

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001883/25
to the Commission
Giuseppe Antoci (The Left)
(12 May 2025)**

Subject: Digital platforms and content moderation — double standards in the fight against online crime

Recently, Salvatore Borsellino, the brother of the illustrious judge, Paolo Borsellino, who was killed by the Mafia, has spoken out against the restrictions that TikTok has placed on his account until 2035, preventing him from continuing to share content raising awareness of the fight against the Mafia and organised crime ⁽¹⁾ ⁽²⁾.

Such a curtailment of the freedom of expression is deeply troubling — all the more so considering that, in the meantime, many social media accounts are sharing content glorifying criminal acts and Mafia figures ⁽³⁾, not to mention inciting violence, without facing any censorship at all ⁽⁴⁾.

Since it is classified as a very large online platform, TikTok is subject to the most stringent rules under the Digital Services Act, including the requirement that it adapt its moderation processes in order to block online content inciting violence.

In light of the above:

1. What does the Commission make of this troubling state of affairs?
2. What further action could it take to ensure that platforms like TikTok monitor content properly and effectively, in accordance with the Digital Services Act, on the one hand protecting individuals' freedom of expression while, on the other hand, promoting positive behavioural patterns and discouraging the posting of violent content?

Submitted: 12.5.2025

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

Freedom of expression and information is a pillar of democracy and protected under the EU Charter.¹ The Digital Services Act (DSA) ⁽¹⁾ helps create a safer digital space where the fundamental rights of users are protected online. The DSA defines the responsibilities of online platforms and specifically helps to ensure freedom of expression online.

Under the DSA the Commission monitors the compliance of all designated Very Large Online Platforms (VLOPs) and Very Large Search Engines (VLOSEs) including TikTok. ⁽²⁾

In order to address harmful and potentially illegal content under the DSA, the providers of online platforms, including social media platforms need to put in place an easy-to-use reporting tool for users to notify them about the presence of illegal content on the platform.

In addition, competent authorities in each Member State may order providers to take action against certain items of illegal content and provide them with specific information.

As VLOP, TikTok has to comply with additional obligations. Namely, the diligent assessment and effective mitigation of the systemic risks, including in relation to the freedom of expression and the removal of illegal content. Mitigation measures can include the automatic detection of harmful content.

Digital Services Coordinators (DSC) are the competent authorities to monitor compliance with the DSA in each Member State. They also gather complaints from individual cases like the one you mentioned and assesses the need for further action.

In Italy, the communications Regulatory Authority (AGCOM) is the designated DSC. Users also have the right to go through out-of-court dispute settlement bodies in case of disagreement with the platform's actions.

¹ <https://www.palermotoday.it/cronaca/salvatore-borsellino-sospeso-tik-tok.html>.

² <https://www.19luglio1992.com/salvatore-borsellino-sospeso-dal-social-tiktok-rete-no-bavaglio-grave-violazione-dellarticolo-21-della-costituzione/>.

³ <https://www.antimafiaduemila.com/rubriche/giorgio-bongiovanni/104777-tiktok-la-piattaforma-della-perversione-che-censura-i-giusti.html>.

⁴ <https://www.open.online/2025/04/26/figlio-toto-riina-ritratto-social/>.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:4625430>.

⁽²⁾ Supervision of the designated very large online platforms and search engines under DSA | Shaping Europe's digital future.