

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000158/26
to the Commission**

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(14 January 2026)

Subject: Big Tech lobby attack on the EU's transparency and targeting of political advertising rules

Google and Meta have made major announcements as regards to political advertisements in the EU. Google deleted its political advertising repository from their public interface, including all history of the past seven years ⁽¹⁾, meanwhile Meta has stopped serving political ads entirely ⁽²⁾, and is taking an extremely broad approach, banning advertising on any societal issue ⁽³⁾. As the Transparency and Targeting of Political Advertising (TTPA) Regulation requires enhanced transparency of political ads and restricts only certain tracking practices, this is seemingly a power play and lobby campaign against the EU's new rules and an effort to derail implementation ⁽⁴⁾. This cannot remain unanswered.

1. Does the Commission agree that the TTPA Regulation does not require companies to stop political advertising, let alone ban such a broad category of societal issues?
2. Is the Commission investigating whether these companies' decisions to stop political and societal issue advertising, while continuing to promote polarising, hateful content via engagement-based recommender systems ⁽⁵⁾, poses a systemic risk with foreseeable negative effects on civic discourse, electoral processes and freedom of expression online under Article 34(1)(c) of the Digital Services Act (DSA)?
3. Is the Commission investigating if the deletion of an advertisement repository is a violation of Article 39 of the DSA?

Submitted: 14.1.2026

Answer given by Mr McGrath on behalf of the European Commission
(27 March 2026)

As the Commission noted in its replies to written questions E-004182/2025 and E-004689/2025, the Political Advertising Regulation ⁽¹⁾ does not ban political advertising, nor does it require providers of online platforms to do so.

Providers of very large online platforms (VLOPs) and very large online search engines (VLOSEs) must identify, analyse and assess systemic risk under Article 34(1)(c) of the Digital Services Act ⁽²⁾ (DSA) on a case-by-case basis.

The Commission is monitoring the implications of the relevant companies' decisions also in light of the Election Guidelines ⁽³⁾ issued by the Commission in April 2024, which recommend concrete measures for the providers of VLOPs and VLOSEs to reduce risks to civic discourse and electoral processes.

Article 39 of the DSA applies notwithstanding the removal of political advertising library initiatives previously offered by the providers of VLOPs and VLOSEs.

These were voluntary practices which predated the DSA. The advertising repositories mandated by Article 39 of the DSA allow the research community and civil society organisations to identify advertisements including political advertisements disseminated in Member States on VLOPs and VLOSEs during the entire period they are presented and for one year after the advertisement was presented for the last time.

¹ <https://www.thebriefing.ie/google-just-erased-7-years-of-our-political-history/>;

² <https://www.ft.com/content/c05bcb1d-f032-46cc-8f6c-c1f29ee0e465>

³ <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2025/10/02/meta-wekt-verwarring-en-woede-bij-overheid-en-ngos-met-advertentieverbod-voor-maatschappelijke-kwesties-a4908280>.

⁴ Articles 11, 12, 13 and 19 of the TTPA Regulation.

⁵ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2025-10-21/facebook-s-political-ad-ban-boosts-dutch-far-right-leader-geert-wilders>.

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

⁽³⁾ Communication from the Commission, Commission Guidelines for providers of Very Large Online Platforms and Very Large Online Search Engines on the mitigation of systemic risks for electoral processes pursuant to Article 35(3) of Regulation (EU) 2022/2065, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52024XC03014&qid=1714466886277>.