

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002915/24
to the Commission
Christel Schaldemose (S&D), Stine Bosse (Renew)
(12 December 2024)**

Subject: Google and edited media content

Google has stated ⁽¹⁾ that some Danes' access to Danish news is going to be blocked. At an extremely challenging time when it comes to mis- and disinformation, it is particularly serious when Google, as a dominant player, suddenly and unilaterally blocks citizens' access to trustworthy content. Google's dominance extends to between 92% and 97% of the Danish search engines market. Google's action shows just how much control the tech companies wield over our information flows.

1. Is the Commission aware that Google is blocking edited media content in eight EU countries?
2. Given the dominant position that Google enjoys, does the Commission take the view that Google is entitled to take this step?
3. Is Google's unilateral interference in the flow of information in line with EU regulation?

Submitted: 12.12.2024

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

The Commission is aware that Google had launched a temporary test, removing EU press publishers' content from its services for 1% of users in eight Member States, including Denmark. The test ended on the 4 February 2025.

The Commission considers that Google is entitled to conduct a time-limited test affecting a small part of users, provided it complies with obligations under applicable EU law.

As a dominant company in the EU online search market, Google is prohibited from abusing market power under Article 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

Article 15 of Directive 2019/790 ⁽¹⁾ grants exclusive rights to press publishers for the online use of their press publications by information society service providers.

It does not oblige these service providers to make press publishers' content available. However, when they do, they are required to obtain authorisation from press publishers.

Google Search is a core platform service for which Alphabet was designated as a gatekeeper under the Digital Markets Act ⁽²⁾ and is required to comply with its obligations. The Commission will take any necessary measures if Alphabet's actions are found non-compliant.

As a very large online search engine under the Digital Services Act ⁽³⁾, Google Search is also required to comply with the obligations therein. Under the Platform-to-Business Regulation ⁽⁴⁾, online platforms must give advance notice to publishers for content restriction or suspensions and offer dispute resolution mechanism.

The European Media Freedom Act ⁽⁵⁾ introduces safeguards to protect reputable media providers against arbitrary content removal by very large online platforms. It also requires Member States to ensure access to diverse, independent media content.

¹ <https://blog.google/around-the-globe/google-europe/more-data-about-news-results-eu/>

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/790/oj>

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/1925/oj/eng>

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2065/oj/eng>

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32019R1150>

⁽⁵⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32024R1083>