(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004294/17**
**to the Commission**
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)
(28 June 2017)

**Subject:** Microsoft vulnerabilities and the EU

The recent WannaCry and Petya ransomware attacks once more highlighted the need to use the most up-to-date software to secure communications, data and critical infrastructure. Microsoft XP was particularly vulnerable to WannaCry, especially since no security updates were provided by the company after 2014. Providing after-sales software updates is a public good when critical infrastructure depends on legacy software.

1. The desktop computing environment of the European Union institutions has been dependent on Microsoft software products since 1993. What is the total value of all ongoing contracts between Microsoft and the Commission?

2. The Commission's DG Digit states that one of the 'main challenges in the area of vulnerability management will be to systematically target and reduce structural vulnerabilities due to a legacy of information systems that have not been developed with security in mind and to achieve target patch rates of days and in critical cases of hours across the Commission' (1). How does the Commission assess its cooperation with Microsoft in this context?

3. In what ways can the European Union institutions, as customers of legacy software and as guardians of the public interest, ensure that software remains updated and safe in order to avoid vulnerability to attacks?

**Answer given by Ms Gabriel on behalf of the Commission**
(12 October 2017)

The total amount of the contracts between the Commission and Microsoft covering the corporate software infrastructure and associated services is about EUR 6.23 million per year (approximately EUR 186 per user per year, of which EUR 150 for the licences), which enable the entire Commission staff to use a large set of Microsoft end-user products on any corporate device and to run the associated server software products as well as a range of infrastructure management solutions, identity management solutions and development tools. These contracts are also applicable to a very large number of EU institutions and Agencies, including the European Parliament.

As regards the second question, it is worth underlining that when the Commission talks about use of legacy systems this is not specifically related to Microsoft products. Apart from very few potential exceptions, all Microsoft software is under active maintenance and no Windows XP machines are used. With respect to Microsoft support, the abovementioned contracts provide the Commission with direct links to support teams through onsite engineers and a dedicated Technical Account Manager. The Commission also gets prior notification of patches that will be made available.

Concerning the third question, no IT system is 100% secure and thus totally impenetrable to any form of malicious attack. However, the Commission works to systematically ensure that only vendor-supported software is in use and that any discovered vulnerabilities are patched as quickly as possible by obtaining and applying the relevant updates/patches.

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