

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002243/26  
to the Commission**

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(The Left), Tomáš Kubín (PfE)  
(2 June 2026)**

*Subject:* Streaming fraud

With rapid advancements in technology and AI, the tools available to malicious actors to commit fraud and mislead consumers have increased. One clear example is streaming fraud, where fake ‘plays’ of tracks on music-streaming platforms are artificially generated to inflate perceived popularity. These practices divert royalties away from legitimate artists and other contributors to the music economy, and undermine consumer trust in digital services. Streaming fraud can amount to breaches of consumer protection and unfair competition law, and to computer-misuse offences, and may in some cases also be linked to other serious crimes such as money laundering.

The Digital Services Act <sup>(1)</sup> (DSA) addresses the risks posed by illegal content online by imposing obligations on intermediaries and online platforms, including very large online platforms (VLOPs) and very large online search engines (VLOSEs), to identify, analyse and mitigate risks related to illegal content, including streaming fraud.

In this context:

1. How is the Commission ensuring that VLOSEs are effectively implementing their obligations under the DSA to prevent their services from being used to support streaming fraud?
2. Does the Commission consider current measures sufficient, or does it envisage further actions to tackle the problem?

Submitted: 2.6.2026

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

The Digital Services Act (DSA) <sup>(1)</sup> addresses risks arising from the design, functioning and use of online intermediary services. Practices such as the artificial inflation of streaming or play counts are best understood as a form of manipulation of the service through inauthentic use or automated exploitation; they may also breach providers’ terms of service.

The Commission notes that the DSA only covers streaming in respect of those parts that involve storing and making available content uploaded by its users.

Providers of designated Very Large Online Platforms (VLOPs) and Very Large Online Search Engines (VLOSEs) must, under Articles 34 and 35 DSA, identify, assess and mitigate the systemic risks stemming from their services.

The risk assessment must expressly examine how those risks are influenced by intentional manipulation of the service, including through inauthentic use or automated exploitation, and providers must adopt reasonable and effective mitigation measures. The use of automated tools or AI to generate deceptive activity falls within that exercise.

In addition, where such practices are illegal, hosting providers must under Article 16 DSA enable any user to notify them and handle such notices in a timely and diligent manner.

As a rule, the Commission does not comment on potential or ongoing proceedings. It stands ready to draw on the full range of its supervisory and enforcement powers, complemented where relevant by the EU consumer protection rules, to address evolving forms of online fraud.

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<sup>1</sup> 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) (OJ L 277, 27.10.2022, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2065/oj>).

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