

From: [Alice Dawkins](#)
To: [Committee, FPA \(SEN\)](#)
Subject: Re: F&PA References Committee - Administration of the Voice referendum - Questions on notice and Hansard corrections, 4 May 2023
Date: Thursday, 18 May 2023 2:31:43 PM

Dear Committee,

Please find Reset's responses to the questions taken on notice. Please let me know if there are further questions or areas to clarify.

Alice

1. Research on online harms/hate experienced throughout the course of the same-sex marriage vote

- We have been unable to find any comprehensive research monitoring these issues. 2017 was certainly a big year for mis/disinformation. Cambridge Analytica, the now-infamous data analytics firm, was working for political campaigns all over the world. It may be worth investigating if either campaign engaged data analytics firms relying on practices such as micro-targeting, as this would have been one driver for exacerbated mis/dis information.
- We note that mis/disinformation monitoring methodologies in 2017 were very nascent, and it is unlikely that monitoring projects such as our proposed initiative in the Voice referendum took place during the marriage plebiscite. We stress the importance of rigorous monitoring efforts, both for accountability and transparency during campaign periods, but also to provide vital baseline data.

2. Evaluation metrics for the effect of the *Digital Services Act*

- These are not yet available, but we expect it will be by the end of the European summer, when platforms submit their first risk assessments to the European Commission. The issue at the moment is platforms' voluntary measures have been mostly halted, as they are reluctant to take measures until they know what regulations will really require. The European Commission is also still finalising the framework.
- One avenue for third-party analysis could be systematically tracking the changes to platform policies and terms and conditions. It would be possible to analyse the number of changes platforms put in place from the end of the summer onwards, compared to a period of time before the DSA (for example, the year before). If there is an appetite for this analysis, we'd be happy to pursue it.