

Brussels, April 30, 2025

To:

Henna Virkkunen

Vice-President of the European Commission

Commissioner for Technological Sovereignty, Security, and Democracy

European Commission

Brussels

Subject: Urgent Request for Update on the Investigation into X (formerly Twitter)

Dear Vice-President Virkkunen,

We are writing to express our deep concern regarding the prolonged delay in the European Commission's investigation into X (formerly Twitter) under the Digital Services Act (DSA). The formal proceedings were initiated on December 18, 2023, as announced by the Commission. As of tomorrow, May 1, 2025, exactly 500 days will have passed since the investigation commenced, and the lack of a conclusive outcome is increasingly troubling.

Recent developments have intensified our concerns. Research indicates a potential algorithmic bias on X that disproportionately favors far-right content and amplifies the platform owner's own posts. Notably, a recent peer-reviewed study reveals that over half of the content shown in user feeds originates from accounts not directly followed. Studies demonstrate that the algorithm disproportionately promotes right-wing content, particularly for newer users, raising serious concerns about political manipulation through algorithmic design.

Further research conducted by the Australian Queensland University of Technology found that Musk's own posts received, on average, 6.4 million more views after July 13, 2024—an increase of over 138%—suggesting intentional algorithmic boosting of the owner's account. The same study observed a broader pattern of increased amplification of conservative content starting from July 2024, which coincided with Musk's public endorsement of Donald Trump's presidential campaign.

Investigative reporting by *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post* further confirms these trends, showing that even politically neutral or left-leaning users are routinely shown right-wing content, raising doubts about the platform's neutrality and compliance with the DSA's obligations for algorithmic transparency and user choice. Just seven days ago, a major investigation by *The New York Times* provided compelling evidence linking Elon Musk's public disputes with certain right-wing and far-right influencers to the immediate and severe suppression of their content's visibility—a phenomenon commonly referred to as "shadowbanning." The report underscored the opaque and arbitrary nature of content governance under Musk's direct control.

Moreover, there is growing evidence of attempts to influence European electoral processes through the platform. In Germany, Elon Musk issued an explicit endorsement of the far-right AfD, amplifying their content and triggering national debate on foreign interference. In the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Keir Starmer was targeted on X by a wave of misinformation, including direct accusations by Elon Musk, which the UK government described as deliberate attempts to undermine democratic institutions. In Ireland, disinformation rapidly spread on X during the Dublin riots in November 2023, exacerbating tensions and prompting criticism from national authorities regarding X's inaction and lack of cooperation.

While X was not the primary platform implicated in the recent Romanian presidential election scandal, it is nevertheless noteworthy that Elon Musk publicly defended the far-right candidate Călin Georgescu following his disqualification due to allegations of Russian interference and electoral irregularities. Musk openly criticized Romania's decision, reportedly calling the chief judge of the Constitutional Court a "tyrant" and expressing support for Georgescu on X. Regardless of Musk's personal declarations, the Romanian case remains a stark reminder of the vulnerability of democratic institutions to digital manipulation and underscores the importance of vigilant regulatory oversight.

These documented episodes—and the growing body of academic research and journalistic investigations—highlight not only the platform's potential to distort democratic discourse, but also the urgent need for regulatory clarity and enforcement. In this context, the 500-day delay since the launch of formal proceedings becomes increasingly unjustifiable. With each passing month, the evidence of potential harm deepens, while the lack of a decisive institutional response risks undermining the credibility of the Digital Services Act itself.

Given these pressing issues, we urge the Commission to provide a comprehensive update on the current status of the investigation. In particular, we would appreciate precise answers to the following specific questions arising directly from the application of the Digital Services Act:

1. Algorithmic transparency (Arts. 27 & 32 DSA)
What preliminary findings have emerged from the three "technical investigatory measures" sent to X on 17 January 2025 concerning the functioning of its recommendation system and its compliance with the DSA's transparency obligations?
2. Systemic-risk assessment and elections (Arts. 34–35)
Has X filed the annual risk-assessment report on democratic integrity required under Article 34? If so, what specific risks were identified and what concrete remedies does the Commission envisage ahead of the 2025–2026 electoral cycle?
3. Non-compliance and interim measures (Arts. 51, 55–57)
In light of evidence of selective amplification of political content, is the Commission considering provisional measures or immediate corrective orders—such as daily penalty payments or the suspension of certain functionalities—should X continue to disregard compliance requests?
4. Mandatory independent audit (Art. 37)
Has the external audit of X's recommendation system foreseen by Article 37 already

begun, or is it scheduled to start shortly? Which transparency criteria will govern the audit, and when does the Commission expect to publish its results?

5. Procedural timeline

Could the Commission provide an indicative calendar of next steps—statement of objections, potential final decision, and deadlines for implementation—in view of the 500 days that have elapsed since proceedings were opened?

In addition, we would welcome replies to the following general questions concerning the broader direction and final outcome of the proceedings:

6. What are the findings to date regarding X's compliance with the DSA?
7. What measures are being considered to address the identified concerns?
8. What is the anticipated timeline for concluding the investigation?

The integrity of our democratic processes and the enforcement of EU regulations are at stake. We trust that the Commission will act decisively to uphold these principles.

Sincerely,

MEP Sandro Gozi, France, Renew Europe

MEP Oihane AGIRREGOITIA MARTINEZ, Spain, Renew Europe

MEP Laura BALLARIN, Spain, Socialists and Democrats

MEP Brando BENIFEI, Italy, Socialists and Democrats

MEP Engin EROGLU, Germany, Renew Europe

MEP Laurence FARRENG, France, Renew Europe

MEP Alexandra GEESE, Germany, Greens/EFA

MEP Elisabeth GROSSMANN, Austria, Socialists and Democrats

MEP Christophe GRUDLER, France, Renew Europe

MEP Pierfrancesco MARAN, Italy, Socialists and Democrats

MEP Cynthia NI MHURCHU, Ireland, Renew Europe

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