

WRITTEN QUESTION E-6234/07  
by Christoph Konrad (PPE-DE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Distortions of competition in credit card discount fees and transactions

1. When a credit card is used at a filling station in the EU a discount fee is charged, usually between 0.9% and 1.8%, with most credit card companies charging under 1%. The largest element in this charge is the interchange rate, which according to the credit card industry accounts for some 0.7% of the transaction amount.

What is the Commission's opinion of the levying of this interchange rate, and the amount levied, in the EU Member States, and of the transparency and monitoring of these fees?

2. Does the Commission consider that effective competition exists in credit card transactions in the EU single market? If so, what are its reasons for thinking so? If not, what action is the Commission taking to counteract distortions of competition which harm the consumer, and to restore the effectiveness of the single market?

3. Does the Commission know if there are agreements between banks on the amount of the interchange rate? If so, where do these agreements take place, and what action is the Commission taking against them?