

NIGORA ISKANDAROVA

From Fortnite to the DMA: Regulating the App Economy



What is your thesis about and why is this topic important to you?

My thesis studies how app store gatekeeping shapes competition and innovation in the app economy. This topic is particularly interesting to me because platforms such as App Store and Google Play have become a fundamental part of how we access and use digital products.

What's one insight from your thesis that really stuck with you?

Do not rush into making conclusions when a topic seems easy at first. My initial thought was that gatekeeping is inherently bad for competition and innovation, but the more I dug into the literature, the more I realized how dependent the effects are on the specific context. I think this can be applied to many things in real life. Try to look at things from different perspectives and make balanced decisions instead of rushing into conclusions.

What did this experience teach you beyond your topic?

This experience made me more resilient to stress and taught me to keep going even when I felt lost in my thesis. There were many moments when I was unsure whether I was going in the right direction, but I learned that feeling lost does not necessarily mean that you are doing something wrong. Sometimes you simply need to keep going.

One piece of advice for future thesis students?

Do not try to make everything perfect from the first try. I often got stuck and procrastinated because I wanted to finish each step perfectly before moving on. But the process is iterative, so do not be afraid to make mistakes. If you feel stuck, move on to something else and come back later because you will probably redo it anyway. Make mistakes faster, learn from them and keep moving forward.