

**Priority question for written answer P-002235/2025/rev.1
to the Commission**
Rule 144
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Subject: Abuse of copyright infringement claims to censor the press

In March 2025, Investigate Europe¹ and other media outlets revealed that Soft2bet, a gambling firm headquartered in Cyprus and Malta, is linked to 114 online casinos that have been blacklisted by Member States. Since the publication of the investigation, anonymous actors have filed false US Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) complaints to de-index these news articles from Google in the EU. In over 60 complaints, fake claimants copied the original investigation and backdated it, making Google believe that their copy was the original article and/or posed as Investigate Europe, filing infringement claims against outlets that co-published or shared the investigation. This has led to the de-indexing of genuine articles about Soft2bet in Greece², Poland³, Malta⁴, Estonia⁵ and other countries.

1. How will the Commission ensure that journalistic work published within the EU is not subject to false copyright complaints, so as to guarantee that Google and other search engines properly filter false infringement claims in the future?
2. Is the Commission aware of Google's use of potentially error-prone algorithmic or AI filtering systems to assess copyright claims?
3. Is the Commission aware of any other cases of systematic abuses of copyright protections in the EU aimed at censoring the press?

Submitted: 4.6.2025

¹ <https://www.investigate-europe.eu/posts/shady-bets-blacklisted-gambling-sites-connected-to-soft2bet-award-winning-european-firm>

² https://lumendatabase.org/notices/50067895?access_token=INKWQV49dp1dmRZMCAkVUg

³ https://lumendatabase.org/notices/50130061?access_token=CYq0sYjCl-OzG_o0T8QpHQ

⁴ <https://lumendatabase.org/notices/50550335>

⁵ https://lumendatabase.org/notices/50266670?access_token=kZ9oB1Hqs377Y87Afzrkrq