

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3924/07
by Marc Tarabella (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Segmentation of the internal market to the detriment of consumers

Numerous surveys and studies show an exponential growth in internet sales as consumers rightly wish to take advantage of the opening up of the internal market, particularly to get the best price. This trend should continue over the next few years provided that all internet operators abide by the rules of the internal market.

However, recent surveys by consumer associations show that some firms, such as mail order companies, are refusing to sell goods to customers living in other Member States or else systematically transfer them to their company's subsidiary in the purchaser's country of residence.

Such practices seem to run totally counter to the idea of the 'single market' and to the free movement of goods.

Can the Commission state:

- whether it has more precise information on these market segmentation practices,
- what measures it intends to take, if necessary, to curb them and
- what rights consumers have in the face of such refusals?