



Kill the First Amendment Act: EU Agrees to Expand Online Censorship with 'Digital Services Act'

Description

EU: The European Union has vowed to massively expand online censorship worldwide, strictly regulate speech during times of “crisis” and impose digital passports so that online anonymity becomes a thing of the past.

Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama both enthusiastically lobbied for the EU to back the draconian censorship bill on Thursday:

For too long, tech platforms have amplified disinformation and extremism with no accountability. The EU is poised to do something about it.

I urge our transatlantic allies to push the Digital Services Act across the finish line and bolster global democracy before it's too late.

— Hillary Clinton (@HillaryClinton) [April 21, 2022](#)

Incredible moment from today: [@BarackObama](#) touts the EU's Digital Services Act [#DSA](#) as a way to “regulate the abuses that are seen in Big Tech companies.”

And he calls on the US to “find our voice in the global conversation.”
pic.twitter.com/0HZ9mHHFDz

— Accountable Tech (@accountabletech) [April 21, 2022](#)

Per [France 24](#), “EU agrees on new legislation to tame internet ‘Wild West’ “:

The Digital Services Act (DSA) — the second part of a massive project to regulate tech companies — aims to ensure tougher consequences for platforms and websites that host a long list of banned content ranging from hate speech to disinformation and child sexual abuse images.

[...] Tech giants have been repeatedly called out for failing to police their platforms — a New Zealand terrorist attack that was live-streamed on Facebook in 2019 caused global outrage, and the chaotic insurrection in the US last year was promoted online.

The dark side of the internet also includes e-commerce platforms filled with counterfeit or defective products.

[...] The regulation will require platforms to swiftly remove illegal content as soon as they are aware of its existence. Social networks would have to suspend users who frequently breach the law.

The DSA will force e-commerce sites to verify the identity of suppliers before proposing their products.

[...] The European Commission will oversee yearly audits [of Big Tech firms] and be able to impose fines of up to six percent of their annual sales for repeated infringements.

[Infowars.com](#) reports: Looking over [the outline of the new agreement](#) it's striking how they seamlessly conflate child sexual abuse material with “illegal hate speech.”

Both are jumbled together as “illegal content.”

- (12) In order to achieve the objective of ensuring a safe, predictable and trusted environment, for the purpose of this Regulation the concept of “illegal content” be defined broadly and also covers information relating to illegal content, products, services and activities. In particular, that concept should be understood to include information, irrespective of its form, that under the applicable law is either illegal, such as illegal hate speech or terrorist content and unlawful discrimination content, or that relates to activities that are illegal, such as the sharing of information depicting child sexual abuse, unlawful non-consensual sharing of private information, online stalking, the sale of non-compliant or counterfeit products, the non-authorised use of copyright protected material or activities involving infringements of copyright or protection law. In this regard, it is immaterial whether the illegality of the information or activity results from Union law or from national law that is consistent with Union law and what the precise nature or subject matter is of the law in question.

The law calls for plans to restrict free speech on the internet during times of “crisis.”

- (71) In case of extraordinary circumstances affecting public security or public health, the Commission may initiate the drawing up of crisis protocols to coordinate a collective and cross-border response in the online environment. Extraordinary circumstances may entail any unforeseeable event, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, pandemics and other serious cross-border threats to public health, war and terrorism, where, for example, online platforms may be misused for the rapid spread of illegal content or disinformation or where the need arises for rapid dissemination of reliable information. In light of the important role of very large online platforms in disseminating information in our societies and across borders, such platforms should be encouraged in drawing up and applying specific crisis protocols. Such protocols should be activated only for a limited period of time and the measures adopted should also be limited to what is strictly necessary to address the extraordinary circumstance. Those measures should be consistent with this Regulation and should not amount to a general obligation for the participating very large online platforms to monitor the information which they transmit or store, nor actively seek facts or circumstances indicating illegal content.

The DSA also [pushes for](#) a “public electronic identity (eID),” which [Politico previously described as a “National ID card” on your phone](#) that has its origins in vaccine passports and “Digital COVID Certificates.”

Trust in the online world also means helping consumers take greater control of and responsibility for their own data and identity. Clearer rules on the transparency, behaviour and accountability of those who act as gatekeepers to information and data flows are needed, as is effective enforcement of existing rules. People should also be able to control their online identity, when authentication is needed to access certain online services. A universally accepted public electronic identity (eID) is necessary for consumers to have access to their data and securely use the products and services they want without having to use unrelated platforms to do so and unnecessarily sharing personal data with them. Europeans can also benefit from use of data to improve public as well as private decision-making.

Though the eID is sold under the guise of protecting people's privacy, "digital rights activists ... worry the proposal could allow the private sector to better access people's government-certified information, thereby actually strengthening the likes of Facebook and Google and the targeted advertising industry," Politico reported.

This law is the EU's answer to the rising tide of populism and nationalism. Rather than offer any concessions to the masses, they're [imprisoning "far-right" leaders, outlawing "far-right" groups, sanctioning Hungarians to punish them for voting for Viktor Orban](#) and [launching witch hunts against Marine Le Pen to sabotage her election chances](#).

This how they "defend democracy!"

by Sean Adl-Tabatabai

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Date Created

04/25/2022