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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(10.4.2025)

The Digital Services Act (DSA)¹ does not regulate online content, nor individual expressions or statements online which are protected by the right of freedom of expression under the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights², within the boundaries defined in national laws on illegal content.

The DSA fosters innovation by setting a single clear and risk-based framework for the EU, thus making the single market easier to navigate, lowering compliance costs and establishing a level playing field. In addition, the most stringent obligations only apply to designated providers of very large online platforms (VLOPs) and very large online search engines (VLOSEs) given their systemic impact in facilitating public debate and the dissemination of information, opinions and ideas.

The DSA implementation costs are annually reported to the European Parliament and the Council pursuant to Article 43(7) of the DSA and published on the Commission's website³. The Commission is currently preparing the report covering the second year of DSA enforcement⁴, which will be transmitted to the European Parliament and the Council soon.

In the EU fact checkers verified by the European Fact Checking Standards Network, work based on high ethical and professional standards, which guarantee their independence.

The Commission does not hire fact checkers and Article 35 of the DSA does not prescribe fact checking as a mitigating measure for systemic risks concerning civic discourse, electoral processes and public security. Rather providers of VLOPs and VLOSEs are required to put in place reasonable, proportionate and effective mitigation measures, tailored to the specific systemic risks they have identified and fully respecting freedom of expression, which may include fact checking.⁵

¹ Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market for Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act), OJ L 277, 27.10.2022, p. 1–102.

² Enshrined in Article 11 of the EU charter on freedom of expression.

³ For the first report, see: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/report-overall-annual-costs-incurred-fulfilment-commissions-tasks-under-digital-services-act-dsa>

⁴ Which ranges from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024.

⁵ See also the recent Commission Opinion on the assessment of the Code of Practice on Disinformation <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/code-conduct-disinformation>