

**Question for written answer E-000972/2024
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Brando Benifei (S&D)

Subject: Microsoft's unfair treatment of consumers in the Windows 11 switchover

With the switch from the Windows 10 to Windows 11 operating systems, technology market analyst Canalys estimates that one third of PCs currently in use (and purchased before 2018), i.e. some 240 million PCs, will become obsolete in the next two years as their hardware features will be incompatible with the new operating system. This means that despite their processors being sufficiently powerful to perform most functions and support most current programs, these computers are likely destined for the electronic scrapheap, forcing thousands of consumers and public bodies to fork out for new equipment. Microsoft ceased sales of Windows 10 in January 2023 and PCs with this operating system will receive no security updates or technical support beyond October 2025. The company is offering only one way to escape the upgrade: to enrol in its paid extended security update programme (ESU), available until 2028.

In view of the above:

1. Does the Commission not think that this move constitutes an abuse of a dominant position that will prove disruptive to consumers and public authorities and disastrous for the environment?
2. Is it not also at odds with the EU's ecodesign and reparability goals? Could this not be avoided by simply extending the Windows 10 licences?

Submitted:2.4.2024