

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002276/24
to the Commission
Emmanouil Kefalogiannis (PPE)
(28 October 2024)**

Subject: Monitoring social media pages that spread inaccurate and irredentist narratives

There is sadly a growing number of pages on Facebook and other social media channels that are spreading irredentist and revisionist narratives, as well as hate speech. Specifically, there is a Facebook page called 'Macedonian Coalition', which presents maps of the so-called 'Greater Macedonia' that include a large section of North Greece, with the northern part of Greece etc. appearing under occupation.

While Facebook does not officially consider itself a media company and is therefore not required to comply with journalistic standards, the dissemination of irredentism, revisionist and historically inaccurate narratives and hate speech has, in the past, led to national conflicts and diplomatic tension between states.

In view of the above:

1. How does the Commission ensure that tech giants such as Facebook comply with rules that minimise, prevent and limit irredentism, historically inaccurate narratives and hate speech on their platforms?
2. How does it plan to monitor, assess and reduce the spread of such cases on online platforms such as Facebook in an effective way?

Submitted: 28.10.2024

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

The Digital Services Act (DSA) ⁽¹⁾ aims to address illegal and harmful activities online. The DSA does not define which content is illegal, but it defers to EU or national laws for that purpose.

The DSA imposes on online platforms the obligation to have in place effective systems to precisely limit arbitrary content moderation decisions, while Very Large Online Platforms, such as Meta's Facebook are obliged to assess and mitigate systemic risks stemming from the design and functioning of their service, including in relation to the exercise of freedom of expression online.

The measures put in place must be reasonable, taking into account the impact that they may have on fundamental rights. However, the Commission does not have the competence to intervene in individual content moderation decisions.

Under the DSA, platforms can participate in codes of conduct. Adherence to and compliance with code commitments may constitute risk mitigation measures. Currently, the Code of Practice on Disinformation ⁽²⁾ and the Code of Conduct on Countering Hate Speech Online ⁽³⁾ are being assessed.

The Commission has two investigations pending in relation to Meta's services ⁽⁴⁾. In relation to one of those pending cases, on 30 April 2024, the Commission opened formal proceedings against Facebook and Instagram to assess whether Meta may have breached the DSA ⁽⁵⁾.

The suspected infringements cover, among other areas, Meta's policies in relation to disinformation campaigns. If the investigations confirm the Commission's concerns, further steps may be taken, such as interim measures and noncompliance decisions.

This may lead to the imposition of fines which may be up to 6% of the worldwide annual turnover of the platform.

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

⁽²⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/code-practice-disinformation>

⁽³⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/racism-and-xenophobia/eu-code-conduct-countering-illegal-hate-speech-online_en

⁽⁴⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/list-designated-vlops-and-vloses>

⁽⁵⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_2373