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E-000854/2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(24.4.2025)

The Digital Services Act (DSA)¹ and the Code of Practice on Disinformation² aim to help ensure a safe, transparent online space in the EU where users' fundamental rights, including freedom of expression, are respected. The DSA does not define what type of content users may or may not post online nor what content constitutes disinformation. It obliges very large online platforms and search engines to assess and mitigate systemic risks³, including to civic discourse, stemming from their services. It also mandates transparency and accountability from online platforms⁴.

The DSA contains the world's strongest safeguards of users' rights online, e.g. by requiring platforms to publish online⁵ statements of reasons for any content moderation decisions by platforms, internal and external complaint mechanisms for appealing content moderation decisions, allowing users to contest decisions and ensuring due process.

Decisions taken by the Commission under the DSA can be challenged in front of the Court of Justice of the European Union. Those taken at national level are subject to oversight of the respective legal systems in each Member State. The Commission is bound by the Charter of Fundamental Rights⁶ to respect the rights, freedoms and principles, including that to freedom of expression.

Regarding the independence of fact-checking organisations, the Commission supports the most stringent standards of integrity and accountability. This is why the EU has supported the independent creation of the European Fact-Checking Standard Network's (EFCSN) Code of Standards⁷, the world's strongest framework to maintain the highest standards of methodology, ethics and transparency.⁸ These standards are upheld and enforced independently by the EFCSN.

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

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

³ As defined in Article 34 and 35 of the DSA.

⁴ Article 37, Article 42 of the DSA.

⁵ <https://transparency.dsa.ec.europa.eu/?lang=en>

⁶ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/char_2012/oj/eng

⁷ <https://efcsn.com/code-of-standards/>

⁸ The project was funded in the course of the Integrity of Social Media call for proposals, <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/funding/call-proposals-integrity-social-media>