

**Question for written answer E-006067/2015  
to the Commission  
Rule 130  
Adam Szejnfeld (PPE)**

Subject: Limited lifetime of products

An increasing number of products now have significantly shorter service lives than was the case in the past. The refrigerators that served our parents are, in many cases, still working away in our homes, but such products are no longer being manufactured. Televisions and washing machines can stop working after just three or four years. Similarly, important components of laptops and mobile telephones often fail shortly after the warranties have expired.

Despite technological advances, modern products have an astonishingly short shelf life. A number of studies show that this is no accident, but rather the result of the producers' deliberate actions. It appears that the majority of corporations are intentionally creating devices in which the most expensive or vital component is designed to fail shortly after the warranty has expired. Given that the cost of replacing or repairing this component is frequently comparable to the price of purchasing a new model, consumers often opt to make a new purchase.

This raises suspicions of 'planned obsolescence', which means that producers are creating products with predetermined and limited service lives. Such actions not only go against consumer interests – they also have a negative impact on the environment.

Is the Commission investigating this harmful phenomenon, and what steps does it intend to take in this matter?