

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002137/25
to the Commission
Laura Ballarín Cereza (S&D)
(28 May 2025)**

Subject: The 2 059 Meta content moderator redundancies in Barcelona, viewed in light of the Digital Services Act

On 3 April 2025, Meta announced that it was terminating its content moderation contract with Telus, which provided Barcelona-based moderation for Facebook and Instagram. As a result, on 28 April, Telus laid off 2 059 employees at its office in Barcelona. This decision followed January's revelation that Meta was ending its fact-checking programme and relaxing its content moderation.

Article 35(1) of the Digital Services Act requires large online platforms to implement effective measures to reduce systemic risks, which may include improving content moderation, with expeditious content removal or blocking, in particular in respect of hate speech or cyber violence.

In light of the above:

1. Does the Commission consider that these redundancies, given Meta's decision, could constitute a breach of Article 35 of the Digital Services Act?
2. Will the redundancies be included in the ongoing investigation into Meta, and when will the results of that investigation be published?
3. If a breach of Article 35 is established, what consequences does the Commission envisage for Meta under the Digital Services Act?

Submitted: 28.5.2025

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

Under the Digital Services Act (DSA) ⁽¹⁾, providers of very large online platforms ('VLOPs') like Meta are required to diligently identify, assess and analyse the systemic risks ⁽²⁾ stemming from design, functioning and use made of their services and related systems (including algorithmic systems) and to put in place reasonable, effective and proportionate mitigation measures ⁽³⁾, tailored to the identified risks. ⁽⁴⁾

In addition, providers like Meta are required under the DSA to *inter alia* include information on content moderation rules in their terms and conditions and to enforce such rules in a diligent, objective and proportionate manner. ⁽⁵⁾

In addition, the provider has to put in place a notice and action mechanism to allow recipients of their service to notify content considered to be illegal and process such notices in a timely, diligent and non-arbitrary manner. ⁽⁶⁾

The DSA also grants users the right to access an effective internal complaint-handling system to challenge content moderation decisions. ⁽⁷⁾

To comply with these obligations, the quality of content moderation processes is essential. While automated content moderation and processing of notices is permissible, the relevant providers (including Meta as the provider of Facebook and Instagram) must be transparent about the extent of their use of automation and the accuracy of their automated tools for the purpose of content moderation. ⁽⁸⁾

⁽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 L277/1.

⁽²⁾ Such systemic risks include the dissemination of illegal content on their services, and any actual or foreseeable negative effect in relation to the protection of public health, minors and to the person's physical and mental well-being.

⁽³⁾ The mitigation of these risks may include adapting the relevant provider's content moderation processes and reinforcing their internal process for the detection of systemic risks.

⁽⁴⁾ Articles 34 and 35 DSA.

⁽⁵⁾ Article 14 DSA.

⁽⁶⁾ Article 16 DSA.

⁽⁷⁾ Article 20 DSA.

⁽⁸⁾ Furthermore, the DSA requires that internal complaint-handling systems be operated under the supervision of qualified staff, to ensure that decision-making processes are fair.

As part of the investigation the Commission opened against Meta on 30 April 2024 ⁽⁹⁾, the Commission is examining whether recipients in the EU can adequately notify Meta of illegal content on their platforms and have access to an effective internal complaint-handling system. The Commission cannot comment on the status of ongoing investigations.

⁽⁹⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/list-designated-vlops-and-vloses#ecl-inpage-metaplatforms>.