

**Question for written answer E-004760/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Christine Anderson (ID)

Subject: Harmful influence of the US corporation Facebook on democracy and society

Employees have levelled harsh criticism against the US corporation Facebook, referencing the negative effects on society and the psyche of various social groups¹. It has been claimed in a report that the mental health of teenage girls suffers the most. The criticism also extends to the discriminatory treatment of people. Revelations have also brought to light that celebrities, politicians and high-ranking Facebook users were treated differently by the company, for instance when it came to compliance with communication policies. It has also been claimed that the riots that took place at the Capitol in Washington DC in early January 2021 were fuelled by Facebook. Facebook reportedly turned on security systems during the US presidential election to reduce misinformation. After the election, it switched them off again or restored the previous settings. It was claimed that such actions influenced a democratic election, in so far as censorship was made easy.

Facebook services are immensely popular in the EU, which means that a very large number of people are directly affected by this.

1. What does the Commission know about the negative impact on society that the services of the US corporation Facebook have?
2. What action is the Commission taking to protect EU citizens in this regard?
3. What action is the Commission taking to tackle the threat to democracy?

¹ https://www.focus.de/digital/internet/keine-24-stunden-vor-totalausfall-facebook-whistleblowerin-offenbart-ihre-identitaet-und-beklagt-verrat-an-der-demokratie_id_24302630.html