

Question for written answer E-012124/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Syed Kamall (ECR)

Subject: Impact of 'right to be forgotten' upon free speech and the search engine market

I have been contacted by a constituent who is concerned about the 'right to be forgotten', part of the forthcoming Data Protection Regulation.

My constituent is concerned that this right may cause unintended damage to the public interest and limit innovation in the search engine market.

He is concerned about the creation of further advantages for those already privileged by society. He is further concerned that such a right creates additional barriers for new entrants to the market, threatening to reduce its diversity. He is also concerned that this added burden may consolidate existing monopolies.

1. Can the Commission confirm whether it has investigated the public burden and impact upon free speech of the 'right to be forgotten'?
2. Can the Commission further confirm whether it has investigated what impact the 'right to be forgotten' may have on the search engine market? Although the additional burden may be negligible for large existing search providers, could it perhaps be dissuasive for new entrants?
3. Has the Commission investigated what the effects of selective identification of suppressed entries may be, potentially leading to a rise of circumvention businesses, and in turn setting ordinary citizens at a disadvantage to those who are better placed to identify fraudsters and poorly performing businessmen?