

**Question for written answer E-000717/2022
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Eva Kaili (S&D)

Subject: EU action against spyware

Information regarding the use of foreign spyware against EU citizens continues to appear in the international media. Recent targets in EU Member States have been as high-ranking as prime ministers and cabinet members¹. Such spyware is allegedly able to transform our smart devices into online real-time tracking devices, allowing its users to intrude into our lives at any time, in any place and for any reason whatsoever.

The situation is made even more complicated by the fact that the authorities of certain countries openly and publicly identify themselves as buyers of such spyware, claiming to use it for legitimate purposes².

As European citizens, we have the uncompromised right to our own personal lives and data privacy, while we are also strongly devoted to the international fight against crime. Therefore:

1. Will the Commission consider adopting a common EU policy against spyware to protect EU citizens and entities?
2. Will the Commission consider introducing the requirement that all devices have the microphone option 'switch off while not in use' enabled centrally and by default, as an extra protection mechanism for the privacy of EU consumers?

¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2021/sep/23/spyware-found-on-phones-of-five-french-cabinet-members>

² <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2022/feb/02/fbi-confirms-it-obtained-nsos-pegasus-spyware>