

Question for written answer E-001099/2018
to the Commission
Rule 130
Adam Szejnfeld (PPE)

Subject: Freedom of expression and illegal content on the internet

In today's digital age, social media is increasingly playing the role of information and education provider. A huge number of people worldwide are acquiring knowledge and forming their views on various subjects almost exclusively on the basis of material found on the internet.

Unfortunately, at an ever-increasing rate, the internet – and social networks in particular – is becoming flooded with illegal and harmful content inciting intolerance, xenophobia, racism, violence and terrorism. Communism, Nazism, fascism and other totalitarian ideologies are frequently promoted. This is an abuse of the principle of freedom of expression in a democratic society.

The biggest companies in the digital sector are apparently trying to take action to tackle this type of content, but it seems that in response some users are moving to niche platforms where banned content is freely available.

Given the non-binding nature of the guidelines and principles outlined by the Commission, it is difficult to achieve satisfactory results in terms of rapid and permanent removal of illegal and harmful content from the internet.

Does the Commission intend to bring forward measures which go further, including legislative measures, to tackle the issue of illegal content on the internet more effectively, without infringing the principle of freedom of expression?