

**Question for written answer E-001206/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield (Verts/ALE), **Thijs Reuten** (S&D), **Ramona Strugariu** (Renew), **Malin Björk** (The Left), **Attila Ara-Kovács** (S&D), **Klára Dobrev** (S&D), **Pascal Durand** (S&D), **Petra Kammerevert** (S&D), **Sándor Rónai** (S&D), **Paul Tang** (S&D), **István Ujhelyi** (S&D), **Anna Júlia Donáth** (Renew), **Vlad Gheorghe** (Renew), **Klemen Grošelj** (Renew), **Karin Karlsbro** (Renew), **Karen Melchior** (Renew), **Salima Yenbou** (Renew), **Patrick Breyer** (Verts/ALE), **David Cormand** (Verts/ALE), **Daniel Freund** (Verts/ALE), **Yannick Jadot** (Verts/ALE), **Alexandra Geese** (Verts/ALE), **Malte Gallée** (Verts/ALE), **Markéta Gregorová** (Verts/ALE), **Kira Marie Peter-Hansen** (Verts/ALE), **Monika Vana** (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Opacity of purchase of Vodafone Hungary by Hungarian government and surveillance-related risks

In January 2023 a decree was passed exempting the purchase of Vodafone Hungary by local IT firm 4iG and the Hungarian government from competition scrutiny. It argued that the acquisition served 'security of telecoms services supply' and classed the deal as being of 'national strategic significance'. 4iG is owned by an associate of Prime Minister Orban.

1. Seeing how, aided by the Hungarian government restrictions on 5G licensing procedures, 4iG was used in 2021 to push Digi Communications out of the market, and now is further reducing competition through the acquisition of Vodafone, what is the Commission doing to ensure that competition rules are safeguarded and that the Hungarian market is indeed open, consumers have sufficient choice and their communications are secure?
2. Since the Hungarian government has allegedly used the Pegasus spyware against opponents and journalists, and telecommunications networks have been used in the past to circulate malware on behalf of national authorities, how will the Commission ensure potential Vodafone network vulnerabilities will not be exploited for surveillance purposes, including by third countries?
3. What safeguards has the Commission asked Hungary to put in place to ensure there is no unauthorised access to data on the telecommunications networks provided by Vodafone?

Supporter¹

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¹ This question is supported by a Member other than the authors: Rosa D'Amato(Verts/ALE)