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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(16.4.2026)

The Digital Services Act (DSA)¹ requires providers of very large online platforms (VLOPs) and very large search engines (VLOSEs) to assess the systemic risks stemming from their services and to mitigate them. This includes risks related to content moderation systems. The Commission assesses the risk assessment reports that providers of VLOPs and VLOSEs are required to compile and transmit to the Commission at least annually. Should the Commission identify shortcomings in those reports, it may send requests for information or open proceedings. In parallel, the Commission engages in regulatory dialogues with providers.

To mitigate systemic risks stemming from their services, providers have the freedom to choose from a wide range of measures. One among many options is adhering to a voluntary code of conduct deemed to contribute to the proper application of the DSA. Examples of such codes include the Code of conduct on countering illegal hate speech online².

The DSA sets a framework to create a safe online environment in which fundamental rights, including freedom of expression and information, are protected. Requirements to mitigate risks are limited to what is proportionate. To prevent ‘over moderation’, intermediary service providers must apply their terms and conditions in a diligent, objective, and proportionate manner, be transparent about all content moderation decisions, inform users of content moderation decisions affecting them and give them clear and specific statements of reasons, and provide effective appeal mechanisms.

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).

² <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/code-conduct-countering-illegal-hate-speech-online>.