Question for written answer E-001750/2024
to the Commission
Rule 144
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Subject: Political pressure on content moderation and limiting freedom of speech in social media

In light of the recent letter by EU Commissioner Thierry Breton to Elon Musk, in which the Commissioner exerts direct pressure on X (formerly Twitter) for stricter content moderation under the pretext of managing harmful content, and considering the statement by Meta's CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, who revealed instances of formal and informal coercion by public authorities to demote or remove specific content, we would like to ask:

1 Can you confirm whether Commissioner Breton or any other Commission officials have, at any point, used their political or administrative positions to exert pressure — whether formally or informally — on major social media platforms to enforce specific content moderation actions, even when those actions contradicted the platforms' own assessments or policies? Could you provide exhaustive list of examples?

2 During negotiations of codes of conduct, or discussions related to best practices under the Digital Services Act (DSA), have Commission officials, including Commissioner Breton, pushed for specific content moderation standards or practices that platforms found contentious or excessive? If so, were these requests consistent with the principles of free speech and transparency that the Commission publicly upholds?

3 Does the Commission maintain records of all communications regarding content moderation discussions with social media platforms?

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