Question for written answer E-6054/2010
to the Council
Rule 117
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Subject: Interoperability and standardisation of Apple products and software

At a time when Apple has just released the latest version of its iPhone and the first version of its iPad tablet computer on the Community market, it is to be regretted that this multinational company still refuses to further its products' interoperability and standardisation.

First France, and now the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway and Sweden have stood up against Apple and its monopoly on the music market. The iPod/iTunes tandem has already proved itself to be the users' favourite, and its success in this field has been telling. The UK had already expressed wishes that Apple should adhere to a degree of interoperability with other constructors by granting them the right to use the DRM technology that protects its music. Denmark, Norway and Sweden swiftly followed suit, with the latter even maintaining that the protection measures Apple applied in Scandinavia were illegal.

Despite all the inconveniences and wastage that the existence of different systems create, Apple still refuses to open up its DRM to other constructors, to implement standard interconnectivity or to increase the compatibility of its products.

This marketing strategy is the best way for the company to maintain its grip on the market and ensure it remains the market leader.

Considering Apple's continuing commercial value to the internal market, how does the Council intend to induce that company to apply an interoperability and standardisation policy to its products and software, for the benefit of the European public?