EU will reportedly open full investigation into Google’s Fitbit acquisition

Google’s $2.1 billion acquisition of Fitbit will reportedly face greater scrutiny from EU regulators. *Reuters* reports that the deal will face a full-scale antitrust investigation, which the European Commission will reportedly open next week. Regulators and consumer advocacy groups have shared fears about Google’s planned acquisition of Fitbit, related to the search giant gaining access to sensitive data like fitness activities, heart rates, sleep patterns, and more.

Consumer groups from across Europe, the US, Mexico, Canada, and Brazil have labeled Google’s Fitbit deal a “test case” for regulators’ abilities to prevent data monopolies. Google has been trying to appease European regulators by offering not to use Fitbit’s health data to target ads, but the *Financial Times* reports that this guarantee hasn’t been enough. EU officials are reportedly demanding more concessions that would guarantee Fitbit’s data would be open to third-party developers, and also seeking assurances that Google won’t use Fitbit data to improve its search engine.

The EU’s investigation will likely take an additional four months to dig into Google’s potential use of Fitbit data. Google announced its Fitbit acquisition back in November, and it could be a full year or more before the company is able to finalize it. Google also spent $40 million to acquire some smartwatch technology from Fossil last year in a greater push to build Android-integrated wearables.

A full European investigation into Google’s Fitbit deal looks

like it will arrive just days after most of the big US technology companies appeared at an antitrust panel of the House Judiciary Committee. Amazon, Apple, Google, and Facebook CEOs appeared at the trial yesterday, and Google CEO Sundar Pichai in particular faced a number of questions around the company’s search dominance and its use of data to monitor would-be competitors.

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