.5.3 Information on changes in search function and ranking

The platform operator shall notify providers and users on changes in the display order of search results and the main parameters that determine the ranking.

### 6.5.4 Information on status of providers

The platform operator shall put in place a mechanism for providers and users to determine if a provider is an individual or an organization. This information shall be made readily accessible to the users.

NOTE Depending on the jurisdiction of the platform's operations, this might impact the provider and user's legal rights and obligations.

### 6.5.5 Information on potential infringement

Platform operators shall actively take measures to alert users and providers to unlawful behaviour against the digital platform (e.g. cyberattacks, fraud, scams, and other attempts to subvert or steal user identities and credentials) and otherwise protect the digital platform from such unlawful behaviours. Similarly, where users or providers are the actors of unlawful behaviour, the platform operator shall take active measures to limit their activities on the digital platform.

### 6.5.6 Deletion of false information

The platform operators shall put in place and publicise a mechanism to deal with false information and violations of its terms. This mechanism shall cover how to report such issues, the investigation process, criteria for making decisions to delete information, how decisions are to be communicated to the parties involved and the wider user base, and whether decisions are final or can be appealed.

### 6.5.7 Raising awareness on unlawful behaviours

The platform operator shall decide measures preventing recurrence for unlawful behaviours by widely providing information with alert and reflecting its contents in the FAQ.

### 6.5.8 Improvement support for providers and users

The platform operator should offer providers opportunities to improve their utilization of the digital platform by informing them of resources such as video and FAQ.

### 6.5.9 Ensuring life security of provider and user

The platform operator should be aware that users and providers can derive revenue primarily from the offering of products and assets on the digital platform and that they may experience financial risks due to the inability to provide those products and assets as a result of injury or illness. The platform operator should seek to offer opportunities for providers and users to protect themselves against such risks.

### 6.5.10 Ensuring timely distribution of revenues

The platform operator shall distribute revenues to providers on a monthly (or more frequent) basis, at the request of providers, or both.