Meeting with ████████████████████████████ **Meta** ████████

19 May 2022 at 11:30, BERL 11/154

Participants

European Commission: Vera Jourova (Vice-President for Values and Transparency), Renate Nikolay (Head of Cabinet Jourova), Daniel Braun (Deputy Head of Cabinet Jourova), Wojtek Talko (Member of Cabinet Jourova), ████████████████████████████████

Externals: ██
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Summary

The Vice-President Jourova met Meta's ████████████████████, ████████. *The parties discussed the Russian war in Ukraine, the danger of pro-Kremlin disinformation, especially in the CEE region, the upcoming Digital Services Act and the Code of Practice, and very briefly the EU-US Privacy Shield. The parties conclude the meeting by agreeing to stay in touch regarding the Code, and the planned meeting on disinformation in the CEE region.*

In detail

████████ opens the meeting by congratulating the Commission on the work on the Digital Markets Act and the Digital Services Act.

Coming to the recent political developments, ██ says Meta's services played an important role at the beginning of the Russian war in Ukraine. In the first 24 hours of the war, WhatsApp saw a 200% increase in its calls. Many platforms, including Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram are currently blocked in **Russia**. Facebook and Instagram services were blocked in Russia based on allegations of having engaged in 'extremist activities.

████████ informs the Vice-President that Meta is in touch with the Ukrainian government. It developed a chatbot on WhatsApp which keeps Ukrainians informed about important developments in their country. The business was one of the first ones to block RT and Sputnik and it updated its policies in order to take down any false claim websites. In this regard, ████████ notes that several countries are asking Meta to take down websites based on their content which the business is not comfortable with.

The Vice-President says this war is about Russian aggression on one hand and protecting Ukrainian people on the other. She informs ████████ that the 6ᵗʰ EU sanction package may include three more **Russia-sponsored channels**. Vice-President underlines that if countries pass a law on banning more channels, Meta and other platforms will need to take their decision into account.

Vice-President underlined the importance of finalisation of the **Code of Practice**. The Code should be seen as a stable arrangement and be as strong as possible. Facebook should provide more country-based data. Facebook facilitates the large outreach of disinformation websites, enabling through its algorithms **a feedback loop**. This is an issue that needs to be addressed.

The cabinet emphasises the need for more commitment when it comes to providing access to data.

Meta is working on a tool (VCR) to provide access to data for research. ▮▮▮▮ also highlights the independent audit done by the E&Y.

The cabinet raises that **RT and Sputnik** reach is getting **back to pre-war levels**. This might be because the channels are not banned on domain-level. The Commission would like to ask Meta to investigate this issue.

Before concluding the meeting, the parties briefly discuss the **EU-US Privacy Shield**. The Shield has a support from the President von der Leyen and the President Biden. Currently, an action on the US side is needed.