

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002200/24
to the Commission
Piotr Müller (ECR)
(21 October 2024)**

Subject: Resubmission of Question E-001563/2024 of 28.8.2024 — in the absence of a full answer

In the absence of a full answer to my previous question (E-001563/2024 ⁽¹⁾), which was answered on 10 October 2024, I would again like to ask the following questions:

1. Question 1: ‘Did the Commission offer X or any other very large online platforms (VLOPs) any agreement on restricting political content in exchange for avoiding financial penalties? If so, what is the content of such agreements?’ — this question remains unanswered. The answer given refers, in general terms, to the scope of the Commission’s powers, but does not directly answer the question that was asked. Could the Commission respond again on this issue. Could it please clarify whether such agreements on the restriction of political content were in fact made and, if so, what those agreements contained. If not, please could it provide a firm denial.
2. Question 2: ‘How does the Commission intend to put a stop to the push for preventive censorship under the pretext of combating harmful content, which could lead to a “digital totalitarianism” in which opinions that challenge dominant ideas are systematically silenced?’ — this question was dealt with in general terms rather than giving a direct answer. Please could the Commission set out what actual and specific action it will take or is taking to prevent the preventive censorship of uncomfortable political content.

I am seeking more complete and more specific explanations in order to ensure clarity on this important issue.

Submitted: 21.10.2024

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(4 March 2025)**

The claim that there was any secret deal between the Commission and X is manifestly unfounded. There has never been any secret deal, nor any proposal for any such secret deal, of any kind, offered to X during the ongoing proceedings, nor to any other entity regulated under the Digital Services Act (DSA).

All acts and decisions adopted by the Commission on the basis of the DSA ⁽¹⁾ are taken within the limits of the Commission’s powers, following due process and subject to judicial review. In its actions, the Commission is bound by the principle of transparency.

At any point during the proceedings, before and after the issuing of preliminary findings, any provider that is subject to proceedings under the DSA may offer commitments to the Commission pursuant to Article 71 of the DSA to ensure compliance with its DSA obligations.

Where such commitments are accepted by the Commission, the relevant decisions are published in full transparency, pursuant to Article 80 of the DSA (for example the recently published commitment decision regarding Tik Tok Lite) ⁽²⁾.

The DSA aims to enable a safe, predictable and trusted online environment that facilitates innovation and in which fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU ⁽³⁾, in particular freedom of expression, are effectively protected. It does not censor users in the EU and protects them against over-removal of lawful content.

The DSA sets a series of ‘due diligence’ obligations on platforms, requiring them, for instance, to act effectively once they are notified that illegal content is accessible on their platform in the EU.

In this respect, the DSA does not stipulate whether content is illegal, which remains defined by national laws, and the Commission has no power to order the removal of content.

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2024-001563_EN.html

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022R2065>

⁽²⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_4161

⁽³⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/char_2012/oj/eng