

EN

E-000641/2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(31.3.2025)

The Digital Services Act (DSA)¹ aims at creating a safe, predictable and trusted online environment.

Although the DSA does not define what is illegal or harmful, it imposes due diligence obligations on online platforms, with more stringent measures on the providers of very large online platforms (VLOPs). Notably, the providers of online platforms are required to process notices of potentially illegal content in a timely, diligent and non-arbitrary manner. Besides, the providers of online platforms must submit the statement of reasons supporting their content moderation decisions on the DSA Transparency Database². Moreover, providers of VLOPs, such as TikTok³, have a legal obligation to regularly assess and mitigate any systemic risk stemming from their services, including those related to the dissemination of illegal content or those of serious negative consequences to a person's physical and mental well-being.

The Commission does not have direct competence to moderate content online, nor does it have the power to order the removal of a specific piece of content, but it takes the impact that social media can have on people's physical and mental well-being very seriously. On 19 February 2024, it opened formal proceedings against TikTok as it suspects, notably, that it failed to diligently assess and mitigate the risks that its service may pose to the physical and mental well-being of its users, in particular the risks stemming from algorithmic-driven exposure to harmful content (commonly called the rabbit hole effect)⁴. This investigation is ongoing, and the Commission is carrying it out as a matter of priority. An EU-wide inquiry into the broader impacts of social media on well-being was also announced in the Political Guidelines⁵.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2065/oj/eng>

² <https://transparency.dsa.ec.europa.eu/?lang=en>

³ By "TikTok", it is being referred to the provider of TikTok.

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_24_926

⁵ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/e6cd4328-673c-4e7a-8683-f63ffb2cf648_en?filename=Political%20Guidelines%202024-2029_EN.pdf