

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004703/25
to the Commission
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(26 November 2025)

Subject: Costs related to the reinstatement of content removed in error by digital platforms under the Digital Services Act and the role of trusted flaggers

In its answer to Written Question E-003616/2025 ⁽¹⁾, the Commission states that the redress and transparency mechanisms provided for in the Digital Services Act have led to the reinstatement of millions of pieces of content previously removed in error. These reinstatement operations are costly and time-consuming for the digital platforms, while they are at least partly based on erroneous indications by trusted flaggers.

1. What are the estimated costs for digital platforms of reinstating content previously removed in error?
2. What are the sanction or incentive mechanisms for trusted flaggers, so that they are incentivised to minimise errors, such as suspensions or withdrawals of licences as trusted flaggers, or pecuniary sanctions, including redress from the digital platform to the trusted flagger for the cost of correcting the error?
3. If trusted flaggers are not incentivised to minimise errors, does the Commission agree that this creates a serious imbalance, where trusted flaggers are able to offset the entire cost of their erroneous assessment to the digital platforms, without any repercussions for themselves?

Submitted: 26.11.2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(26 January 2026)

The Commission does not collect data on, nor estimate, the costs incurred by online platforms when reinstating content. Under the Digital Services Act (DSA), platform providers remain fully responsible for their content moderation decisions and for the organisational choices and costs linked to compliance with EU law.

The DSA's trusted flagger mechanism is expressly designed to improve the accuracy and quality of notices submitted to platforms. Trusted flaggers are designated by national Digital Services Coordinators (DSCs) only where they demonstrate proven expertise, independence, diligence, accuracy and objectivity in identifying illegal content, in accordance with Article 22.

Trusted flaggers do not take moderation decisions. Their notices must be treated with priority, but the assessment and final decision remain with the platform, which must apply its own safeguards and respect its own legal obligations. This reflects the DSA's core principle that platforms retain accountability for moderation outcomes.

Article 22 provides clear incentive and control mechanisms. Trusted flaggers are subject to ongoing monitoring by DSCs and transparency obligations, including annual public reporting on the volume and outcome of their notices.

In addition, Platforms must inform DSCs where a trusted flagger systematically submits insufficiently substantiated notices. Where designation conditions are no longer met, DSCs are empowered to suspend or revoke trusted flagger status.

Accordingly, the DSA does not create an imbalance but establishes proportionate oversight ensuring high quality notices while preserving platform responsibility.

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2025-003616_EN.html