

Written Question to the European Commission

According to the recent revelations from the US Environmental Protection Agency, the German car manufacturer Volkswagen has programmed a fleet of vehicles to conceal how much pollution they generated, resulting in a real, quantifiable impact on the environment and human health. Allowing watchdogs to find safety or security issues, but also encouraging competition in the markets for add-on technologies and repair tools to consumer products, should be policy priorities.

- What are the steps undertaken by the Commission to allow independent research activities to control the proper implementation of manufacturers' obligations under environmental regulations or regulations protecting other public interest purposes?
- In particular, can an exemption to technical protection measures on company softwares be explicitly introduced in Directive 2009/24/EC on the protection of computer programs, to permit their circumvention in the aim of such control without the manufacturers' permission?
- Does the proposal for a Directive on the protection of 'trade secrets' (COM(2013)0813) allow researchers to access company software to exercise such control?