

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002686/25
to the Commission
Aldo Patriciello (PFE)
(2 July 2025)**

Subject: Tackling telephone scams and protecting older consumers in the European Union

Factors such as limited familiarity with modern technologies and social isolation leave older people particularly vulnerable to telephone scams.

The scams targeting older people come in various forms, including requests for money for fake emergencies, misleading service offers or offers relating to non-existent services, and attempted extortion through fraudulent calls.

Such scams often cause serious economic, emotional and psychological harm to victims, undermining their safety and quality of life.

A harmonised regulatory framework and targeted preventive measures are therefore needed to ensure older people are effectively protected against these kinds of fraud.

It is also important to put in place specific information, training and awareness-raising campaigns aimed at older people and their family members, to help them recognise and report attempted fraud as soon as possible.

In the light of the above:

1. What concrete steps will the Commission take to help prevent and combat telephone scams that target older people, including by means of dedicated information campaigns and digital education programmes aimed this section of our society?
2. What means of support, assistance and redress are available (use of innovative technologies and systems to prevent fraudulent calls) and can they be deployed to help older victims of telephone scams?

Submitted: 2.7.2025

**Answer given by Mr Brunner on behalf of the European Commission
(5 September 2025)**

While addressing telephone scams primarily falls under the competence of Member States, the Commission provides support. The ProtectEU Strategy ⁽¹⁾ and the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) cycle to tackle online fraud enhance collaborative efforts across the EU.

To further strengthen the EU's ability to combat online fraud, the Commission will support prevention measures and more effective law enforcement action and will work with Member States and stakeholders to protect victims. These efforts will be formalised in an Action Plan on Online Fraud.

Additionally, the EU promotes digital literacy through programs like the Digital Education Action Plan and the Media Literacy for All Programme ⁽²⁾, aiming to boost digital skills among all age groups, including older adults.

Regulatory frameworks, such as The Network and Information Security ⁽³⁾ allows providers to take appropriate and proportionate measures, like the use of multi-factor authentication or secured voice, video and text communications.

The European Electronic Communications Code ⁽⁴⁾ and the ePrivacy Directive ⁽⁵⁾, require telecom providers to implement robust security measures, indirectly mitigating fraudulent calls.

11 Member States adopted anti-spoofing measures, including obligations for telecom operators to block spoofed calls from abroad, short message service (SMS) sender identification (ID) register and a technical solution for calls authentication, effectively curbing a major method used in telephone scams.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0148>.

⁽²⁾ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/digital-education/plan>.

⁽³⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/nis2-directive>.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/european-electronic-communications-code.html>.

⁽⁵⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2002/58/oj/eng>.

The Commission is also assessing possible measures as part of the future Digital Networks Act ⁽⁶⁾.

⁽⁶⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14709-Digital-Networks-Act_en.