

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000458/26
to the Commission
Jorge Martín Frías (Pfe)
(4 February 2026)**

Subject: Recent reports from the US Congress on censorship in the European Union

The Republican group of the House Committee on the Judiciary of the United States recently reported that the Commission applied alleged censorship mechanisms to digital platforms under the Digital Services Act (DSA). According to these revelations, the Commission pushed for content that went against its own narrative on certain topics, including the COVID-19 pandemic, illegal immigration and gender ideology, to be removed through working groups against disinformation.

Although the Commission states that joining these groups and codes of conduct is voluntary, the information published suggests that, in practice, pressure was exerted on platforms to force them to change their rules, for example through the threat or initiation of sanctioning proceedings.

The report also states that the Commission met with digital platforms to restrict political discourse in the days leading up to at least eight elections held since 2023 across six Member States, including the elections in Romania.

In light of the above:

1. What are the Commission's explanations for this?
2. What guidelines did the Commission give the platforms to comply with the DSA?
3. Finally, what guarantees are there that the future EU network of verifiers will not be used to silence critical opinions?

Submitted: 4.2.2026

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(31 March 2026)**

The allegations of the U.S. House Judiciary Committee are unsubstantiated and unfounded. The Digital Services Act (DSA) ⁽¹⁾ brings unprecedented transparency in relation to and accountability of online platforms.

The DSA does not prescribe which content is illegal; this is determined by national law or other EU laws. It protects freedom of expression and entitles users to explanations and redress if their content is removed.

From July to December 2025, of 3.4+ billion content removals, most breached terms of service, while others involved unsafe products, scams, illegal hate speech, violence, or Internet Protocol violations ⁽²⁾.

The Commission's guidelines and codes of conduct support providers of online platforms with DSA compliance; these are entirely voluntary.

Platforms choose mitigation measures; codes are one option among many, designed by platforms themselves. Engaging with platforms on how their systems operate across different jurisdictions is a normal and necessary part of regulatory oversight.

Trusted flaggers operate exclusively in specific areas of expertise (e.g., protection of minors' violations or intellectual property infringements) where they can submit notices related to illegal content.

These notices are not legally binding; just like any notice of any other user, they serve solely as alerts to platforms, which must conduct their own independent assessment of the content's legality before acting.

The trusted flagger status is awarded by the independent Digital Services Coordinators of Member States following strict criteria set by the DSA and subject to various safeguards, such as objectivity, quality and transparency requirements, and the revocation of the trusted flagger status in case of misuse.

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

⁽²⁾ <https://transparency.dsa.ec.europa.eu/dashboard>.