

Question for written answer E-004289/2019
to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: Online price discrimination and artificial intelligence

European B2C e-commerce is growing rapidly. For example, the sector's turnover is expected to rise by 14% to EUR 621 billion in 2019, partly thanks to the use of artificial intelligence (AI). This software can optimise logistics, make recommendations to customers and match supply and demand more effectively. In addition, AI can be used to engage in far-reaching individual online price discrimination (personalisation of prices) based on consumer data such as location, purchasing history, surfing behaviour, etc. Research shows that such price discrimination is bad for consumers.

In the context of future AI and consumer protection initiatives, online price discrimination should be an important aspect to consider. The evaluation of the General Data Protection Regulation should also address this issue. In this context, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Is the Commission aware of price discrimination based on individual consumer data such as location, surfing behaviour, purchasing history, etc.?
2. Is the Commission considering a general prohibition on online price discrimination, as an issue separate from that of the 'consent' principle for the processing of data and personal particulars?