

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004384/25
to the Commission
Merja Kyllönen (The Left)
(6 November 2025)**

Subject: Political Advertising Regulation risks harming civil society

The definition of political advertising in the Political Advertising Regulation ⁽¹⁾ into force on 10 October 2025, risks harming civil society. Major platforms and media companies (e.g. Meta, Microsoft, Sanoma Oy) plan to restrict or ban paid content by NGOs related to issues such as civil rights, the environment, health, migration or taxation. This undermines NGOs' ability to communicate, advocate and fundraise, which are core elements of democratic participation. These restrictions may be misused in countries where civic space is already under pressure. Clear guidance is therefore needed to distinguish legitimate civil advocacy from political advertising.

The ongoing revision of the Public Procurement Directive ⁽²⁾ should address the definition of a body governed by public law, as in some Member States, such as Finland, it forces many NGOs to follow full procurement procedures for contracts above EUR 60 000, even when privately funded. This creates an excessive administrative burden and fails to recognise the autonomy of NGOs. As clarified in the Court of Justice of the European Union Case C-526/11 *Ärztokammer* ⁽³⁾, receiving public grants alone should not imply control by the public authorities.

1. How will the Commission ensure that guidance on the Political Advertising Regulation will protect civil society advocacy and freedom of expression?
2. Will the Commission clarify the definition of a body governed by public law in order to safeguard the independence of NGOs in the forthcoming Public Procurement Directive?

Submitted: 6.11.2025

**Answer given by Commissioner McGrath on behalf of the European Commission
(29 January 2026)**

The Political Advertising Regulation ⁽¹⁾ does not ban political advertising, nor does it regulate its content or impose general monitoring obligations on online platforms.

These new rules ensure a level playing field, online and offline, help to protect the integrity of electoral processes and support an open democratic debate.

On 8 October 2025, the Commission published Guidelines ⁽²⁾ to support the regulation implementation. They offer guidance for sponsors and providers of political advertising services, including civil society actors and online platforms.

The decisions of some online platforms to discontinue political advertising services in the EU are commercial decisions.

The Commission is in contact with stakeholders and Member States to monitor and support the application of the regulation and will organise an implementation dialogue in 2026 to draw insights from its application. A new stakeholder Expert Group will help monitoring the application of the regulation.

The Commission also announced a revision of the EU public procurement Directives for the second quarter of 2026. As part of this revision, the Commission intends to assess to what extent the definition of contracting authority can be clarified.

To prepare this revision, the Commission intends to carry out an impact assessment to ensure that any proposed measure achieves its intended objectives, including simplification.

As both the impact assessment and a preparatory open public consultation on policy options are ongoing, the Commission is not in a position at this stage to commit to any possible aspect of its forthcoming proposals.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2024/900 of 13 March 2024 on the transparency and targeting of political advertising (OJ L, 2024/900, 20.3.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/900/oj>).

² Directive 2014/24/EU of 26 February 2014 on public procurement (OJ L 94, 28.3.2014, p. 65, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2014/24/oj>).

³ *IVD GmbH & Co. KG v Ärztekammer Westfalen-Lippe*. Case C-526/11. ECLI:EU:C:2013:543.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/900 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 March 2024 on the transparency and targeting of political advertising. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/900/oj/eng>.

⁽²⁾ C(2025) 6829 final — Communication from the Commission — Guidelines to support the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2024/900 on the transparency and targeting of political advertising.

The Commission recently adopted the EU Strategy for Civil Society ⁽³⁾ which aims to further support and empower civil society actors.

⁽³⁾ COM(2025) 790 final — Communication from the Commission — EU Strategy for Civil Society.