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# EU Targets Telegram: Could the Messaging App Face New Censorship Orders?

Didi Rankovic (<https://reclaimthenet.org/author/dee-rankovic>)



The European Union is eager to pull Telegram into the realm of its online censorship law, the [Digital Services Act \(DSA\)](https://reclaimthenet.org/the-eu-digital-services-act-is-the-next-big-threat-to-free-speech) (<https://reclaimthenet.org/the-eu-digital-services-act-is-the-next-big-threat-to-free-speech>), by declaring that it has enough users to be considered a very large online platform (VLOP) – which DSA can then regulate.

The messaging app’s numbers from February said that it had 41 million monthly active users in the EU’s 27 member countries. But if the EU could find a way to officially push that statistic up to 45 million, then it could subject Telegram to a host of strict DSA rules. And to this end, an “investigation” has reportedly been launched.

The bloc is “in discussion” with those behind the app, unnamed sources have told [Bloomberg](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-05-28/eu-explores-whether-telegram-falls-under-strict-new-content-law) (<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2024-05-28/eu-explores-whether-telegram-falls-under-strict-new-content-law>). What exactly they might be discussing isn’t clear at this time, but Telegram no longer mentions the DSA on its ToS pages, while the one that provided the 41 million figure has been [removed](https://web.archive.org/web/20240502005805/https://telegram.org/tos/eu-dsa) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20240502005805/https://telegram.org/tos/eu-dsa>) from the site.





Telegram has long been a thorn in the side of censorship-prone authorities around the world, and the EU – some of its member countries more so than others – is no different.

Although not as large and influential as Facebook, Google, or even X, unlike these platforms, it remains “unmoderated” and “unaccountable” – i.e., governments who like to suppress online speech on a whim have a hard time trying to achieve this on apps like Telegram.

The EU’s main concern seems to be to fully control the narrative around the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, and be able to block content published by Russian channels as “disinformation” – having long since censored traditional media and platforms based in that country.

The EU appears to be trying to now control Telegram’s reach by “investigating” the number of users it has, and if it finds (or decides) that there are more than 45 million of them in the bloc, the next step would be to try and impose DSA rules on the app.

EU’s punishment for those found in violation of those rules ranges from fines amounting to 6 percent of revenue, to the banning of a platform.

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