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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Vestager
on behalf of the European Commission
(28.11.2024)

The Digital Services Act (DSA)¹ lays down obligations for designated providers of very large online platforms and search engines (VLOPSEs), such as X, to identify and mitigate certain systemic risks, including those related to negative effects on civic discourse and electoral processes in the EU. The Commission is responsible for supervising and enforcing these specific obligations in the EU.

Under the DSA, the Commission published guidelines² on recommended measures to VLOPSEs to mitigate systemic risks online that may impair the integrity of elections in the EU. This may include access to official information on the electoral process, media literacy initiatives, fact-checking labels, and demonetisation of content or disinformation. The Commission guidelines include a recommendation that risk mitigation measures should function at least one to six months before an electoral period and continue for at least one month after.

On 18 December 2023, the Commission opened an investigation into X's compliance with the DSA³. This investigation covers *inter alia* the risks regarding negative effects on civic discourse and electoral processes, in relation to the effectiveness of the measures taken to combat information manipulation on X. During its investigations, the Commission assesses evidence from multiple sources, including following public discourse. The Commission is thus aware of the Wall Street Journal publication referred to in the question.

Freedom of expression and information is a pillar of the EU's democratic system and is protected under the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union⁴, which is binding on the EU institutions and on Member States when they implement EU law.

The geographical scope of application of the DSA is the EU.

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://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52024XC03014&qid=1714466886277>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_23_6709

⁴ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/treaty/char_2012/oj