

**Question for written answer E-010961/2010
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Follow-up to the exemption for private security services from the EU directive on services in the internal market

In Europe, private security services are provided by about 50 000 private security companies which have a yearly turnover of approximately EUR 23 billion and contribute both to growth and development in the EU economy and to delivering security to EU citizens. This field covers a wide range of services, from personal security services to critical infrastructure protection, which are increasingly used by public bodies and organisations.

Directive 2006/123/EC on services in the internal market was adopted in December 2006 with a view to removing legal and administrative barriers within the EU in the services sector. Given the differences existing between EU Member State laws on private security services, such services were excluded from the scope of the directive. In accordance with Article 38(b) of the directive, the Commission should assess, by 28 December 2010, the possibility of presenting proposals for harmonisation in this field.

1. Can the Commission confirm that it will carry out an assessment of the private security services sector by 28 December 2010?
2. If so, which options is it currently considering and in what timeframe will they be presented?
3. If private security services are included in the scope of the Services Directive, and given that major differences still exist between national laws, especially in terms of training, background screening, the documentation required, licensing, and control mechanisms, how will the Commission ensure that this will not result in the application of the lowest common denominator and will instead guarantee a high level of security and quality in this field?