

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000414/25
to the Commission**

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(30 January 2025)

Subject: Statements by former Commissioner Thierry Breton on the upcoming parliamentary elections in Germany: a threat to democracy

On 9 January 2025, in an interview on RMC, former European Commissioner Thierry Breton suggested that the European Union had played a role in the judicial process that led to the cancellation of the presidential elections in Romania. He added that the EU could consider similar action in Germany, notably if the AfD were to win the elections, owing to concerns about possible foreign interference, in particular by Elon Musk.

These statements raise questions about the EU's commitment to democratic principles and the sovereignty of the Member States.

1. Can the Commission clarify these statements and state whether it intervened, or could have intervened in any way, in the process leading to the cancellation of the first round of the elections in Romania?
2. What criteria could justify such a measure in other Member States?
3. What powers does the Commission have to intervene in national elections?

Supporters ⁽¹⁾

Submitted: 30.1.2025

Answer given by Mr McGrath on behalf of the European Commission
(15 April 2025)

The Commission will not comment about statements made by former Commissioners in their private capacity.

The Commission has no powers to intervene in national elections. The conduct and the organisation of elections, and any decisions related to the electoral process, are the competence and responsibility of the Member States, in accordance with their national legislation, international obligations and applicable EU law. National authorities and courts are primarily responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable rules.

Free and fair elections are at the core of democracy. The Commission supports Member States on electoral matters, notably through the framework of the European Cooperation Network on Elections, which brings together national authorities with competences in electoral matters and facilitates the exchanges of information and best practices.

The Commission is also working with Member States to support the application of EU law provisions which are relevant in national electoral contexts in the EU, such as the Digital Services Act ⁽¹⁾, Regulation 2024/900 on the transparency and targeting of political advertising ⁽²⁾ (which will apply in full from October 2025), the General Data Protection Regulation ⁽³⁾ and the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Act ⁽⁴⁾ (if AI is used to influence the outcome of an election).

In 2023, the Commission published a recommendation on inclusive and resilient electoral processes in the Union ⁽⁵⁾.

¹ This question is supported by Members other than the authors: Julien Leonardelli (Pfe), Julie Rechagneux (Pfe)

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022R2065> In 2024, the Commission issued Guidelines for providers of Very Large Online Platforms and Very Large Online Search Engines on the mitigation of systemic risks for electoral processes, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52024XC03014&qid=1714466886277>

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/900/oj/eng>

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/679/oj/eng>

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj/eng>

⁽⁵⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reco/2023/2829/oj/eng>