

**Question for written answer E-015010/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Theodoros Zagorakis (PPE)**

Subject: Bitcoin digital currency and consumer protection

Use of the bitcoin virtual digital currency, which has already gained acceptance as an alternative means of electronic payments, is continually increasing. The growing demand for virtual currencies has been particularly pronounced in Greece following the imposition of capital controls and the massive problems affecting business activity, principally external trade.

The forthcoming installation of 1 000 Bitcoin ATMs has already been officially announced, making Greece the first Member State to have such an extensive virtual currency transaction network.

In view of the warnings issued by the European Banking Authority (EBA) about the risks of virtual currencies and their massive exchange rate fluctuations to date:

1. Is the Commission aware of this development and what view does it take of it? Can it say how many bitcoin ATMs in total are currently operating in the EU? Can confirm that an increasing number of consumers in Europe are using virtual currencies?
2. Given the legal problems of regulating the use of virtual currencies, what action will it take to protect European consumers?