

**Question for written answer E-009236/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Esther de Lange (PPE)

Subject: Persistent problems with the Commission's VAT number validation site

For a considerable period of time, we have been receiving reports from SMEs in the Netherlands that the European Union's VAT number validation site is regularly impossible to access¹. Moreover, error messages submitted through the site never elicit any reply. This is worrying, it causes economic damage and it does not accord with the Commission's aim of completing the internal market.

We hear that in recent weeks there have been constant problems with the site. When SMEs receive international orders, they cannot process them, which immediately causes financial damage. In the past, it was easy to check VAT numbers with the Dutch tax authorities. For the past few years, businesses have been required to use the above-mentioned Commission site. All this causes administrative delays and frustration for SMEs, and moreover costs a good deal of money.

1. Is the Commission aware of these problems with its VAT number validation site?
2. How many times per day is the site used?
3. How will the Commission ensure that Dutch businesses can easily validate VAT numbers, without encountering technical problems, on the Commission's VAT number validation site?

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/vies/vatRequest.html?locale=en