



Commission preliminarily finds TikTok's ad repository in breach of the Digital Services Act

Brussels, 15 May 2025

Today, the Commission has informed TikTok of its preliminary view that the company does not fulfil the [Digital Services Act \(DSA\)](#)'s obligation to publish an advertisement repository. Such an advertising repository is critical for researchers and civil society to detect scam advertisements, hybrid threat campaigns, as well as coordinated information operations and fake advertisements, including in the context of elections.

The Commission has found that TikTok does not provide the necessary information about the content of the advertisements, the users targeted by the ads, and who paid for the advertisements. Moreover, TikTok's advertisement repository does not allow the public to search comprehensively for advertisements on the basis of this information, thereby limiting the usefulness of the tool.

The Commission's preliminary findings are based on an in-depth investigation that included, among others, the analysis of internal company documents, testing TikTok's tools, and interviews with experts in the field. By sending preliminary findings, the Commission informs TikTok of its preliminary view that it is in breach of the DSA. This is without prejudice to the outcome of the investigation

Next Steps

TikTok now has the possibility to exercise its rights of defence by examining the documents in the Commission's investigation file and by replying in writing to the Commission's preliminary findings. In parallel, the [European Board for Digital Services](#) will be consulted.

If the Commission's preliminary views were to be ultimately confirmed, the Commission may issue a non-compliance decision, which may trigger a fine of up to 6% of the total worldwide annual turnover of the provider as well as an enhanced supervision period to ensure compliance with the measures the provider intends to take to remedy the breach. The Commission can also impose periodic penalty payments to compel a platform to comply.

Background

On 19 February 2024, the Commission [opened formal proceedings](#) to assess whether TikTok may have breached the Digital Services Act. In addition to advertising transparency, the opening of proceedings also covered the negative effects stemming from the design of TikTok's algorithmic systems (such as 'rabbit hole effects' and behavioural addiction), age assurance, its obligation to ensure a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors, and data access for researchers, for which the investigation continues.

The Commission has also opened formal proceedings against TikTok in [December](#) 2024 on its management of risks related to elections and civic discourse, for which the investigation continues. These investigations are pursued by the Commission with priority.

The Commission has also put in place a [whistleblower tool](#), allowing employees and other people with knowledge to contact the Commission in an anonymous way to contribute to the Commission's monitoring of compliance by designated Very Large Online Platforms (VLOPs) and Very Large Online Search Engines (VLOSEs).

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Quote(s):

"Transparency in online advertising — who pays and how audiences are targeted — is essential to safeguarding the public interest. Whether we are defending the integrity of our democratic elections, protecting public health, or protecting consumers from scam ads, citizens have a right to know who is behind the messages they see. In our preliminary view, TikTok is not complying with the DSA in key areas of its advertisement repository, preventing the full inspection of the risks brought about by its advertising and targeting systems."

Henna Virkkunen, Executive Vice-President for Tech Sovereignty, Security and Democracy - 15/05/2025

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