

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2313/08
by László Surján (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Bridging the information gap

Access to modern information technology such as broadband internet varies greatly across the 27 Member States. Lacking the necessary knowledge and equipment, a large number of European citizens have no opportunity to use the internet. Some Member States are clearly trying hard to rectify this, and EU funds are available to do so. Other Member States are doing far less to bridge the information gap.

Is the Commission looking into the differences in the way Member States are handling this problem, and is it putting any pressure on them to put an end to the information gap?

What is the situation in individual Member States since the last report on this matter in terms of achieving the goals set out in the i2010 strategy for a European Information Society for Growth and Employment and bringing an end to the information gap?

Which Member States are using EU funds to bring an end to the information gap, and how are they doing so?

The internet is increasingly becoming a tool for publicising information, and the amount of information transmitted is increasing; the result is that – in spite of the available search facilities – it is becoming increasingly difficult to find exactly what you want. The increased use of internet-based television is also likely to cause problems as network capacity becomes used up.

Might the current network in future become unsuitable for the dissemination of information? Is the Commission considering the question of how long the internet – on which the publicising of information is based – will be suitable for fulfilling this function?