

**Question for written answer E-004987/2021  
to the Commission**  
Rule 138  
**Eva Kaili (S&D)**

Subject: Invasion of privacy by camera-based security systems

A recent court ruling in Oxford<sup>1</sup>, UK, found that an Amazon Ring doorbell pointed at a neighbour's property constituted an invasion of privacy under surveillance laws, breaching the Data Protection Act of 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

The ruling stated that the devices' ability to capture audio at a range of between 12 and 20 meters was excessive, citing that the extent of range cannot be reasonable for the purpose for which the devices are used, namely crime prevention.

The court ruling also upheld the claim<sup>2</sup> that the devices contributed to harassment by creating a 'surveillance zone'.

Camera-based home security systems can be an efficient deterrent against crime, however they do entail privacy risks. As seen in this case, the proliferation of such systems may lead to an invasive surveillance ecosystem with unintended consequences for privacy.

In the light of the above, we ask:

1. Will the Commission consider establishing default range specifications for such systems to ensure purpose limitation for captured audio and video data?
2. Has the Commission consulted, or does it intend to consult, the European Data Protection Supervisor for an opinion on the processing of personal data by such systems, and the balance between the legitimate interests of the controller and the right of people to privacy and a home life?

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<sup>1</sup> Fairhurst v Woodard, (2021), Oxford County Court, Case No: G00MK161, 12 October 2021, Available at: <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Fairhurst-v-Woodard-Judgment-1.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.