

**Question for written answer E-008847/2013  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Martin Kastler (PPE)**

Subject: Eavesdropping scandal and measures taken by the Commission under competition law

Reports about the widespread eavesdropping on the private communication of EU citizens under the US National Security Agency's PRISM surveillance programme and the active cooperation and/or compulsory involvement of American companies are unnerving our citizens. They are in clear breach of EU data protection rules and the rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

1. Is the Commission aware of cases in which European providers of communication technology and VPN software products have been placed at a disadvantage by US firms and/or prevented from accessing markets or forced out of a market as a result of refusal to disclose interfacing information, thereby giving an advantage to US providers which may have been cooperating with the NSA?
2. What steps is the Commission taking to promote and support, by means of competition law, innovative companies and technologies from the EU which guarantee greater security against interception and higher data protection standards than other – US – providers? Is this matter considered a priority of the Union as regards measures taken under competition law within DG Competition?
3. Is the Commission willing to step up its commitment in this area in connection with the current eavesdropping scandal?