

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001593/24
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Fernand Kartheiser (ECR)
(2 September 2024)

Subject: EU interference in the US election campaign, and risk posed to relations with the US and American companies

Commissioner Breton has faced fire for the letter he addressed to Elon Musk on 12 August 2024, in particular from the US Congress and Trump's election campaign officials. Meanwhile, in the EU, many people have expressed their concern that the Digital Services Act (DSA) poses a threat to freedom of expression.

1. Would the Commission say this letter interfered in the US election campaign, and if not, how would it then define electoral interference?
2. Have EU-US relations been lastingly damaged by this letter?
3. How do things currently stand between the Commission and the American platform X?

Submitted: 2.9.2024

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Vestager on behalf of the European Commission
(20 November 2024)

In December 2023, the Commission opened an investigation into X's compliance with the Digital Services Act (DSA) ⁽¹⁾. In July 2024, the Commission informed X of its preliminary view that the platform is in breach of the DSA in areas linked to dark patterns, advertising transparency and researcher access to data.

X now has the possibility to exercise its rights of defence by examining the documents in the investigation file and by replying to these preliminary findings. In parallel, the Commission continues its investigation in areas linked to the dissemination of illegal content and the effectiveness of the measures taken to combat information manipulation, which were also covered in the opening decision of December 2023.

All acts and decisions adopted by the Commission are taken within the limits of the Commission's powers followed due process and are subject to judicial review by the EU courts.

The letter sent to X on 12 August 2024 did not interfere in any election campaign. It merely aimed to ensure that freedom of expression and of information are effectively protected and focused on the impact in the EU of the consequences of certain findings relating to the functioning of the online service X, following up on previous exchanges with its provider.

The EU and the United States (US) are combined home to nearly 800 million people, who have a strong stake in a peaceful and prosperous world.

The EU and US work together to promote common values, which include peace, freedom, democracy and the rule of law. Actions taken by the Commission with relation to X in enforcing the DSA have no bearing on this relationship.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2022/2065; <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2065/oj>