

**Question for written answer E-000733/2013/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Poland's traffic enforcement camera system

A heated debate has recently been playing out in the Polish media on whether the traffic enforcement camera system currently being set up in Poland is justifiable. By the start of January 2013, 300 traffic enforcement cameras had been placed alongside roads in Poland. Some 29 unmarked road transport inspectorate vehicles equipped with devices to record traffic offences are also circulating on Polish roads. Additionally, the road transport inspectorate plans to put a system in place to measure average speeds along stretches of road.

It is hard to disagree with the statement that we must do all we can to improve safety on Poland's roads. In this context, it may appear unjustifiable to question the measures described above.

However, Polish Ministry of Finance figures show that fines imposed for traffic offences brought in revenues of PLN 1.5 billion for the national budget. This begs the question: is this not a form of hidden taxation imposed on drivers?

There are 10 million vehicles on Poland's roads, and it is reasonable to estimate that every car owner will end up paying the treasury PLN 150 in fines in an average year.

In this connection:

1. The Polish road transport inspectorate does not allow people to see photographs taken by traffic enforcement cameras in cases where the vehicle owner disputes the identity of the offender captured on the photograph. Is this in accordance with Directive 2011/82/EU?
2. Does this initiative receive EU funding? If so, in view of the glaring lack of motorways and high-speed roads in Poland and the poor state of repair of existing roads, does it make sense to invest such large amounts of money in a traffic enforcement camera system instead of in constructing new or repairing existing roads?
3. In the Commission's opinion, does the Polish authorities' approach to the issue as described above take account of best practices as regards improving road safety?