

**Question for written answer E-007273/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Protection of consumers' rights in arbitration proceedings in the EU

There is a trend among certain types of company (mobile phone operators, energy suppliers, leasing firms and 'quick loan' companies) to refer their disputes with consumers to arbitration. The principle of consumer protection, as guaranteed in EU law and specifically in Council Directive 93/13/EEC, aims to bring about the convergence of Member States' rules concerning unfair terms in consumer contracts.

I am concerned that consumers are finding it difficult to use the arrangements in place for the protection of their rights and that they are experiencing various problems with arbitration. Specifically, I have been alerted to problems with high charges and fake notices and summonses, and to the absence of any requirement to secure consent to and recognition of arbitration, the fact that reference to an arbitration clause in general terms and conditions is not prohibited, the lack of any guarantee that arbitrators be properly qualified, and a failure to ensure access to archives and the protection of personal data.

1. Is the Commission aware of these problems and does it intend to take any action?
2. Does the Commission have information as to the number of arbitration bodies in the EU, the volume of consumer rights cases that they handle and the proportion of such cases in which their decisions are the subject of appeal in the national courts?