

**Question for written answer E-003421/2022
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Kosma Złotowski (ECR)

Subject: The Dutch Government's use of Twitter user data without consent

The Dutch newspaper Trouw has revealed that the Dutch authorities are conducting large-scale analysis and storage of Twitter posts in order to monitor public responses to their policies¹. According to the newspaper, in recent years the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) has gathered thousands of tweets on climate change and 'national identity' for its research. The processing records show that information such as religious beliefs, ethnic origin, sexual behaviour and political opinions is also collected. Users are not asked for consent or even informed of the intention to process their data.

In light of the above:

1. Are such activities not in breach of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC²?
2. In the Commission's view, does this practice by the Dutch Government not affect the democratic electoral process by giving an advantage to the incumbent government, which, by analysing critical tweets, is able to convince the voters more effectively?
3. Is the Commission monitoring the use of social media data by government bodies in the EU? If it is, is this a widespread practice?

¹ <https://www.trouw.nl/economie/overheid-verzamelt-tweets-zonder-dat-je-het-weet-problematisch-stellen-experts~b0263e44/>

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32016R0679&from=EN>