

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5518/08
by Robert Evans (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Consequences of the Google/Yahoo! partnership for EU consumers

On 12 June 2008 Google, the world's largest search engine, signed a partnership with Yahoo!, the second largest search engine. At the moment the agreement only applies to the US and Canadian markets, but will most likely spread to the EU markets since the Internet is a global phenomenon. Concerned European consumer organisations have pointed out that the partnership is not in the consumer's best interest and could have effects comparable to those of a cartel.

Does the Commission share my concern that this partnership could limit and hinder competition on the Internet by allowing only one company to manage the search engine platforms, therefore holding a monopoly on the market? Does the Commission agree that this lack of competition would hinder consumers? What does the Commission believe could be done to prevent such threats?

Does the Commission also agree that the EU should act now to stop this deal before it enters our market? What action, if any, is the Commission considering to address this situation?