

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3248/03
by Anna Karamanou (PSE)
to the Council

Subject: Possibility of tracking cellphone users

Information has recently come to light regarding the commercial possibilities offered by mobile telephony networks which are being exploited by at least six companies in Great Britain, making it possible to pinpoint the location of a cellphone user at a very low monthly cost (EUR 7.5). Clearly this opens the door to the exploitation of sensitive personal information, for example by employers wishing to know where their employees are at any given moment. A number of ideas were also put forward regarding a code of conduct on the part of these companies which in theory, offer protection to cellphone users who do not wish their whereabouts to be divulged. The arguments put forward however were singularly unconvincing, given the danger of the emergence of a surveillance mentality with unforeseeable consequences.

What action does the Council intend to take to protect European citizens from the use of mobile telephony to track their movements?