

Question for written answer E-003098/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: Special loopholes in mobile phone security systems

The dispute between the FBI and a mobile phone manufacturer in the US has raised the question of whether or not investigators should have access to the mobile phone data of persons who have perpetrated an offence. When the manufacturer refused to give the FBI access to the data on a perpetrator's device, it was suggested that mobile phone security systems should be designed with 'special loopholes' so that the relevant services can have easy access to the data on mobile devices. Similar suggestions have been made in Europe. Serious concerns have been raised, however, that the privacy of technology users would be put at risk, in a clear violation of the provisions of civil and human rights.

Even if motivated by good intentions, technological loopholes would affect all mobile phone users. Should hundreds of millions of honest people be opened up to monitoring just because a few individuals have committed a crime? Nobody can guarantee that the special loopholes would not be used by shady employees working in the relevant services or by hackers seeking access to mobile phone users' sensitive information. A solution of that kind could pose a serious threat to the fundamental rights of EU citizens, in particular the right to privacy.

Can the Commission say what relevant laws it is planning to introduce in the EU?