

Question for written answer E-004608/2018
to the Commission
Rule 130
Adam Szejnfeld (PPE)

Subject: Restricting citizens' privacy through the overuse of the possibility to record phone calls by public authorities and businesses

There has been a noticeable increase in the number of privacy violations in the Member States, as a result of phone calls being recorded by public authorities and businesses. Therefore, more and more consumers in Europe complain that their right to privacy is being restricted. Hotlines seem to be particularly affected. Consumers are given no choice when they phone the hotline: they can either agree to the conversation being recorded or end the call.

It is difficult to justify the fact that each and every phone call is recorded irrespective of its nature or purpose. Consumers have a right to call public authorities, stores or service providers to make their preferences, expectations or intentions known or to ask about prices or other terms and conditions of sale in order to make a choice that is important to them. What is more, this must be considered purely their private and individual business. Quite apart from this, customers are often embarrassed in such situations. Therefore, these calls should not be recorded, especially given the fact that one cannot tell when information thereby obtained will be used, by whom it will be used and for what purpose.

What actions does the Commission intend to take in order to curb the violations consisting in the widespread recording of phone calls between consumers and suppliers of goods or services?