

**Question for written answer P-000792/2017
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Dario Tamburrano (EFDD), Eleonora Evi (EFDD) and Isabella Adinolfi (EFDD)

Subject: Fake news

The Commission's efforts to combat online incitement to hatred, as requested by the Council, have led to a code of conduct for IT companies. The Commission also fights fake news by means of declarations¹ which bring political pressure to bear on IT companies. The Commission has long been threatening Google and Facebook with heavy fines (under the law on competition and on the use of data). They have readily assented to the Commission's requests concerning fake news².

- What is the legal basis for the Commission's efforts to combat fake news, which is already a criminal offence under national laws on the conduct of the press, and what task assigned to the Commission is it carrying out in this way?
- Where is the dividing line between fake news and credible news (various stories published by reputable newspapers are so false, misleading or incomplete as to deceive readers), and why are IT companies, which have an economic interest in maintaining good relations with the Commission, expected to define it?
- As fake news is blamed for the dissemination of anti-establishment views, to what extent does the Commission attribute anti-EU sentiment to fake news, to what extent does it blame the social impact of austerity, and to what extent does it see other specific factors as being responsible? The Commission is asked not only to state its views but to give scores on a scale of 1 to 10.

¹ <http://www.politico.eu/article/juncker-calls-for-action-on-fake-news/>, http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/item-detail.cfm?&item_id=50840, <https://www.ft.com/content/85683e08-e4a9-11e6-9645-c9357a75844a>

² https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/25/technology/google-facebook-fake-news.html?_r=0