

**Question for written answer E-002446/2011
to the Commission**
Rule 117
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Subject: Security of the European mobile phone system / Need for improved GSM standards

The Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) is outdated and has serious security shortcomings. These enable mobile phone conversations to be tapped and text messages to be decoded, for example. This was most recently demonstrated in February 2011 at an international hacker conference. According to computer scientists, manufacturers and operators skimp on security by using poor software. Users of the mobile phone system are therefore being exposed to a growing number of risks. It is not only the mobile phone network but also critical infrastructure in Europe, such as information and communications technology, that is at increasing risk of cyber attack.

1. In view of the most recent findings, how does the Commission view the current situation in the EU? Can the security of GSM standards in Europe still be guaranteed?
2. How can a European approach encourage the mobile phone industry to introduce new and improved standards? What features already exist, what measures are still needed and how can they be created?
3. What other measures could be implemented in order to protect European mobile phone users?
4. How does the Commission plan to deal with the increasing threat of cyber attacks on critical infrastructure in Europe?