

I

(Legislative acts)

REGULATIONS

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)
(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 114 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee ⁽¹⁾,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions ⁽²⁾,

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure ⁽³⁾,

Whereas:

- (1) Information society services and especially intermediary services have become an important part of the Union's economy and the daily life of Union citizens. Twenty years after the adoption of the existing legal framework applicable to such services laid down in Directive 2000/31/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽⁴⁾, new and innovative business models and services, such as online social networks and online platforms allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders, have allowed business users and consumers to impart and access information and engage in transactions in novel ways. A majority of Union citizens now uses those services on a daily basis. However, the digital transformation and increased use of those services has also resulted in new risks and challenges for individual recipients of the relevant service, companies and society as a whole.
- (2) Member States are increasingly introducing, or are considering introducing, national laws on the matters covered by this Regulation, imposing, in particular, diligence requirements for providers of intermediary services as regards the way they should tackle illegal content, online disinformation or other societal risks. Those diverging national laws negatively affect the internal market, which, pursuant to Article 26 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), comprises an area without internal frontiers in which the free movement of goods and services and freedom of establishment are ensured, taking into account the inherently cross-border nature of the internet, which is generally used to provide those services. The conditions for the provision of intermediary services

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 286, 16.7.2021, p. 70.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 440, 29.10.2021, p. 67.

⁽³⁾ Position of the European Parliament of 5 July 2022 (not yet published in the Official Journal) and decision of the Council of 4 October 2022.

⁽⁴⁾ Directive 2000/31/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2000 on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular electronic commerce, in the Internal Market ('Directive on electronic commerce') (OJ L 178, 17.7.2000, p. 1).

- (151) In order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of this Regulation, implementing powers should be conferred on the Commission to lay down templates concerning the form, content and other details of reports on content moderation, to establish the amount of the annual supervisory fee charged on providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines, to lay down the practical arrangements for the proceedings, the hearings and the negotiated disclosure of information carried out in the context of supervision, investigation, enforcement and monitoring in respect of providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines, as well as to lay down the practical and operational arrangements for the functioning of the information sharing system and its interoperability with other relevant systems. Those powers should be exercised in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽³⁴⁾.
- (152) In order to fulfil the objectives of this Regulation, the power to adopt acts in accordance with Article 290 TFEU should be delegated to the Commission to supplement this Regulation, in respect of criteria for the identification of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines, the procedural steps, methodologies and reporting templates for the audits, the technical specifications for access requests and the detailed methodology and procedures for setting the supervisory fee. It is of particular importance that the Commission carry out appropriate consultations during its preparatory work, including at expert level, and that those consultations be conducted in accordance with the principles laid down in the Interinstitutional Agreement of 13 April 2016 on Better Law-Making ⁽³⁵⁾. In particular, to ensure equal participation in the preparation of delegated acts, the European Parliament and the Council receive all documents at the same time as Member States' experts, and their experts systematically have access to meetings of Commission expert groups dealing with the preparation of delegated acts.
- (153) This Regulation respects the fundamental rights recognised by the Charter and the fundamental rights constituting general principles of Union law. Accordingly, this Regulation should be interpreted and applied in accordance with those fundamental rights, including the freedom of expression and of information, as well as the freedom and pluralism of the media. When exercising the powers set out in this Regulation, all public authorities involved should achieve, in situations where the relevant fundamental rights conflict, a fair balance between the rights concerned, in accordance with the principle of proportionality.
- (154) Given the scope and impact of societal risks that may be caused by very large online platforms and very large online search engines, the need to address those risks as a matter of priority and the capacity to take the necessary measures, it is justified to limit the period after which this Regulation starts to apply to the providers of those services.
- (155) Since the objectives of this Regulation, namely to contribute to the proper functioning of the internal market and to ensure a safe, predictable and trusted online environment in which the fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter are duly protected, cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States because they cannot achieve the necessary harmonisation and cooperation by acting alone, but can rather, by reason of territorial and personal scope, be better achieved at the Union level, the Union may adopt measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union. In accordance with the principle of proportionality as set out in that Article, this Regulation does not go beyond what is necessary in order to achieve those objectives.
- (156) The European Data Protection Supervisor was consulted in accordance with Article 42(1) of Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽³⁶⁾ and delivered an opinion on 10 February 2021 ⁽³⁷⁾,

⁽³⁴⁾ Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers (OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, p. 13).

⁽³⁵⁾ OJ L 123, 12.5.2016, p. 1.

⁽³⁶⁾ Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

⁽³⁷⁾ OJ C 149, 27.4.2021, p. 3.

HAVE ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

CHAPTER I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

Subject matter

1. The aim of this Regulation is to contribute to the proper functioning of the internal market for intermediary services by setting out harmonised rules for a safe, predictable and trusted online environment that facilitates innovation and in which fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter, including the principle of consumer protection, are effectively protected.
2. This Regulation lays down harmonised rules on the provision of intermediary services in the internal market. In particular, it establishes:
 - (a) a framework for the conditional exemption from liability of providers of intermediary services;
 - (b) rules on specific due diligence obligations tailored to certain specific categories of providers of intermediary services;
 - (c) rules on the implementation and enforcement of this Regulation, including as regards the cooperation of and coordination between the competent authorities.

Article 2

Scope

1. This Regulation shall apply to intermediary services offered to recipients of the service that have their place of establishment or are located in the Union, irrespective of where the providers of those intermediary services have their place of establishment.
2. This Regulation shall not apply to any service that is not an intermediary service or to any requirements imposed in respect of such a service, irrespective of whether the service is provided through the use of an intermediary service.
3. This Regulation shall not affect the application of Directive 2000/31/EC.
4. This Regulation is without prejudice to the rules laid down by other Union legal acts regulating other aspects of the provision of intermediary services in the internal market or specifying and complementing this Regulation, in particular, the following:
 - (a) Directive 2010/13/EU;
 - (b) Union law on copyright and related rights;
 - (c) Regulation (EU) 2021/784;
 - (d) Regulation (EU) 2019/1148;
 - (e) Regulation (EU) 2019/1150;
 - (f) Union law on consumer protection and product safety, including Regulations (EU) 2017/2394 and (EU) 2019/1020 and Directives 2001/95/EC and 2013/11/EU;
 - (g) Union law on the protection of personal data, in particular Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and Directive 2002/58/EC;

- (h) Union law in the field of judicial cooperation in civil matters, in particular Regulation (EU) No 1215/2012 or any Union legal act laying down the rules on law applicable to contractual and non-contractual obligations;
- (i) Union law in the field of judicial cooperation in criminal matters, in particular a Regulation on European Production and Preservation Orders for electronic evidence in criminal matters;
- (j) a Directive laying down harmonised rules on the appointment of legal representatives for the purpose of gathering evidence in criminal proceedings.

Article 3

Definitions

For the purpose of this Regulation, the following definitions shall apply:

- (a) ‘information society service’ means a ‘service’ as defined in Article 1(1), point (b), of Directive (EU) 2015/1535;
- (b) ‘recipient of the service’ means any natural or legal person who uses an intermediary service, in particular for the purposes of seeking information or making it accessible;
- (c) ‘consumer’ means any natural person who is acting for purposes which are outside his or her trade, business, craft, or profession;
- (d) ‘to offer services in the Union’ means enabling natural or legal persons in one or more Member States to use the services of a provider of intermediary services that has a substantial connection to the Union;
- (e) ‘substantial connection to the Union’ means a connection of a provider of intermediary services with the Union resulting either from its establishment in the Union or from specific factual criteria, such as:
 - a significant number of recipients of the service in one or more Member States in relation to its or their population; or
 - the targeting of activities towards one or more Member States;
- (f) ‘trader’ means any natural person, or any legal person irrespective of whether it is privately or publicly owned, who is acting, including through any person acting in his or her name or on his or her behalf, for purposes relating to his or her trade, business, craft or profession;
- (g) ‘intermediary service’ means one of the following information society services:
 - (i) a ‘mere conduit’ service, consisting of the transmission in a communication network of information provided by a recipient of the service, or the provision of access to a communication network;
 - (ii) a ‘caching’ service, consisting of the transmission in a communication network of information provided by a recipient of the service, involving the automatic, intermediate and temporary storage of that information, performed for the sole purpose of making more efficient the information’s onward transmission to other recipients upon their request;
 - (iii) a ‘hosting’ service, consisting of the storage of information provided by, and at the request of, a recipient of the service;
- (h) ‘illegal content’ means any information that, in itself or in relation to an activity, including the sale of products or the provision of services, is not in compliance with Union law or the law of any Member State which is in compliance with Union law, irrespective of the precise subject matter or nature of that law;

- (i) 'online platform' means a hosting service that, at the request of a recipient of the service, stores and disseminates information to the public, unless that activity is a minor and purely ancillary feature of another service or a minor functionality of the principal service and, for objective and technical reasons, cannot be used without that other service, and the integration of the feature or functionality into the other service is not a means to circumvent the applicability of this Regulation;
- (j) 'online search engine' means an intermediary service that allows users to input queries in order to perform searches of, in principle, all websites, or all websites in a particular language, on the basis of a query on any subject in the form of a keyword, voice request, phrase or other input, and returns results in any format in which information related to the requested content can be found;
- (k) 'dissemination to the public' means making information available, at the request of the recipient of the service who provided the information, to a potentially unlimited number of third parties;
- (l) 'distance contract' means 'distance contract' as defined in Article 2, point (7), of Directive 2011/83/EU;
- (m) 'online interface' means any software, including a website or a part thereof, and applications, including mobile applications;
- (n) 'Digital Services Coordinator of establishment' means the Digital Services Coordinator of the Member State where the main establishment of a provider of an intermediary service is located or its legal representative resides or is established;
- (o) 'Digital Services Coordinator of destination' means the Digital Services Coordinator of a Member State where the intermediary service is provided;
- (p) 'active recipient of an online platform' means a recipient of the service that has engaged with an online platform by either requesting the online platform to host information or being exposed to information hosted by the online platform and disseminated through its online interface;
- (q) 'active recipient of an online search engine' means a recipient of the service that has submitted a query to an online search engine and been exposed to information indexed and presented on its online interface;
- (r) 'advertisement' means information designed to promote the message of a legal or natural person, irrespective of whether to achieve commercial or non-commercial purposes, and presented by an online platform on its online interface against remuneration specifically for promoting that information;
- (s) 'recommender system' means a fully or partially automated system used by an online platform to suggest in its online interface specific information to recipients of the service or prioritise that information, including as a result of a search initiated by the recipient of the service or otherwise determining the relative order or prominence of information displayed;
- (t) 'content moderation' means the activities, whether automated or not, undertaken by providers of intermediary services, that are aimed, in particular, at detecting, identifying and addressing illegal content or information incompatible with their terms and conditions, provided by recipients of the service, including measures taken that affect the availability, visibility, and accessibility of that illegal content or that information, such as demotion, demonetisation, disabling of access to, or removal thereof, or that affect the ability of the recipients of the service to provide that information, such as the termination or suspension of a recipient's account;
- (u) 'terms and conditions' means all clauses, irrespective of their name or form, which govern the contractual relationship between the provider of intermediary services and the recipients of the service;

- (v) 'persons with disabilities' means 'persons with disabilities' as referred to in Article 3, point (1), of Directive (EU) 2019/882 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽³⁸⁾;
- (w) 'commercial communication' means 'commercial communication' as defined in Article 2, point (f), of Directive 2000/31/EC;
- (x) 'turnover' means the amount derived by an undertaking within the meaning of Article 5(1) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽³⁹⁾.

CHAPTER II

LIABILITY OF PROVIDERS OF INTERMEDIARY SERVICES

Article 4

'Mere conduit'

1. Where an information society service is provided that consists of the transmission in a communication network of information provided by a recipient of the service, or the provision of access to a communication network, the service provider shall not be liable for the information transmitted or accessed, on condition that the provider:

- (a) does not initiate the transmission;
- (b) does not select the receiver of the transmission; and
- (c) does not select or modify the information contained in the transmission.

2. The acts of transmission and of provision of access referred to in paragraph 1 shall include the automatic, intermediate and transient storage of the information transmitted in so far as this takes place for the sole purpose of carrying out the transmission in the communication network, and provided that the information is not stored for any period longer than is reasonably necessary for the transmission.

3. This Article shall not affect the possibility for a judicial or administrative authority, in accordance with a Member State's legal system, to require the service provider to terminate or prevent an infringement.

Article 5

'Caching'

1. Where an information society service is provided that consists of the transmission in a communication network of information provided by a recipient of the service, the service provider shall not be liable for the automatic, intermediate and temporary storage of that information, performed for the sole purpose of making more efficient or more secure the information's onward transmission to other recipients of the service upon their request, on condition that the provider:

- (a) does not modify the information;
- (b) complies with conditions on access to the information;
- (c) complies with rules regarding the updating of the information, specified in a manner widely recognised and used by industry;

⁽³⁸⁾ Directive (EU) 2019/882 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on the accessibility requirements for products and services (OJ L 151, 7.6.2019, p. 70).

⁽³⁹⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 of 20 January 2004 on the control of concentrations between undertakings (OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1).

- (d) does not interfere with the lawful use of technology, widely recognised and used by industry, to obtain data on the use of the information; and
- (e) acts expeditiously to remove or to disable access to the information it has stored upon obtaining actual knowledge of the fact that the information at the initial source of the transmission has been removed from the network, or access to it has been disabled, or that a judicial or an administrative authority has ordered such removal or disablement.

2. This Article shall not affect the possibility for a judicial or administrative authority, in accordance with a Member State's legal system, to require the service provider to terminate or prevent an infringement.

Article 6

Hosting

1. Where an information society service is provided that consists of the storage of information provided by a recipient of the service, the service provider shall not be liable for the information stored at the request of a recipient of the service, on condition that the provider:

- (a) does not have actual knowledge of illegal activity or illegal content and, as regards claims for damages, is not aware of facts or circumstances from which the illegal activity or illegal content is apparent; or
- (b) upon obtaining such knowledge or awareness, acts expeditiously to remove or to disable access to the illegal content.

2. Paragraph 1 shall not apply where the recipient of the service is acting under the authority or the control of the provider.

3. Paragraph 1 shall not apply with respect to the liability under consumer protection law of online platforms that allow consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders, where such an online platform presents the specific item of information or otherwise enables the specific transaction at issue in a way that would lead an average consumer to believe that the information, or the product or service that is the object of the transaction, is provided either by the online platform itself or by a recipient of the service who is acting under its authority or control.

4. This Article shall not affect the possibility for a judicial or administrative authority, in accordance with a Member State's legal system, to require the service provider to terminate or prevent an infringement.

Article 7

Voluntary own-initiative investigations and legal compliance

Providers of intermediary services shall not be deemed ineligible for the exemptions from liability referred to in Articles 4, 5 and 6 solely because they, in good faith and in a diligent manner, carry out voluntary own-initiative investigations into, or take other measures aimed at detecting, identifying and removing, or disabling access to, illegal content, or take the necessary measures to comply with the requirements of Union law and national law in compliance with Union law, including the requirements set out in this Regulation.

Article 8

No general monitoring or active fact-finding obligations

No general obligation to monitor the information which providers of intermediary services transmit or store, nor actively to seek facts or circumstances indicating illegal activity shall be imposed on those providers.

*Article 9***Orders to act against illegal content**

1. Upon the receipt of an order to act against one or more specific items of illegal content, issued by the relevant national judicial or administrative authorities, on the basis of the applicable Union law or national law in compliance with Union law, providers of intermediary services shall inform the authority issuing the order, or any other authority specified in the order, of any effect given to the order without undue delay, specifying if and when effect was given to the order.
2. Member States shall ensure that when an order referred to in paragraph 1 is transmitted to the provider, it meets at least the following conditions:
 - (a) that order contains the following elements:
 - (i) a reference to the legal basis under Union or national law for the order;
 - (ii) a statement of reasons explaining why the information is illegal content, by reference to one or more specific provisions of Union law or national law in compliance with Union law;
 - (iii) information identifying the issuing authority;
 - (iv) clear information enabling the provider of intermediary services to identify and locate the illegal content concerned, such as one or more exact URL and, where necessary, additional information;
 - (v) information about redress mechanisms available to the provider of intermediary services and to the recipient of the service who provided the content;
 - (vi) where applicable, information about which authority is to receive the information about the effect given to the orders;
 - (b) the territorial scope of that order, on the basis of the applicable rules of Union and national law, including the Charter, and, where relevant, general principles of international law, is limited to what is strictly necessary to achieve its objective;
 - (c) that order is transmitted in one of the languages declared by the provider of intermediary services pursuant to Article 11(3) or in another official language of the Member States, agreed between the authority issuing the order and that provider, and is sent to the electronic point of contact designated by that provider, in accordance with Article 11; where the order is not drafted in the language declared by the provider of intermediary services or in another bilaterally agreed language, the order may be transmitted in the language of the authority issuing the order, provided that it is accompanied by a translation into such declared or bilaterally agreed language of at least the elements set out in points (a) and (b) of this paragraph.
3. The authority issuing the order or, where applicable, the authority specified therein, shall transmit it, along with any information received from the provider of intermediary services concerning the effect given to that order to the Digital Services Coordinator from the Member State of the issuing authority.
4. After receiving the order from the judicial or administrative authority, the Digital Services Coordinator of the Member State concerned shall, without undue delay, transmit a copy of the order referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article to all other Digital Services Coordinators through the system established in accordance with Article 85.
5. At the latest when effect is given to the order or, where applicable, at the time provided by the issuing authority in its order, providers of intermediary services shall inform the recipient of the service concerned of the order received and to the effect given to it. Such information provided to the recipient of the service shall include a statement of reasons, the possibilities for redress that exist, and a description of the territorial scope of the order, in accordance with paragraph 2.

6. The conditions and requirements laid down in this Article shall be without prejudice to national civil and criminal procedural law.

Article 10

Orders to provide information

1. Upon receipt of an order to provide specific information about one or more specific individual recipients of the service, issued by the relevant national judicial or administrative authorities on the basis of the applicable Union law or national law in compliance with Union law, providers of intermediary services shall, without undue delay inform the authority issuing the order, or any other authority specified in the order, of its receipt and of the effect given to the order, specifying if and when effect was given to the order.

2. Member States shall ensure that when an order referred to in paragraph 1 is transmitted to the provider, it meets at least the following conditions:

(a) that order contains the following elements:

- (i) a reference to the legal basis under Union or national law for the order;
- (ii) information identifying the issuing authority;
- (iii) clear information enabling the provider of intermediary services to identify the specific recipient or recipients on whom information is sought, such as one or more account names or unique identifiers;
- (iv) a statement of reasons explaining the objective for which the information is required and why the requirement to provide the information is necessary and proportionate to determine compliance by the recipients of the intermediary services with applicable Union law or national law in compliance with Union law, unless such a statement cannot be provided for reasons related to the prevention, investigation, detection and prosecution of criminal offences;
- (v) information about redress mechanisms available to the provider and to the recipients of the service concerned;
- (vi) where applicable, information about which authority is to receive the information about the effect given to the orders;

(b) that order only requires the provider to provide information already collected for the purposes of providing the service and which lies within its control;

(c) that order is transmitted in one of the languages declared by the provider of intermediary services pursuant to Article 11(3) or in another official language of the Member States, agreed between the authority issuing the order and the provider, and is sent to the electronic point of contact designated by that provider, in accordance with Article 11; where the order is not drafted in the language declared by the provider of intermediary services or in another bilaterally agreed language, the order may be transmitted in the language of the authority issuing the order, provided that it is accompanied by a translation into such declared or bilaterally agreed language of at least the elements set out in points (a) and (b) of this paragraph.

3. The authority issuing the order or, where applicable, the authority specified therein, shall transmit it, along with any information received from the provider of intermediary services concerning the effect given to that order to the Digital Services Coordinator from the Member State of the issuing authority.

4. After receiving the order from the judicial or administrative authority, the Digital Services Coordinator of the Member State concerned shall, without undue delay, transmit a copy of the order referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article to all Digital Services Coordinators through the system established in accordance with Article 85.

5. At the latest when effect is given to the order, or, where applicable, at the time provided by the issuing authority in its order, providers of intermediary services shall inform the recipient of the service concerned of the order received and the effect given to it. Such information provided to the recipient of the service shall include a statement of reasons and the possibilities for redress that exist, in accordance with paragraph 2.

6. The conditions and requirements laid down in this Article shall be without prejudice to national civil and criminal procedural law.

CHAPTER III

DUE DILIGENCE OBLIGATIONS FOR A TRANSPARENT AND SAFE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

SECTION 1

Provisions applicable to all providers of intermediary services

Article 11

Points of contact for Member States' authorities, the Commission and the Board

1. Providers of intermediary services shall designate a single point of contact to enable them to communicate directly, by electronic means, with Member States' authorities, the Commission and the Board referred to in Article 61 for the application of this Regulation.
2. Providers of intermediary services shall make public the information necessary to easily identify and communicate with their single points of contact. That information shall be easily accessible, and shall be kept up to date.
3. Providers of intermediary services shall specify in the information referred to in paragraph 2 the official language or languages of the Member States which, in addition to a language broadly understood by the largest possible number of Union citizens, can be used to communicate with their points of contact, and which shall include at least one of the official languages of the Member State in which the provider of intermediary services has its main establishment or where its legal representative resides or is established.

Article 12

Points of contact for recipients of the service

1. Providers of intermediary services shall designate a single point of contact to enable recipients of the service to communicate directly and rapidly with them, by electronic means and in a user-friendly manner, including by allowing recipients of the service to choose the means of communication, which shall not solely rely on automated tools.
2. In addition to the obligations provided under Directive 2000/31/EC, providers of intermediary services shall make public the information necessary for the recipients of the service in order to easily identify and communicate with their single points of contact. That information shall be easily accessible, and shall be kept up to date.

Article 13

Legal representatives

1. Providers of intermediary services which do not have an establishment in the Union but which offer services in the Union shall designate, in writing, a legal or natural person to act as their legal representative in one of the Member States where the provider offers its services.

2. Providers of intermediary services shall mandate their legal representatives for the purpose of being addressed in addition to or instead of such providers, by the Member States' competent authorities, the Commission and the Board, on all issues necessary for the receipt of, compliance with and enforcement of decisions issued in relation to this Regulation. Providers of intermediary services shall provide their legal representative with necessary powers and sufficient resources to guarantee their efficient and timely cooperation with the Member States' competent authorities, the Commission and the Board, and to comply with such decisions.
3. It shall be possible for the designated legal representative to be held liable for non-compliance with obligations under this Regulation, without prejudice to the liability and legal actions that could be initiated against the provider of intermediary services.
4. Providers of intermediary services shall notify the name, postal address, email address and telephone number of their legal representative to the Digital Services Coordinator in the Member State where that legal representative resides or is established. They shall ensure that that information is publicly available, easily accessible, accurate and kept up to date.
5. The designation of a legal representative within the Union pursuant to paragraph 1 shall not constitute an establishment in the Union.

Article 14

Terms and conditions

1. Providers of intermediary services shall include information on any restrictions that they impose in relation to the use of their service in respect of information provided by the recipients of the service, in their terms and conditions. That information shall include information on any policies, procedures, measures and tools used for the purpose of content moderation, including algorithmic decision-making and human review, as well as the rules of procedure of their internal complaint handling system. It shall be set out in clear, plain, intelligible, user-friendly and unambiguous language, and shall be publicly available in an easily accessible and machine-readable format.
2. Providers of intermediary services shall inform the recipients of the service of any significant change to the terms and conditions.
3. Where an intermediary service is primarily directed at minors or is predominantly used by them, the provider of that intermediary service shall explain the conditions for, and any restrictions on, the use of the service in a way that minors can understand.
4. Providers of intermediary services shall act in a diligent, objective and proportionate manner in applying and enforcing the restrictions referred to in paragraph 1, with due regard to the rights and legitimate interests of all parties involved, including the fundamental rights of the recipients of the service, such as the freedom of expression, freedom and pluralism of the media, and other fundamental rights and freedoms as enshrined in the Charter.
5. Providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines shall provide recipients of services with a concise, easily-accessible and machine-readable summary of the terms and conditions, including the available remedies and redress mechanisms, in clear and unambiguous language.
6. Very large online platforms and very large online search engines within the meaning of Article 33 shall publish their terms and conditions in the official languages of all the Member States in which they offer their services.

Article 15

Transparency reporting obligations for providers of intermediary services

1. Providers of intermediary services shall make publicly available, in a machine-readable format and in an easily accessible manner, at least once a year, clear, easily comprehensible reports on any content moderation that they engaged in during the relevant period. Those reports shall include, in particular, information on the following, as applicable:

- (a) for providers of intermediary services, the number of orders received from Member States' authorities including orders issued in accordance with Articles 9 and 10, categorised by the type of illegal content concerned, the Member State issuing the order, and the median time needed to inform the authority issuing the order, or any other authority specified in the order, of its receipt, and to give effect to the order;
- (b) for providers of hosting services, the number of notices submitted in accordance with Article 16, categorised by the type of alleged illegal content concerned, the number of notices submitted by trusted flaggers, any action taken pursuant to the notices by differentiating whether the action was taken on the basis of the law or the terms and conditions of the provider, the number of notices processed by using automated means and the median time needed for taking the action;
- (c) for providers of intermediary services, meaningful and comprehensible information about the content moderation engaged in at the providers' own initiative, including the use of automated tools, the measures taken to provide training and assistance to persons in charge of content moderation, the number and type of measures taken that affect the availability, visibility and accessibility of information provided by the recipients of the service and the recipients' ability to provide information through the service, and other related restrictions of the service; the information reported shall be categorised by the type of illegal content or violation of the terms and conditions of the service provider, by the detection method and by the type of restriction applied;
- (d) for providers of intermediary services, the number of complaints received through the internal complaint-handling systems in accordance with the provider's terms and conditions and additionally, for providers of online platforms, in accordance with Article 20, the basis for those complaints, decisions taken in respect of those complaints, the median time needed for taking those decisions and the number of instances where those decisions were reversed;
- (e) any use made of automated means for the purpose of content moderation, including a qualitative description, a specification of the precise purposes, indicators of the accuracy and the possible rate of error of the automated means used in fulfilling those purposes, and any safeguards applied.

2. Paragraph 1 of this Article shall not apply to providers of intermediary services that qualify as micro or small enterprises as defined in Recommendation 2003/361/EC and which are not very large online platforms within the meaning of Article 33 of this Regulation.

3. The Commission may adopt implementing acts to lay down templates concerning the form, content and other details of reports pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Article, including harmonised reporting periods. Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the advisory procedure referred to in Article 88.

SECTION 2

Additional provisions applicable to providers of hosting services, including online platforms

Article 16

Notice and action mechanisms

1. Providers of hosting services shall put mechanisms in place to allow any individual or entity to notify them of the presence on their service of specific items of information that the individual or entity considers to be illegal content. Those mechanisms shall be easy to access and user-friendly, and shall allow for the submission of notices exclusively by electronic means.

2. The mechanisms referred to in paragraph 1 shall be such as to facilitate the submission of sufficiently precise and adequately substantiated notices. To that end, the providers of hosting services shall take the necessary measures to enable and to facilitate the submission of notices containing all of the following elements:

- (a) a sufficiently substantiated explanation of the reasons why the individual or entity alleges the information in question to be illegal content;
- (b) a clear indication of the exact electronic location of that information, such as the exact URL or URLs, and, where necessary, additional information enabling the identification of the illegal content adapted to the type of content and to the specific type of hosting service;
- (c) the name and email address of the individual or entity submitting the notice, except in the case of information considered to involve one of the offences referred to in Articles 3 to 7 of Directive 2011/93/EU;
- (d) a statement confirming the bona fide belief of the individual or entity submitting the notice that the information and allegations contained therein are accurate and complete.

3. Notices referred to in this Article shall be considered to give rise to actual knowledge or awareness for the purposes of Article 6 in respect of the specific item of information concerned where they allow a diligent provider of hosting services to identify the illegality of the relevant activity or information without a detailed legal examination.

4. Where the notice contains the electronic contact information of the individual or entity that submitted it, the provider of hosting services shall, without undue delay, send a confirmation of receipt of the notice to that individual or entity.

5. The provider shall also, without undue delay, notify that individual or entity of its decision in respect of the information to which the notice relates, providing information on the possibilities for redress in respect of that decision.

6. Providers of hosting services shall process any notices that they receive under the mechanisms referred to in paragraph 1 and take their decisions in respect of the information to which the notices relate, in a timely, diligent, non-arbitrary and objective manner. Where they use automated means for that processing or decision-making, they shall include information on such use in the notification referred to in paragraph 5.

Article 17

Statement of reasons

1. Providers of hosting services shall provide a clear and specific statement of reasons to any affected recipients of the service for any of the following restrictions imposed on the ground that the information provided by the recipient of the service is illegal content or incompatible with their terms and conditions:

- (a) any restrictions of the visibility of specific items of information provided by the recipient of the service, including removal of content, disabling access to content, or demoting content;
- (b) suspension, termination or other restriction of monetary payments;
- (c) suspension or termination of the provision of the service in whole or in part;
- (d) suspension or termination of the recipient of the service's account.

2. Paragraph 1 shall only apply where the relevant electronic contact details are known to the provider. It shall apply at the latest from the date that the restriction is imposed, regardless of why or how it was imposed.

Paragraph 1 shall not apply where the information is deceptive high-volume commercial content.

3. The statement of reasons referred to in paragraph 1 shall at least contain the following information:
 - (a) information on whether the decision entails either the removal of, the disabling of access to, the demotion of or the restriction of the visibility of the information, or the suspension or termination of monetary payments related to that information, or imposes other measures referred to in paragraph 1 with regard to the information, and, where relevant, the territorial scope of the decision and its duration;
 - (b) the facts and circumstances relied on in taking the decision, including, where relevant, information on whether the decision was taken pursuant to a notice submitted in accordance with Article 16 or based on voluntary own-initiative investigations and, where strictly necessary, the identity of the notifier;
 - (c) where applicable, information on the use made of automated means in taking the decision, including information on whether the decision was taken in respect of content detected or identified using automated means;
 - (d) where the decision concerns allegedly illegal content, a reference to the legal ground relied on and explanations as to why the information is considered to be illegal content on that ground;
 - (e) where the decision is based on the alleged incompatibility of the information with the terms and conditions of the provider of hosting services, a reference to the contractual ground relied on and explanations as to why the information is considered to be incompatible with that ground;
 - (f) clear and user-friendly information on the possibilities for redress available to the recipient of the service in respect of the decision, in particular, where applicable through internal complaint-handling mechanisms, out-of-court dispute settlement and judicial redress.
4. The information provided by the providers of hosting services in accordance with this Article shall be clear and easily comprehensible and as precise and specific as reasonably possible under the given circumstances. The information shall, in particular, be such as to reasonably allow the recipient of the service concerned to effectively exercise the possibilities for redress referred to in of paragraph 3, point (f).
5. This Article shall not apply to any orders referred to in Article 9.

Article 18

Notification of suspicions of criminal offences

1. Where a provider of hosting services becomes aware of any information giving rise to a suspicion that a criminal offence involving a threat to the life or safety of a person or persons has taken place, is taking place or is likely to take place, it shall promptly inform the law enforcement or judicial authorities of the Member State or Member States concerned of its suspicion and provide all relevant information available.
2. Where the provider of hosting services cannot identify with reasonable certainty the Member State concerned, it shall inform the law enforcement authorities of the Member State in which it is established or where its legal representative resides or is established or inform Europol, or both.

For the purpose of this Article, the Member State concerned shall be the Member State in which the offence is suspected to have taken place, to be taking place or to be likely to take place, or the Member State where the suspected offender resides or is located, or the Member State where the victim of the suspected offence resides or is located.

SECTION 3

Additional provisions applicable to providers of online platforms*Article 19***Exclusion for micro and small enterprises**

1. This Section, with the exception of Article 24(3) thereof, shall not apply to providers of online platforms that qualify as micro or small enterprises as defined in Recommendation 2003/361/EC.

This Section, with the exception of Article 24(3) thereof, shall not apply to providers of online platforms that previously qualified for the status of a micro or small enterprise as defined in Recommendation 2003/361/EC during the 12 months following their loss of that status pursuant to Article 4(2) thereof, except when they are very large online platforms in accordance with Article 33.

2. By derogation from paragraph 1 of this Article, this Section shall apply to providers of online platforms that have been designated as very large online platforms in accordance with Article 33, irrespective of whether they qualify as micro or small enterprises.

*Article 20***Internal complaint-handling system**

1. Providers of online platforms shall provide recipients of the service, including individuals or entities that have submitted a notice, for a period of at least six months following the decision referred to in this paragraph, with access to an effective internal complaint-handling system that enables them to lodge complaints, electronically and free of charge, against the decision taken by the provider of the online platform upon the receipt of a notice or against the following decisions taken by the provider of the online platform on the grounds that the information provided by the recipients constitutes illegal content or is incompatible with its terms and conditions:

- (a) decisions whether or not to remove or disable access to or restrict visibility of the information;
- (b) decisions whether or not to suspend or terminate the provision of the service, in whole or in part, to the recipients;
- (c) decisions whether or not to suspend or terminate the recipients' account;
- (d) decisions whether or not to suspend, terminate or otherwise restrict the ability to monetise information provided by the recipients.

2. The period of at least six months referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall start on the day on which the recipient of the service is informed about the decision in accordance with Article 16(5) or Article 17.

3. Providers of online platforms shall ensure that their internal complaint-handling systems are easy to access, user-friendly and enable and facilitate the submission of sufficiently precise and adequately substantiated complaints.

4. Providers of online platforms shall handle complaints submitted through their internal complaint-handling system in a timely, non-discriminatory, diligent and non-arbitrary manner. Where a complaint contains sufficient grounds for the provider of the online platform to consider that its decision not to act upon the notice is unfounded or that the information to which the complaint relates is not illegal and is not incompatible with its terms and conditions, or contains information indicating that the complainant's conduct does not warrant the measure taken, it shall reverse its decision referred to in paragraph 1 without undue delay.

5. Providers of online platforms shall inform complainants without undue delay of their reasoned decision in respect of the information to which the complaint relates and of the possibility of out-of-court dispute settlement provided for in Article 21 and other available possibilities for redress.

6. Providers of online platforms shall ensure that the decisions, referred to in paragraph 5, are taken under the supervision of appropriately qualified staff, and not solely on the basis of automated means.

Article 21

Out-of-court dispute settlement

1. Recipients of the service, including individuals or entities that have submitted notices, addressed by the decisions referred to in Article 20(1) shall be entitled to select any out-of-court dispute settlement body that has been certified in accordance with paragraph 3 of this Article in order to resolve disputes relating to those decisions, including complaints that have not been resolved by means of the internal complaint-handling system referred to in that Article.

Providers of online platforms shall ensure that information about the possibility for recipients of the service to have access to an out-of-court dispute settlement, as referred to in the first subparagraph, is easily accessible on their online interface, clear and user-friendly.

The first subparagraph is without prejudice to the right of the recipient of the service concerned to initiate, at any stage, proceedings to contest those decisions by the providers of online platforms before a court in accordance with the applicable law.

2. Both parties shall engage, in good faith, with the selected certified out-of-court dispute settlement body with a view to resolving the dispute.

Providers of online platforms may refuse to engage with such out-of-court dispute settlement body if a dispute has already been resolved concerning the same information and the same grounds of alleged illegality or incompatibility of content.

The certified out-of-court dispute settlement body shall not have the power to impose a binding settlement of the dispute on the parties.

3. The Digital Services Coordinator of the Member State where the out-of-court dispute settlement body is established shall, for a maximum period of five years, which may be renewed, certify the body, at its request, where the body has demonstrated that it meets all of the following conditions:

- (a) it is impartial and independent, including financially independent, of providers of online platforms and of recipients of the service provided by providers of online platforms, including of individuals or entities that have submitted notices;
- (b) it has the necessary expertise in relation to the issues arising in one or more particular areas of illegal content, or in relation to the application and enforcement of terms and conditions of one or more types of online platform, allowing the body to contribute effectively to the settlement of a dispute;
- (c) its members are remunerated in a way that is not linked to the outcome of the procedure;
- (d) the out-of-court dispute settlement that it offers is easily accessible, through electronic communications technology and provides for the possibility to initiate the dispute settlement and to submit the requisite supporting documents online;
- (e) it is capable of settling disputes in a swift, efficient and cost-effective manner and in at least one of the official languages of the institutions of the Union;
- (f) the out-of-court dispute settlement that it offers takes place in accordance with clear and fair rules of procedure that are easily and publicly accessible, and that comply with applicable law, including this Article.

The Digital Services Coordinator shall, where applicable, specify in the certificate:

- (a) the particular issues to which the body's expertise relates, as referred to in point (b) of the first subparagraph; and
- (b) the official language or languages of the institutions of the Union in which the body is capable of settling disputes, as referred to in point (e) of the first subparagraph.

4. Certified out-of-court dispute settlement bodies shall report to the Digital Services Coordinator that certified them, on an annual basis, on their functioning, specifying at least the number of disputes they received, the information about the outcomes of those disputes, the average time taken to resolve them and any shortcomings or difficulties encountered. They shall provide additional information at the request of that Digital Services Coordinator.

Digital Services Coordinators shall, every two years, draw up a report on the functioning of the out-of-court dispute settlement bodies that they certified. That report shall in particular:

- (a) list the number of disputes that each certified out-of-court dispute settlement body has received annually;
- (b) indicate the outcomes of the procedures brought before those bodies and the average time taken to resolve the disputes;
- (c) identify and explain any systematic or sectoral shortcomings or difficulties encountered in relation to the functioning of those bodies;
- (d) identify best practices concerning that functioning;
- (e) make recommendations as to how to improve that functioning, where appropriate.

Certified out-of-court dispute settlement bodies shall make their decisions available to the parties within a reasonable period of time and no later than 90 calendar days after the receipt of the complaint. In the case of highly complex disputes, the certified out-of-court dispute settlement body may, at its own discretion, extend the 90 calendar day period for an additional period that shall not exceed 90 days, resulting in a maximum total duration of 180 days.

5. If the out-of-court dispute settlement body decides the dispute in favour of the recipient of the service, including the individual or entity that has submitted a notice, the provider of the online platform shall bear all the fees charged by the out-of-court dispute settlement body, and shall reimburse that recipient, including the individual or entity, for any other reasonable expenses that it has paid in relation to the dispute settlement. If the out-of-court dispute settlement body decides the dispute in favour of the provider of the online platform, the recipient of the service, including the individual or entity, shall not be required to reimburse any fees or other expenses that the provider of the online platform paid or is to pay in relation to the dispute settlement, unless the out-of-court dispute settlement body finds that that recipient manifestly acted in bad faith.

The fees charged by the out-of-court dispute settlement body to the providers of online platforms for the dispute settlement shall be reasonable and shall in any event not exceed the costs incurred by the body. For recipients of the service, the dispute settlement shall be available free of charge or at a nominal fee.

Certified out-of-court dispute settlement bodies shall make the fees, or the mechanisms used to determine the fees, known to the recipient of the service, including to the individuals or entities that have submitted a notice, and to the provider of the online platform concerned, before engaging in the dispute settlement.

6. Member States may establish out-of-court dispute settlement bodies for the purposes of paragraph 1 or support the activities of some or all out-of-court dispute settlement bodies that they have certified in accordance with paragraph 3.

Member States shall ensure that any of their activities undertaken under the first subparagraph do not affect the ability of their Digital Services Coordinators to certify the bodies concerned in accordance with paragraph 3.

7. A Digital Services Coordinator that has certified an out-of-court dispute settlement body shall revoke that certification if it determines, following an investigation either on its own initiative or on the basis of the information received by third parties, that the out-of-court dispute settlement body no longer meets the conditions set out in paragraph 3. Before revoking that certification, the Digital Services Coordinator shall afford that body an opportunity to react to the findings of its investigation and its intention to revoke the out-of-court dispute settlement body's certification.

8. Digital Services Coordinators shall notify to the Commission the out-of-court dispute settlement bodies that they have certified in accordance with paragraph 3, including where applicable the specifications referred to in the second subparagraph of that paragraph, as well as the out-of-court dispute settlement bodies the certification of which they have revoked. The Commission shall publish a list of those bodies, including those specifications, on a dedicated website that is easily accessible, and keep it up to date.

9. This Article is without prejudice to Directive 2013/11/EU and alternative dispute resolution procedures and entities for consumers established under that Directive.

Article 22

Trusted flaggers

1. Providers of online platforms shall take the necessary technical and organisational measures to ensure that notices submitted by trusted flaggers, acting within their designated area of expertise, through the mechanisms referred to in Article 16, are given priority and are processed and decided upon without undue delay.

2. The status of 'trusted flagger' under this Regulation shall be awarded, upon application by any entity, by the Digital Services Coordinator of the Member State in which the applicant is established, to an applicant that has demonstrated that it meets all of the following conditions:

- (a) it has particular expertise and competence for the purposes of detecting, identifying and notifying illegal content;
- (b) it is independent from any provider of online platforms;
- (c) it carries out its activities for the purposes of submitting notices diligently, accurately and objectively.

3. Trusted flaggers shall publish, at least once a year easily comprehensible and detailed reports on notices submitted in accordance with Article 16 during the relevant period. The report shall list at least the number of notices categorised by:

- (a) the identity of the provider of hosting services,
- (b) the type of allegedly illegal content notified,
- (c) the action taken by the provider.

Those reports shall include an explanation of the procedures in place to ensure that the trusted flagger retains its independence.

Trusted flaggers shall send those reports to the awarding Digital Services Coordinator, and shall make them publicly available. The information in those reports shall not contain personal data.

4. Digital Services Coordinators shall communicate to the Commission and the Board the names, addresses and email addresses of the entities to which they have awarded the status of the trusted flagger in accordance with paragraph 2 or whose trusted flagger status they have suspended in accordance with paragraph 6 or revoked in accordance with paragraph 7.

5. The Commission shall publish the information referred to in paragraph 4 in a publicly available database, in an easily accessible and machine-readable format, and shall keep the database up to date.

6. Where a provider of online platforms has information indicating that a trusted flagger has submitted a significant number of insufficiently precise, inaccurate or inadequately substantiated notices through the mechanisms referred to in Article 16, including information gathered in connection to the processing of complaints through the internal complaint-handling systems referred to in Article 20(4), it shall communicate that information to the Digital Services Coordinator that awarded the status of trusted flagger to the entity concerned, providing the necessary explanations and supporting documents. Upon receiving the information from the provider of online platforms, and if the Digital Services Coordinator considers that there are legitimate reasons to open an investigation, the status of trusted flagger shall be suspended during the period of the investigation. That investigation shall be carried out without undue delay.

7. The Digital Services Coordinator that awarded the status of trusted flagger to an entity shall revoke that status if it determines, following an investigation either on its own initiative or on the basis information received from third parties, including the information provided by a provider of online platforms pursuant to paragraph 6, that the entity no longer meets the conditions set out in paragraph 2. Before revoking that status, the Digital Services Coordinator shall afford the entity an opportunity to react to the findings of its investigation and its intention to revoke the entity's status as trusted flagger.

8. The Commission, after consulting the Board, shall, where necessary, issue guidelines to assist providers of online platforms and Digital Services Coordinators in the application of paragraphs 2, 6 and 7.

Article 23

Measures and protection against misuse

1. Providers of online platforms shall suspend, for a reasonable period of time and after having issued a prior warning, the provision of their services to recipients of the service that frequently provide manifestly illegal content.

2. Providers of online platforms shall suspend, for a reasonable period of time and after having issued a prior warning, the processing of notices and complaints submitted through the notice and action mechanisms and internal complaints-handling systems referred to in Articles 16 and 20, respectively, by individuals or entities or by complainants that frequently submit notices or complaints that are manifestly unfounded.

3. When deciding on suspension, providers of online platforms shall assess, on a case-by-case basis and in a timely, diligent and objective manner, whether the recipient of the service, the individual, the entity or the complainant engages in the misuse referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, taking into account all relevant facts and circumstances apparent from the information available to the provider of online platforms. Those circumstances shall include at least the following:

- (a) the absolute numbers of items of manifestly illegal content or manifestly unfounded notices or complaints, submitted within a given time frame;
- (b) the relative proportion thereof in relation to the total number of items of information provided or notices submitted within a given time frame;
- (c) the gravity of the misuses, including the nature of illegal content, and of its consequences;
- (d) where it is possible to identify it, the intention of the recipient of the service, the individual, the entity or the complainant.

4. Providers of online platforms shall set out, in a clear and detailed manner, in their terms and conditions their policy in respect of the misuse referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2, and shall give examples of the facts and circumstances that they take into account when assessing whether certain behaviour constitutes misuse and the duration of the suspension.

*Article 24***Transparency reporting obligations for providers of online platforms**

1. In addition to the information referred to in Article 15, providers of online platforms shall include in the reports referred to in that Article information on the following:
 - (a) the number of disputes submitted to the out-of-court dispute settlement bodies referred to in Article 21, the outcomes of the dispute settlement, and the median time needed for completing the dispute settlement procedures, as well as the share of disputes where the provider of the online platform implemented the decisions of the body;
 - (b) the number of suspensions imposed pursuant to Article 23, distinguishing between suspensions enacted for the provision of manifestly illegal content, the submission of manifestly unfounded notices and the submission of manifestly unfounded complaints.
2. By 17 February 2023 and at least once every six months thereafter, providers shall publish for each online platform or online search engine, in a publicly available section of their online interface, information on the average monthly active recipients of the service in the Union, calculated as an average over the period of the past six months and in accordance with the methodology laid down in the delegated acts referred to in Article 33(3), where those delegated acts have been adopted.
3. Providers of online platforms or of online search engines shall communicate to the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment and the Commission, upon their request and without undue delay, the information referred to in paragraph 2, updated to the moment of such request. That Digital Services Coordinator or the Commission may require the provider of the online platform or of the online search engine to provide additional information as regards the calculation referred to in that paragraph, including explanations and substantiation in respect of the data used. That information shall not include personal data.
4. When the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment has reasons to consider, based the information received pursuant to paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article, that a provider of online platforms or of online search engines meets the threshold of average monthly active recipients of the service in the Union laid down in Article 33(1), it shall inform the Commission thereof.
5. Providers of online platforms shall, without undue delay, submit to the Commission the decisions and the statements of reasons referred to in Article 17(1) for the inclusion in a publicly accessible machine-readable database managed by the Commission. Providers of online platforms shall ensure that the information submitted does not contain personal data.
6. The Commission may adopt implementing acts to lay down templates concerning the form, content and other details of reports pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Article. Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the advisory procedure referred to in Article 88.

*Article 25***Online interface design and organisation**

1. Providers of online platforms shall not design, organise or operate their online interfaces in a way that deceives or manipulates the recipients of their service or in a way that otherwise materially distorts or impairs the ability of the recipients of their service to make free and informed decisions.
2. The prohibition in paragraph 1 shall not apply to practices covered by Directive 2005/29/EC or Regulation (EU) 2016/679.
3. The Commission may issue guidelines on how paragraph 1 applies to specific practices, notably:
 - (a) giving more prominence to certain choices when asking the recipient of the service for a decision;

- (b) repeatedly requesting that the recipient of the service make a choice where that choice has already been made, especially by presenting pop-ups that interfere with the user experience;
- (c) making the procedure for terminating a service more difficult than subscribing to it.

Article 26

Advertising on online platforms

1. Providers of online platforms that present advertisements on their online interfaces shall ensure that, for each specific advertisement presented to each individual recipient, the recipients of the service are able to identify, in a clear, concise and unambiguous manner and in real time, the following:

- (a) that the information is an advertisement, including through prominent markings, which might follow standards pursuant to Article 44;
- (b) the natural or legal person on whose behalf the advertisement is presented;
- (c) the natural or legal person who paid for the advertisement if that person is different from the natural or legal person referred to in point (b);
- (d) meaningful information directly and easily accessible from the advertisement about the main parameters used to determine the recipient to whom the advertisement is presented and, where applicable, about how to change those parameters.

2. Providers of online platforms shall provide recipients of the service with a functionality to declare whether the content they provide is or contains commercial communications.

When the recipient of the service submits a declaration pursuant to this paragraph, the provider of online platforms shall ensure that other recipients of the service can identify in a clear and unambiguous manner and in real time, including through prominent markings, which might follow standards pursuant to Article 44, that the content provided by the recipient of the service is or contains commercial communications, as described in that declaration.

3. Providers of online platforms shall not present advertisements to recipients of the service based on profiling as defined in Article 4, point (4), of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 using special categories of personal data referred to in Article 9(1) of Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

Article 27

Recommender system transparency

1. Providers of online platforms that use recommender systems shall set out in their terms and conditions, in plain and intelligible language, the main parameters used in their recommender systems, as well as any options for the recipients of the service to modify or influence those main parameters.

2. The main parameters referred to in paragraph 1 shall explain why certain information is suggested to the recipient of the service. They shall include, at least:

- (a) the criteria which are most significant in determining the information suggested to the recipient of the service;
- (b) the reasons for the relative importance of those parameters.

3. Where several options are available pursuant to paragraph 1 for recommender systems that determine the relative order of information presented to recipients of the service, providers of online platforms shall also make available a functionality that allows the recipient of the service to select and to modify at any time their preferred option. That functionality shall be directly and easily accessible from the specific section of the online platform's online interface where the information is being prioritised.

*Article 28***Online protection of minors**

1. Providers of online platforms accessible to minors shall put in place appropriate and proportionate measures to ensure a high level of privacy, safety, and security of minors, on their service.
2. Providers of online platform shall not present advertisements on their interface based on profiling as defined in Article 4, point (4), of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 using personal data of the recipient of the service when they are aware with reasonable certainty that the recipient of the service is a minor.
3. Compliance with the obligations set out in this Article shall not oblige providers of online platforms to process additional personal data in order to assess whether the recipient of the service is a minor.
4. The Commission, after consulting the Board, may issue guidelines to assist providers of online platforms in the application of paragraph 1.

*SECTION 4****Additional provisions applicable to providers of online platforms allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders****Article 29***Exclusion for micro and small enterprises**

1. This Section shall not apply to providers of online platforms allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders that qualify as micro or small enterprises as defined in Recommendation 2003/361/EC.

This Section shall not apply to providers of online platforms allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders that previously qualified for the status of a micro or small enterprise as defined in Recommendation 2003/361/EC during the 12 months following their loss of that status pursuant to Article 4(2) thereof, except when they are very large online platforms in accordance with Article 33.

2. By derogation from paragraph 1 of this Article, this Section shall apply to providers of online platforms allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders that have been designated as very large online platforms in accordance with Article 33, irrespective of whether they qualify as micro or small enterprises.

*Article 30***Traceability of traders**

1. Providers of online platforms allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders shall ensure that traders can only use those online platforms to promote messages on or to offer products or services to consumers located in the Union if, prior to the use of their services for those purposes, they have obtained the following information, where applicable to the trader:

- (a) the name, address, telephone number and email address of the trader;
- (b) a copy of the identification document of the trader or any other electronic identification as defined by Article 3 of Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽⁴⁰⁾;

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Regulation (EU) No 910/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2014 on electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the internal market and repealing Directive 1999/93/EC (OJ L 257, 28.8.2014, p. 73).

- (c) the payment account details of the trader;
- (d) where the trader is registered in a trade register or similar public register, the trade register in which the trader is registered and its registration number or equivalent means of identification in that register;
- (e) a self-certification by the trader committing to only offer products or services that comply with the applicable rules of Union law.

2. Upon receiving the information referred to in paragraph 1 and prior to allowing the trader concerned to use its services, the provider of the online platform allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders shall, through the use of any freely accessible official online database or online interface made available by a Member State or the Union or through requests to the trader to provide supporting documents from reliable sources, make best efforts to assess whether the information referred to in paragraph 1, points (a) to (e), is reliable and complete. For the purpose of this Regulation, traders shall be liable for the accuracy of the information provided.

As regards traders that are already using the services of providers of online platforms allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders for the purposes referred to in paragraph 1 on 17 February 2024, the providers shall make best efforts to obtain the information listed from the traders concerned within 12 months. Where the traders concerned fail to provide the information within that period, the providers shall suspend the provision of their services to those traders until they have provided all information.

3. Where the provider of the online platform allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders obtains sufficient indications or has reason to believe that any item of information referred to in paragraph 1 obtained from the trader concerned is inaccurate, incomplete or not up-to-date, that provider shall request that the trader remedy that situation without delay or within the period set by Union and national law.

Where the trader fails to correct or complete that information, the provider of the online platform allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders shall swiftly suspend the provision of its service to that trader in relation to the offering of products or services to consumers located in the Union until the request has been fully complied with.

4. Without prejudice to Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1150, if a provider of an online platform allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders refuses to allow a trader to use its service pursuant to paragraph 1, or suspends the provision of its service pursuant to paragraph 3 of this Article, the trader concerned shall have the right to lodge a complaint as provided for in Articles 20 and 21 of this Regulation.

5. Providers of online platforms allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders shall store the information obtained pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 2 in a secure manner for a period of six months after the end of the contractual relationship with the trader concerned. They shall subsequently delete the information.

6. Without prejudice to paragraph 2 of this Article, the provider of the online platform allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders shall only disclose the information to third parties where so required in accordance with the applicable law, including the orders referred to in Article 10 and any orders issued by Member States' competent authorities or the Commission for the performance of their tasks under this Regulation.

7. The provider of the online platform allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders shall make the information referred to in paragraph 1, points (a), (d) and (e) available on its online platform to the recipients of the service in a clear, easily accessible and comprehensible manner. That information shall be available at least on the online platform's online interface where the information on the product or service is presented.

*Article 31***Compliance by design**

1. Providers of online platforms allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders shall ensure that its online interface is designed and organised in a way that enables traders to comply with their obligations regarding pre-contractual information, compliance and product safety information under applicable Union law.

In particular, the provider concerned shall ensure that its online interface enables traders to provide information on the name, address, telephone number and email address of the economic operator, as defined in Article 3, point (13), of Regulation (EU) 2019/1020 and other Union law.

2. Providers of online platforms allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders shall ensure that its online interface is designed and organised in a way that it allows traders to provide at least the following:

- (a) the information necessary for the clear and unambiguous identification of the products or the services promoted or offered to consumers located in the Union through the services of the providers;
- (b) any sign identifying the trader such as the trademark, symbol or logo; and,
- (c) where applicable, the information concerning the labelling and marking in compliance with rules of applicable Union law on product safety and product compliance.

3. Providers of online platforms allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders shall make best efforts to assess whether such traders have provided the information referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 prior to allowing them to offer their products or services on those platforms. After allowing the trader to offer products or services on its online platform that allows consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders, the provider shall make reasonable efforts to randomly check in any official, freely accessible and machine-readable online database or online interface whether the products or services offered have been identified as illegal.

*Article 32***Right to information**

1. Where a provider of an online platform allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders becomes aware, irrespective of the means used, that an illegal product or service has been offered by a trader to consumers located in the Union through its services, that provider shall inform, insofar as it has their contact details, consumers who purchased the illegal product or service through its services of the following:

- (a) the fact that the product or service is illegal;
- (b) the identity of the trader; and
- (c) any relevant means of redress.

The obligation laid down in the first subparagraph shall be limited to purchases of illegal products or services made within the six months preceding the moment that the provider became aware of the illegality.

2. Where, in the situation referred to in paragraph 1, the provider of the online platform allowing consumers to conclude distance contracts with traders does not have the contact details of all consumers concerned, that provider shall make publicly available and easily accessible on its online interface the information concerning the illegal product or service, the identity of the trader and any relevant means of redress.

SECTION 5

Additional obligations for providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines to manage systemic risks

Article 33

Very large online platforms and very large online search engines

1. This Section shall apply to online platforms and online search engines which have a number of average monthly active recipients of the service in the Union equal to or higher than 45 million, and which are designated as very large online platforms or very large online search engines pursuant to paragraph 4.
2. The Commission shall adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 87 to adjust the number of average monthly active recipients of the service in the Union referred to in paragraph 1, where the Union's population increases or decreases at least by 5 % in relation to its population in 2020 or its population after adjustment by means of a delegated act in the year in which the latest delegated act was adopted. In such a case, it shall adjust the number so that it corresponds to 10 % of the Union's population in the year in which it adopts the delegated act, rounded up or down to allow the number to be expressed in millions.
3. The Commission may adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 87, after consulting the Board, to supplement the provisions of this Regulation by laying down the methodology for calculating the number of average monthly active recipients of the service in the Union, for the purposes of paragraph 1 of this Article and Article 24(2), ensuring that the methodology takes account of market and technological developments.
4. The Commission shall, after having consulted the Member State of establishment or after taking into account the information provided by the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment pursuant to Article 24(4), adopt a decision designating as a very large online platform or a very large online search engine for the purposes of this Regulation the online platform or the online search engine which has a number of average monthly active recipients of the service equal to or higher than the number referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article. The Commission shall take its decision on the basis of data reported by the provider of the online platform or of the online search engine pursuant to Article 24(2), or information requested pursuant to Article 24(3) or any other information available to the Commission.

The failure by the provider of the online platform or of the online search engine to comply with Article 24(2) or to comply with the request by the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment or by the Commission pursuant to Article 24(3) shall not prevent the Commission from designating that provider as a provider of a very large online platform or of a very large online search engine pursuant to this paragraph.

Where the Commission bases its decision on other information available to the Commission pursuant to the first subparagraph of this paragraph or on the basis of additional information requested pursuant to Article 24(3), the Commission shall give the provider of the online platform or of the online search engine concerned 10 working days in which to submit its views on the Commission's preliminary findings and on its intention to designate the online platform or the online search engine as a very large online platform or as a very large online search engine, respectively. The Commission shall take due account of the views submitted by the provider concerned.

The failure of the provider of the online platform or of the online search engine concerned to submit its views pursuant to the third subparagraph shall not prevent the Commission from designating that online platform or that online search engine as a very large online platform or as a very large online search engine, respectively, based on other information available to it.

5. The Commission shall terminate the designation if, during an uninterrupted period of one year, the online platform or the online search engine does not have a number of average monthly active recipients of the service equal to or higher than the number referred to in paragraph 1.

6. The Commission shall notify its decisions pursuant to paragraphs 4 and 5, without undue delay, to the provider of the online platform or of the online search engine concerned, to the Board and to the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment.

The Commission shall ensure that the list of designated very large online platforms and very large online search engines is published in the *Official Journal of the European Union*, and shall keep that list up to date. The obligations set out in this Section shall apply, or cease to apply, to the very large online platforms and very large online search engines concerned from four months after the notification to the provider concerned referred to in the first subparagraph.

Article 34

Risk assessment

1. Providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines shall diligently identify, analyse and assess any systemic risks in the Union stemming from the design or functioning of their service and its related systems, including algorithmic systems, or from the use made of their services.

They shall carry out the risk assessments by the date of application referred to in Article 33(6), second subparagraph, and at least once every year thereafter, and in any event prior to deploying functionalities that are likely to have a critical impact on the risks identified pursuant to this Article. This risk assessment shall be specific to their services and proportionate to the systemic risks, taking into consideration their severity and probability, and shall include the following systemic risks:

- (a) the dissemination of illegal content through their services;
- (b) any actual or foreseeable negative effects for the exercise of fundamental rights, in particular the fundamental rights to human dignity enshrined in Article 1 of the Charter, to respect for private and family life enshrined in Article 7 of the Charter, to the protection of personal data enshrined in Article 8 of the Charter, to freedom of expression and information, including the freedom and pluralism of the media, enshrined in Article 11 of the Charter, to non-discrimination enshrined in Article 21 of the Charter, to respect for the rights of the child enshrined in Article 24 of the Charter and to a high-level of consumer protection enshrined in Article 38 of the Charter;
- (c) any actual or foreseeable negative effects on civic discourse and electoral processes, and public security;
- (d) any actual or foreseeable negative effects in relation to gender-based violence, the protection of public health and minors and serious negative consequences to the person's physical and mental well-being.

2. When conducting risk assessments, providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines shall take into account, in particular, whether and how the following factors influence any of the systemic risks referred to in paragraph 1:

- (a) the design of their recommender systems and any other relevant algorithmic system;
- (b) their content moderation systems;
- (c) the applicable terms and conditions and their enforcement;
- (d) systems for selecting and presenting advertisements;
- (e) data related practices of the provider.

The assessments shall also analyse whether and how the risks pursuant to paragraph 1 are influenced by intentional manipulation of their service, including by inauthentic use or automated exploitation of the service, as well as the amplification and potentially rapid and wide dissemination of illegal content and of information that is incompatible with their terms and conditions.

The assessment shall take into account specific regional or linguistic aspects, including when specific to a Member State.

3. Providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines shall preserve the supporting documents of the risk assessments for at least three years after the performance of risk assessments, and shall, upon request, communicate them to the Commission and to the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment.

Article 35

Mitigation of risks

1. Providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines shall put in place reasonable, proportionate and effective mitigation measures, tailored to the specific systemic risks identified pursuant to Article 34, with particular consideration to the impacts of such measures on fundamental rights. Such measures may include, where applicable:

- (a) adapting the design, features or functioning of their services, including their online interfaces;
- (b) adapting their terms and conditions and their enforcement;
- (c) adapting content moderation processes, including the speed and quality of processing notices related to specific types of illegal content and, where appropriate, the expeditious removal of, or the disabling of access to, the content notified, in particular in respect of illegal hate speech or cyber violence, as well as adapting any relevant decision-making processes and dedicated resources for content moderation;
- (d) testing and adapting their algorithmic systems, including their recommender systems;
- (e) adapting their advertising systems and adopting targeted measures aimed at limiting or adjusting the presentation of advertisements in association with the service they provide;
- (f) reinforcing the internal processes, resources, testing, documentation, or supervision of any of their activities in particular as regards detection of systemic risk;
- (g) initiating or adjusting cooperation with trusted flaggers in accordance with Article 22 and the implementation of the decisions of out-of-court dispute settlement bodies pursuant to Article 21;
- (h) initiating or adjusting cooperation with other providers of online platforms or of online search engines through the codes of conduct and the crisis protocols referred to in Articles 45 and 48 respectively;
- (i) taking awareness-raising measures and adapting their online interface in order to give recipients of the service more information;
- (j) taking targeted measures to protect the rights of the child, including age verification and parental control tools, tools aimed at helping minors signal abuse or obtain support, as appropriate;
- (k) ensuring that an item of information, whether it constitutes a generated or manipulated image, audio or video that appreciably resembles existing persons, objects, places or other entities or events and falsely appears to a person to be authentic or truthful is distinguishable through prominent markings when presented on their online interfaces, and, in addition, providing an easy to use functionality which enables recipients of the service to indicate such information.

2. The Board, in cooperation with the Commission, shall publish comprehensive reports, once a year. The reports shall include the following:

- (a) identification and assessment of the most prominent and recurrent systemic risks reported by providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines or identified through other information sources, in particular those provided in compliance with Articles 39, 40 and 42;

- (b) best practices for providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines to mitigate the systemic risks identified.

Those reports shall present systemic risks broken down by the Member States in which they occurred and in the Union as a whole, as applicable.

3. The Commission, in cooperation with the Digital Services Coordinators, may issue guidelines on the application of paragraph 1 in relation to specific risks, in particular to present best practices and recommend possible measures, having due regard to the possible consequences of the measures on fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter of all parties involved. When preparing those guidelines the Commission shall organise public consultations.

Article 36

Crisis response mechanism

1. Where a crisis occurs, the Commission, acting upon a recommendation of the Board may adopt a decision, requiring one or more providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines to take one or more of the following actions:

- (a) assess whether, and if so to what extent and how, the functioning and use of their services significantly contribute to a serious threat as referred to in paragraph 2, or are likely to do so;
- (b) identify and apply specific, effective and proportionate measures, such as any of those provided for in Article 35(1) or Article 48(2), to prevent, eliminate or limit any such contribution to the serious threat identified pursuant to point (a) of this paragraph;
- (c) report to the Commission by a certain date or at regular intervals specified in the decision, on the assessments referred to in point (a), on the precise content, implementation and qualitative and quantitative impact of the specific measures taken pursuant to point (b) and on any other issue related to those assessments or those measures, as specified in the decision.

When identifying and applying measures pursuant to point (b) of this paragraph, the service provider or providers shall take due account of the gravity of the serious threat referred to in paragraph 2, of the urgency of the measures and of the actual or potential implications for the rights and legitimate interests of all parties concerned, including the possible failure of the measures to respect the fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter.

2. For the purpose of this Article, a crisis shall be deemed to have occurred where extraordinary circumstances lead to a serious threat to public security or public health in the Union or in significant parts of it.

3. When taking the decision referred to in paragraph 1, the Commission shall ensure that all of the following requirements are met:

- (a) the actions required by the decision are strictly necessary, justified and proportionate, having regard in particular to the gravity of the serious threat referred to in paragraph 2, the urgency of the measures and the actual or potential implications for the rights and legitimate interests of all parties concerned, including the possible failure of the measures to respect the fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter;
- (b) the decision specifies a reasonable period within which specific measures referred to in paragraph 1, point (b), are to be taken, having regard, in particular, to the urgency of those measures and the time needed to prepare and implement them;
- (c) the actions required by the decision are limited to a period not exceeding three months.

4. After adopting the decision referred to in paragraph 1, the Commission shall, without undue delay, take the following steps:

- (a) notify the decision to the provider or providers to which the decision is addressed;

- (b) make the decision publicly available; and
- (c) inform the Board of the decision, invite it to submit its views thereon, and keep it informed of any subsequent developments relating to the decision.

5. The choice of specific measures to be taken pursuant to paragraph 1, point (b), and to paragraph 7, second subparagraph, shall remain with the provider or providers addressed by the Commission's decision.

6. The Commission may on its own initiative or at the request of the provider, engage in a dialogue with the provider to determine whether, in light of the provider's specific circumstances, the intended or implemented measures referred to in paragraph 1, point (b), are effective and proportionate in achieving the objectives pursued. In particular, the Commission shall ensure that the measures taken by the service provider under paragraph 1, point (b), meet the requirements referred to in paragraph 3, points (a) and (c).

7. The Commission shall monitor the application of the specific measures taken pursuant to the decision referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article on the basis of the reports referred to in point (c) of that paragraph and any other relevant information, including information it may request pursuant to Article 40 or 67, taking into account the evolution of the crisis. The Commission shall report regularly to the Board on that monitoring, at least on a monthly basis.

Where the Commission considers that the intended or implemented specific measures pursuant to paragraph 1, point (b), are not effective or proportionate it may, after consulting the Board, adopt a decision requiring the provider to review the identification or application of those specific measures.

8. Where appropriate in view of the evolution of the crisis, the Commission, acting on the Board's recommendation, may amend the decision referred to in paragraph 1 or in paragraph 7, second subparagraph, by:

- (a) revoking the decision and, where appropriate, requiring the very large online platform or very large online search engine to cease to apply the measures identified and implemented pursuant to paragraph 1, point (b), or paragraph 7, second subparagraph, in particular where the grounds for such measures do not exist anymore;
- (b) extending the period referred to paragraph 3, point (c), by a period of no more than three months;
- (c) taking account of experience gained in applying the measures, in particular the possible failure of the measures to respect the fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter.

9. The requirements of paragraphs 1 to 6 shall apply to the decision and to the amendment thereof referred to in this Article.

10. The Commission shall take utmost account of the recommendation of the Board issued pursuant to this Article.

11. The Commission shall report to the European Parliament and to the Council on a yearly basis following the adoption of decisions in accordance with this Article, and, in any event, three months after the end of the crisis, on the application of the specific measures taken pursuant to those decisions.

Article 37

Independent audit

1. Providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines shall be subject, at their own expense and at least once a year, to independent audits to assess compliance with the following:

- (a) the obligations set out in Chapter III;
- (b) any commitments undertaken pursuant to the codes of conduct referred to in Articles 45 and 46 and the crisis protocols referred to in Article 48.

2. Providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines shall afford the organisations carrying out the audits pursuant to this Article the cooperation and assistance necessary to enable them to conduct those audits in an effective, efficient and timely manner, including by giving them access to all relevant data and premises and by answering oral or written questions. They shall refrain from hampering, unduly influencing or undermining the performance of the audit.

Such audits shall ensure an adequate level of confidentiality and professional secrecy in respect of the information obtained from the providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines and third parties in the context of the audits, including after the termination of the audits. However, complying with that requirement shall not adversely affect the performance of the audits and other provisions of this Regulation, in particular those on transparency, supervision and enforcement. Where necessary for the purpose of the transparency reporting pursuant to Article 42(4), the audit report and the audit implementation report referred to in paragraphs 4 and 6 of this Article shall be accompanied with versions that do not contain any information that could reasonably be considered to be confidential.

3. Audits performed pursuant to paragraph 1 shall be performed by organisations which:

- (a) are independent from, and do not have any conflicts of interest with, the provider of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines concerned and any legal person connected to that provider; in particular:
 - (i) have not provided non-audit services related to the matters audited to the provider of very large online platform or of very large online search engine concerned and to any legal person connected to that provider in the 12 months' period before the beginning of the audit and have committed to not providing them with such services in the 12 months' period after the completion of the audit;
 - (ii) have not provided auditing services pursuant to this Article to the provider of very large online platform or of very large online search engine concerned and any legal person connected to that provider during a period longer than 10 consecutive years;
 - (iii) are not performing the audit in return for fees which are contingent on the result of the audit;
- (b) have proven expertise in the area of risk management, technical competence and capabilities;
- (c) have proven objectivity and professional ethics, based in particular on adherence to codes of practice or appropriate standards.

4. Providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines shall ensure that the organisations that perform the audits establish an audit report for each audit. That report shall be substantiated, in writing, and shall include at least the following:

- (a) the name, address and the point of contact of the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine subject to the audit and the period covered;
- (b) the name and address of the organisation or organisations performing the audit;
- (c) a declaration of interests;
- (d) a description of the specific elements audited, and the methodology applied;
- (e) a description and a summary of the main findings drawn from the audit;
- (f) a list of the third parties consulted as part of the audit;
- (g) an audit opinion on whether the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine subject to the audit complied with the obligations and with the commitments referred to in paragraph 1, namely 'positive', 'positive with comments' or 'negative';
- (h) where the audit opinion is not 'positive', operational recommendations on specific measures to achieve compliance and the recommended timeframe to achieve compliance.

5. Where the organisation performing the audit was unable to audit certain specific elements or to express an audit opinion based on its investigations, the audit report shall include an explanation of the circumstances and the reasons why those elements could not be audited.

6. Providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines receiving an audit report that is not 'positive' shall take due account of the operational recommendations addressed to them with a view to take the necessary measures to implement them. They shall, within one month from receiving those recommendations, adopt an audit implementation report setting out those measures. Where they do not implement the operational recommendations, they shall justify in the audit implementation report the reasons for not doing so and set out any alternative measures that they have taken to address any instances of non-compliance identified.

7. The Commission is empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 87 to supplement this Regulation by laying down the necessary rules for the performance of the audits pursuant to this Article, in particular as regards the necessary rules on the procedural steps, auditing methodologies and reporting templates for the audits performed pursuant to this Article. Those delegated acts shall take into account any voluntary auditing standards referred to in Article 44(1), point (e).

Article 38

Recommender systems

In addition to the requirements set out in Article 27, providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines that use recommender systems shall provide at least one option for each of their recommender systems which is not based on profiling as defined in Article 4, point (4), of Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

Article 39

Additional online advertising transparency

1. Providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines that present advertisements on their online interfaces shall compile and make publicly available in a specific section of their online interface, through a searchable and reliable tool that allows multicriteria queries and through application programming interfaces, a repository containing the information referred to in paragraph 2, for the entire period during which they present an advertisement and until one year after the advertisement was presented for the last time on their online interfaces. They shall ensure that the repository does not contain any personal data of the recipients of the service to whom the advertisement was or could have been presented, and shall make reasonable efforts to ensure that the information is accurate and complete.

2. The repository shall include at least all of the following information:

- (a) the content of the advertisement, including the name of the product, service or brand and the subject matter of the advertisement;
- (b) the natural or legal person on whose behalf the advertisement is presented;
- (c) the natural or legal person who paid for the advertisement, if that person is different from the person referred to in point (b);
- (d) the period during which the advertisement was presented;
- (e) whether the advertisement was intended to be presented specifically to one or more particular groups of recipients of the service and if so, the main parameters used for that purpose including where applicable the main parameters used to exclude one or more of such particular groups;
- (f) the commercial communications published on the very large online platforms and identified pursuant to Article 26(2);
- (g) the total number of recipients of the service reached and, where applicable, aggregate numbers broken down by Member State for the group or groups of recipients that the advertisement specifically targeted.

3. As regards paragraph 2, points (a), (b) and (c), where a provider of very large online platform or of very large online search engine has removed or disabled access to a specific advertisement based on alleged illegality or incompatibility with its terms and conditions, the repository shall not include the information referred to in those points. In such case, the repository shall include, for the specific advertisement concerned, the information referred to in Article 17(3), points (a) to (e), or Article 9(2), point (a)(i), as applicable.

The Commission may, after consultation of the Board, the relevant vetted researchers referred to in Article 40 and the public, issue guidelines on the structure, organisation and functionalities of the repositories referred to in this Article.

Article 40

Data access and scrutiny

1. Providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines shall provide the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment or the Commission, at their reasoned request and within a reasonable period specified in that request, access to data that are necessary to monitor and assess compliance with this Regulation.

2. Digital Services Coordinators and the Commission shall use the data accessed pursuant to paragraph 1 only for the purpose of monitoring and assessing compliance with this Regulation and shall take due account of the rights and interests of the providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines and the recipients of the service concerned, including the protection of personal data, the protection of confidential information, in particular trade secrets, and maintaining the security of their service.

3. For the purposes of paragraph 1, providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines shall, at the request of either the Digital Service Coordinator of establishment or of the Commission, explain the design, the logic, the functioning and the testing of their algorithmic systems, including their recommender systems.

4. Upon a reasoned request from the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment, providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines shall, within a reasonable period, as specified in the request, provide access to data to vetted researchers who meet the requirements in paragraph 8 of this Article, for the sole purpose of conducting research that contributes to the detection, identification and understanding of systemic risks in the Union, as set out pursuant to Article 34(1), and to the assessment of the adequacy, efficiency and impacts of the risk mitigation measures pursuant to Article 35.

5. Within 15 days following receipt of a request as referred to in paragraph 4, providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines may request the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment, to amend the request, where they consider that they are unable to give access to the data requested because one of following two reasons:

- (a) they do not have access to the data;
- (b) giving access to the data will lead to significant vulnerabilities in the security of their service or the protection of confidential information, in particular trade secrets.

6. Requests for amendment pursuant to paragraph 5 shall contain proposals for one or more alternative means through which access may be provided to the requested data or other data which are appropriate and sufficient for the purpose of the request.

The Digital Services Coordinator of establishment shall decide on the request for amendment within 15 days and communicate to the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine its decision and, where relevant, the amended request and the new period to comply with the request.

7. Providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines shall facilitate and provide access to data pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 4 through appropriate interfaces specified in the request, including online databases or application programming interfaces.

8. Upon a duly substantiated application from researchers, the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment shall grant such researchers the status of 'vetted researchers' for the specific research referred to in the application and issue a reasoned request for data access to a provider of very large online platform or of very large online search engine pursuant to paragraph 4, where the researchers demonstrate that they meet all of the following conditions:

- (a) they are affiliated to a research organisation as defined in Article 2, point (1), of Directive (EU) 2019/790;
- (b) they are independent from commercial interests;
- (c) their application discloses the funding of the research;
- (d) they are capable of fulfilling the specific data security and confidentiality requirements corresponding to each request and to protect personal data, and they describe in their request the appropriate technical and organisational measures that they have put in place to this end;
- (e) their application demonstrates that their access to the data and the time frames requested are necessary for, and proportionate to, the purposes of their research, and that the expected results of that research will contribute to the purposes laid down in paragraph 4;
- (f) the planned research activities will be carried out for the purposes laid down in paragraph 4;
- (g) they have committed themselves to making their research results publicly available free of charge, within a reasonable period after the completion of the research, subject to the rights and interests of the recipients of the service concerned, in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

Upon receipt of the application pursuant to this paragraph, the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment shall inform the Commission and the Board.

9. Researchers may also submit their application to the Digital Services Coordinator of the Member State of the research organisation to which they are affiliated. Upon receipt of the application pursuant to this paragraph the Digital Services Coordinator shall conduct an initial assessment as to whether the respective researchers meet all of the conditions set out in paragraph 8. The respective Digital Services Coordinator shall subsequently send the application, together with the supporting documents submitted by the respective researchers and the initial assessment, to the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment. The Digital Services Coordinator of establishment shall take a decision whether to award a researcher the status of 'vetted researcher' without undue delay.

While taking due account of the initial assessment provided, the final decision to award a researcher the status of 'vetted researcher' lies within the competence of Digital Services Coordinator of establishment, pursuant to paragraph 8.

10. The Digital Services Coordinator that awarded the status of vetted researcher and issued the reasoned request for data access to the providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines in favour of a vetted researcher shall issue a decision terminating the access if it determines, following an investigation either on its own initiative or on the basis of information received from third parties, that the vetted researcher no longer meets the conditions set out in paragraph 8, and shall inform the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine concerned of the decision. Before terminating the access, the Digital Services Coordinator shall allow the vetted researcher to react to the findings of its investigation and to its intention to terminate the access.

11. Digital Services Coordinators of establishment shall communicate to the Board the names and contact information of the natural persons or entities to which they have awarded the status of 'vetted researcher' in accordance with paragraph 8, as well as the purpose of the research in respect of which the application was made or, where they have terminated the access to the data in accordance with paragraph 10, communicate that information to the Board.

12. Providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines shall give access without undue delay to data, including, where technically possible, to real-time data, provided that the data is publicly accessible in their online interface by researchers, including those affiliated to not for profit bodies, organisations and associations, who comply with the conditions set out in paragraph 8, points (b), (c), (d) and (e), and who use the data solely for performing research that contributes to the detection, identification and understanding of systemic risks in the Union pursuant to Article 34(1).

13. The Commission shall, after consulting the Board, adopt delegated acts supplementing this Regulation by laying down the technical conditions under which providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines are to share data pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 4 and the purposes for which the data may be used. Those delegated acts shall lay down the specific conditions under which such sharing of data with researchers can take place in compliance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679, as well as relevant objective indicators, procedures and, where necessary, independent advisory mechanisms in support of sharing of data, taking into account the rights and interests of the providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines and the recipients of the service concerned, including the protection of confidential information, in particular trade secrets, and maintaining the security of their service.

Article 41

Compliance function

1. Providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines shall establish a compliance function, which is independent from their operational functions and composed of one or more compliance officers, including the head of the compliance function. That compliance function shall have sufficient authority, stature and resources, as well as access to the management body of the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine to monitor the compliance of that provider with this Regulation.

2. The management body of the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine shall ensure that compliance officers have the professional qualifications, knowledge, experience and ability necessary to fulfil the tasks referred to in paragraph 3.

The management body of the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine shall ensure that the head of the compliance function is an independent senior manager with distinct responsibility for the compliance function.

The head of the compliance function shall report directly to the management body of the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine, and may raise concerns and warn that body where risks referred to in Article 34 or non-compliance with this Regulation affect or may affect the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine concerned, without prejudice to the responsibilities of the management body in its supervisory and managerial functions.

The head of the compliance function shall not be removed without prior approval of the management body of the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine.

3. Compliance officers shall have the following tasks:

- (a) cooperating with the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment and the Commission for the purpose of this Regulation;
- (b) ensuring that all risks referred to in Article 34 are identified and properly reported on and that reasonable, proportionate and effective risk-mitigation measures are taken pursuant to Article 35;
- (c) organising and supervising the activities of the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine relating to the independent audit pursuant to Article 37;

- (d) informing and advising the management and employees of the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine about relevant obligations under this Regulation;
- (e) monitoring the compliance of the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine with its obligations under this Regulation;
- (f) where applicable, monitoring the compliance of the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine with commitments made under the codes of conduct pursuant to Articles 45 and 46 or the crisis protocols pursuant to Article 48.

4. Providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines shall communicate the name and contact details of the head of the compliance function to the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment and to the Commission.

5. The management body of the provider of the very large online platform or of the very large online search engine shall define, oversee and be accountable for the implementation of the provider's governance arrangements that ensure the independence of the compliance function, including the division of responsibilities within the organisation of the provider of very large online platform or of very large online search engine, the prevention of conflicts of interest, and sound management of systemic risks identified pursuant to Article 34.

6. The management body shall approve and review periodically, at least once a year, the strategies and policies for taking up, managing, monitoring and mitigating the risks identified pursuant to Article 34 to which the very large online platform or the very large online search engine is or might be exposed to.

7. The management body shall devote sufficient time to the consideration of the measures related to risk management. It shall be actively involved in the decisions related to risk management, and shall ensure that adequate resources are allocated to the management of the risks identified in accordance with Article 34.

Article 42

Transparency reporting obligations

1. Providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines shall publish the reports referred to in Article 15 at the latest by two months from the date of application referred to in Article 33(6), second subparagraph, and thereafter at least every six months.

2. The reports referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article published by providers of very large online platforms shall, in addition to the information referred to in Article 15 and Article 24(1), specify:

- (a) the human resources that the provider of very large online platforms dedicates to content moderation in respect of the service offered in the Union, broken down by each applicable official language of the Member States, including for compliance with the obligations set out in Articles 16 and 22, as well as for compliance with the obligations set out in Article 20;
- (b) the qualifications and linguistic expertise of the persons carrying out the activities referred to in point (a), as well as the training and support given to such staff;
- (c) the indicators of accuracy and related information referred to in Article 15(1), point (e), broken down by each official language of the Member States.

The reports shall be published in at least one of the official languages of the Member States.

3. In addition to the information referred to in Articles 24(2), the providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines shall include in the reports referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article the information on the average monthly recipients of the service for each Member State.

4. Providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines shall transmit to the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment and the Commission, without undue delay upon completion, and make publicly available at the latest three months after the receipt of each audit report pursuant to Article 37(4):

- (a) a report setting out the results of the risk assessment pursuant to Article 34;
- (b) the specific mitigation measures put in place pursuant to Article 35(1);
- (c) the audit report provided for in Article 37(4);
- (d) the audit implementation report provided for in Article 37(6);
- (e) where applicable, information about the consultations conducted by the provider in support of the risk assessments and design of the risk mitigation measures.

5. Where a provider of very large online platform or of very large online search engine considers that the publication of information pursuant to paragraph 4 might result in the disclosure of confidential information of that provider or of the recipients of the service, cause significant vulnerabilities for the security of its service, undermine public security or harm recipients, the provider may remove such information from the publicly available reports. In that case, the provider shall transmit the complete reports to the Digital Services Coordinator of establishment and the Commission, accompanied by a statement of the reasons for removing the information from the publicly available reports.

Article 43

Supervisory fee

1. The Commission shall charge providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines an annual supervisory fee upon their designation pursuant to Article 33.

2. The overall amount of the annual supervisory fees shall cover the estimated costs that the Commission incurs in relation to its supervisory tasks under this Regulation, in particular costs related to the designation pursuant to Article 33, to the set-up, maintenance and operation of the database pursuant to Article 24(5) and to the information sharing system pursuant to Article 85, to referrals pursuant to Article 59, to supporting the Board pursuant to Article 62 and to the supervisory tasks pursuant to Article 56 and Section 4 of Chapter IV.

3. The providers of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines shall be charged annually a supervisory fee for each service for which they have been designated pursuant to Article 33.

The Commission shall adopt implementing acts establishing the amount of the annual supervisory fee in respect of each provider of very large online platform or of very large online search engine. When adopting those implementing acts, the Commission shall apply the methodology laid down in the delegated act referred to in paragraph 4 of this Article and shall respect the principles set out in paragraph 5 of this Article. Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the advisory procedure referred to in Article 88.

4. The Commission shall adopt delegated acts, in accordance with Article 87, laying down the detailed methodology and procedures for:

- (a) the determination of the estimated costs referred to in paragraph 2;
- (b) the determination of the individual annual supervisory fees referred to in paragraph 5, points (b) and (c);
- (c) the determination of the maximum overall limit defined in paragraph 5, point (c); and
- (d) the detailed arrangements necessary to make payments.

When adopting those delegated acts, the Commission shall respect the principles set out in paragraph 5 of this Article.

5. The implementing act referred to in paragraph 3 and the delegated act referred to in paragraph 4 shall respect the following principles:

- (a) the estimation of the overall amount of the annual supervisory fee takes into account the costs incurred in the previous year;
- (b) the annual supervisory fee is proportionate to the number of average monthly active recipients in the Union of each very large online platform or each very large online search engine designated pursuant to Article 33;
- (c) the overall amount of the annual supervisory fee charged on a given provider of very large online platform or very large search engine does not, in any case, exceed 0,05 % of its worldwide annual net income in the preceding financial year.

6. The individual annual supervisory fees charged pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Article shall constitute external assigned revenue in accordance with Article 21(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council ⁽⁴¹⁾.

7. The Commission shall report annually to the European Parliament and to the Council on the overall amount of the costs incurred for the fulfilment of the tasks under this Regulation and the total amount of the individual annual supervisory fees charged in the preceding year.

SECTION 6

Other provisions concerning due diligence obligations

Article 44

Standards

1. The Commission shall consult the Board, and shall support and promote the development and implementation of voluntary standards set by relevant European and international standardisation bodies, at least in respect of the following:

- (a) electronic submission of notices under Article 16;
- (b) templates, design and process standards for communicating with the recipients of the service in a user-friendly manner on restrictions resulting from terms and conditions and changes thereto;
- (c) electronic submission of notices by trusted flaggers under Article 22, including through application programming interfaces;
- (d) specific interfaces, including application programming interfaces, to facilitate compliance with the obligations set out in Articles 39 and 40;
- (e) auditing of very large online platforms and of very large online search engines pursuant to Article 37;
- (f) interoperability of the advertisement repositories referred to in Article 39(2);
- (g) transmission of data between advertising intermediaries in support of transparency obligations pursuant to Article 26(1), points (b), (c) and (d);
- (h) technical measures to enable compliance with obligations relating to advertising contained in this Regulation, including the obligations regarding prominent markings for advertisements and commercial communications referred to in Article 26;

⁽⁴¹⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 (OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p. 1).

- (i) choice interfaces and presentation of information on the main parameters of different types of recommender systems, in accordance with Articles 27 and 38;
- (j) standards for targeted measures to protect minors online.

2. The Commission shall support the update of the standards in the light of technological developments and the behaviour of the recipients of the services in question. The relevant information regarding the update of the standards shall be publicly available and easily accessible.

Article 45

Codes of conduct

1. The Commission and the Board shall encourage and facilitate the drawing up of voluntary codes of conduct at Union level to contribute to the proper application of this Regulation, taking into account in particular the specific challenges of tackling different types of illegal content and systemic risks, in accordance with Union law in particular on competition and the protection of personal data.

2. Where significant systemic risk within the meaning of Article 34(1) emerge and concern several very large online platforms or very large online search engines, the Commission may invite the providers of very large online platforms concerned or the providers of very large online search engines concerned, and other providers of very large online platforms, of very large online search engines, of online platforms and of other intermediary services, as appropriate, as well as relevant competent authorities, civil society organisations and other relevant stakeholders, to participate in the drawing up of codes of conduct, including by setting out commitments to take specific risk mitigation measures, as well as a regular reporting framework on any measures taken and their outcomes.

3. When giving effect to paragraphs 1 and 2, the Commission and the Board, and where relevant other bodies, shall aim to ensure that the codes of conduct clearly set out their specific objectives, contain key performance indicators to measure the achievement of those objectives and take due account of the needs and interests of all interested parties, and in particular citizens, at Union level. The Commission and the Board shall also aim to ensure that participants report regularly to the Commission and their respective Digital Services Coordinators of establishment on any measures taken and their outcomes, as measured against the key performance indicators that they contain. Key performance indicators and reporting commitments shall take into account differences in size and capacity between different participants.

4. The Commission and the Board shall assess whether the codes of conduct meet the aims specified in paragraphs 1 and 3, and shall regularly monitor and evaluate the achievement of their objectives, having regard to the key performance indicators that they might contain. They shall publish their conclusions.

The Commission and the Board shall also encourage and facilitate regular review and adaptation of the codes of conduct.

In the case of systematic failure to comply with the codes of conduct, the Commission and the Board may invite the signatories to the codes of conduct to take the necessary action.

Article 46

Codes of conduct for online advertising

1. The Commission shall encourage and facilitate the drawing up of voluntary codes of conduct at Union level by providers of online platforms and other relevant service providers, such as providers of online advertising intermediary services, other actors involved in the programmatic advertising value chain, or organisations representing recipients of the service and civil society organisations or relevant authorities to contribute to further transparency for actors in the online advertising value chain beyond the requirements of Articles 26 and 39.

2. The Commission shall aim to ensure that the codes of conduct pursue an effective transmission of information that fully respects the rights and interests of all parties involved, as well as a competitive, transparent and fair environment in online advertising, in accordance with Union and national law, in particular on competition and the protection of privacy and personal data. The Commission shall aim to ensure that the codes of conduct at least address the following:

- (a) the transmission of information held by providers of online advertising intermediaries to recipients of the service concerning the requirements set in Article 26(1), points (b), (c) and (d);
- (b) the transmission of information held by providers of online advertising intermediaries to the repositories pursuant to Article 39;
- (c) meaningful information on data monetisation.

3. The Commission shall encourage the development of the codes of conduct by 18 February 2025 and their application by 18 August 2025.

4. The Commission shall encourage all the actors in the online advertising value chain referred to in paragraph 1 to endorse the commitments stated in the codes of conduct, and to comply with them.

Article 47

Codes of conduct for accessibility

1. The Commission shall encourage and facilitate the drawing up of codes of conduct at Union level with the involvement of providers of online platforms and other relevant service providers, organisations representing recipients of the service and civil society organisations or relevant authorities to promote full and effective, equal participation, by improving access to online services that, through their initial design or subsequent adaptation, address the particular needs of persons with disabilities.

2. The Commission shall aim to ensure that the codes of conduct pursue the objective of ensuring that those services are accessible in compliance with Union and national law, in order to maximise their foreseeable use by persons with disabilities. The Commission shall aim to ensure that the codes of conduct address at least the following objectives:

- (a) designing and adapting services to make them accessible to persons with disabilities by making them perceivable, operable, understandable and robust;
- (b) explaining how the services meet the applicable accessibility requirements and making this information available to the public in an accessible manner for persons with disabilities;
- (c) making information, forms and measures provided pursuant to this Regulation available in such a manner that they are easy to find, easy to understand, and accessible to persons with disabilities.

3. The Commission shall encourage the development of the codes of conduct by 18 February 2025 and their application by 18 August 2025.

Article 48

Crisis protocols

1. The Board may recommend that the Commission initiate the drawing up, in accordance with paragraphs 2, 3 and 4, of voluntary crisis protocols for addressing crisis situations. Those situations shall be strictly limited to extraordinary circumstances affecting public security or public health.

2. The Commission shall encourage and facilitate the providers of very large online platforms, of very large online search engines and, where appropriate, the providers of other online platforms or of other online search engines, to participate in the drawing up, testing and application of those crisis protocols. The Commission shall aim to ensure that those crisis protocols include one or more of the following measures:

- (a) prominently displaying information on the crisis situation provided by Member States' authorities or at Union level, or, depending on the context of the crisis, by other relevant reliable bodies;
- (b) ensuring that the provider of intermediary services designates a specific point of contact for crisis management; where relevant, this may be the electronic point of contact referred to in Article 11 or, in the case of providers of very large online platforms or of very large online search engines, the compliance officer referred to in Article 41;
- (c) where applicable, adapt the resources dedicated to compliance with the obligations set out in Articles 16, 20, 22, 23 and 35 to the needs arising from the crisis situation.

3. The Commission shall, as appropriate, involve Member States' authorities, and may also involve Union bodies, offices and agencies in drawing up, testing and supervising the application of the crisis protocols. The Commission may, where necessary and appropriate, also involve civil society organisations or other relevant organisations in drawing up the crisis protocols.

4. The Commission shall aim to ensure that the crisis protocols set out clearly all of the following:

- (a) the specific parameters to determine what constitutes the specific extraordinary circumstance the crisis protocol seeks to address and the objectives it pursues;
- (b) the role of each participant and the measures they are to put in place in preparation and once the crisis protocol has been activated;
- (c) a clear procedure for determining when the crisis protocol is to be activated;
- (d) a clear procedure for determining the period during which the measures to be taken once the crisis protocol has been activated are to be taken, which is strictly limited to what is necessary for addressing the specific extraordinary circumstances concerned;
- (e) safeguards to address any negative effects on the exercise of the fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter, in particular the freedom of expression and information and the right to non-discrimination;
- (f) a process to publicly report on any measures taken, their duration and their outcomes, upon the termination of the crisis situation.

5. If the Commission considers that a crisis protocol fails to effectively address the crisis situation, or to safeguard the exercise of fundamental rights as referred to in paragraph 4, point (e), it shall request the participants to revise the crisis protocol, including by taking additional measures.

CHAPTER IV

IMPLEMENTATION, COOPERATION, PENALTIES AND ENFORCEMENT

SECTION 1

Competent authorities and national Digital Services Coordinators*Article 49***Competent authorities and Digital Services Coordinators**

1. Member States shall designate one or more competent authorities to be responsible for the supervision of providers of intermediary services and enforcement of this Regulation ('competent authorities').
2. Member States shall designate one of the competent authorities as their Digital Services Coordinator. The Digital Services Coordinator shall be responsible for all matters relating to supervision and enforcement of this Regulation in that Member State, unless the Member State concerned has assigned certain specific tasks or sectors to other competent authorities. The Digital Services Coordinator shall in any event be responsible for ensuring coordination at national level in respect of those matters and for contributing to the effective and consistent supervision and enforcement of this Regulation throughout the Union.

For that purpose, Digital Services Coordinators shall cooperate with each other, other national competent authorities, the Board and the Commission, without prejudice to the possibility for Member States to provide for cooperation mechanisms and regular exchanges of views between the Digital Services Coordinator and other national authorities where relevant for the performance of their respective tasks.

Where a Member State designates one or more competent authorities in addition to the Digital Services Coordinator, it shall ensure that the respective tasks of those authorities and of the Digital Services Coordinator are clearly defined and that they cooperate closely and effectively when performing their tasks.

3. Member States shall designate the Digital Services Coordinators by 17 February 2024.

Member States shall make publicly available, and communicate to the Commission and the Board, the name of their competent authority designated as Digital Services Coordinator and information on how it can be contacted. The Member State concerned shall communicate to the Commission and the Board the name of the other competent authorities referred to in paragraph 2, as well as their respective tasks.

4. The provisions applicable to Digital Services Coordinators set out in Articles 50, 51 and 56 shall also apply to any other competent authorities that the Member States designate pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Article.

*Article 50***Requirements for Digital Services Coordinators**

1. Member States shall ensure that their Digital Services Coordinators perform their tasks under this Regulation in an impartial, transparent and timely manner. Member States shall ensure that their Digital Services Coordinators have all necessary resources to carry out their tasks, including sufficient technical, financial and human resources to adequately supervise all providers of intermediary services falling within their competence. Each Member State shall ensure that its Digital Services Coordinator has sufficient autonomy in managing its budget within the budget's overall limits, in order not to adversely affect the independence of the Digital Services Coordinator.

2. When carrying out their tasks and exercising their powers in accordance with this Regulation, the Digital Services Coordinators shall act with complete independence. They shall remain free from any external influence, whether direct or indirect, and shall neither seek nor take instructions from any other public authority or any private party.

3. Paragraph 2 of this Article is without prejudice to the tasks of Digital Services Coordinators within the system of supervision and enforcement provided for in this Regulation and the cooperation with other competent authorities in accordance with Article 49(2). Paragraph 2 of this Article shall not prevent the exercise of judicial review and shall also be without prejudice to proportionate accountability requirements regarding the general activities of the Digital Services Coordinators, such as financial expenditure or reporting to national parliaments, provided that those requirements do not undermine the achievement of the objectives of this Regulation.

Article 51

Powers of Digital Services Coordinators

1. Where needed in order to carry out their tasks under this Regulation, Digital Services Coordinators shall have the following powers of investigation, in respect of conduct by providers of intermediary services falling within the competence of their Member State:

- (a) the power to require those providers, as well as any other persons acting for purposes related to their trade, business, craft or profession that may reasonably be aware of information relating to a suspected infringement of this Regulation, including organisations performing the audits referred to in Article 37 and Article 75(2), to provide such information without undue delay;
- (b) the power to carry out, or to request a judicial authority in their Member State to order, inspections of any premises that those providers or those persons use for purposes related to their trade, business, craft or profession, or to request other public authorities to do so, in order to examine, seize, take or obtain copies of information relating to a suspected infringement in any form, irrespective of the storage medium;
- (c) the power to ask any member of staff or representative of those providers or those persons to give explanations in respect of any information relating to a suspected infringement and to record the answers with their consent by any technical means.

2. Where needed for carrying out their tasks under this Regulation, Digital Services Coordinators shall have the following enforcement powers, in respect of providers of intermediary services falling within the competence of their Member State:

- (a) the power to accept the commitments offered by those providers in relation to their compliance with this Regulation and to make those commitments binding;
- (b) the power to order the cessation of infringements and, where appropriate, to impose remedies proportionate to the infringement and necessary to bring the infringement effectively to an end, or to request a judicial authority in their Member State to do so;
- (c) the power to impose fines, or to request a judicial authority in their Member State to do so, in accordance with Article 52 for failure to comply with this Regulation, including with any of the investigative orders issued pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Article;
- (d) the power to impose a periodic penalty payment, or to request a judicial authority in their Member State to do so, in accordance with Article 52 to ensure that an infringement is terminated in compliance with an order issued pursuant to point (b) of this subparagraph or for failure to comply with any of the investigative orders issued pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Article;
- (e) the power to adopt interim measures or to request the competent national judicial authority in their Member State to do so, to avoid the risk of serious harm.