

**Question for written answer E-006674/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Reduction in the cost of new drugs for treating Hepatitis C

It is estimated that some 170 million worldwide (including 800 000 in Spain) suffer from chronic Hepatitis C, which can have serious consequences and lead, for example, to liver cirrhosis and hepatocellular carcinoma. New drugs have recently become available that have cured the vast majority of the patients who have taken them, with no major side effects.

However, the price of these drugs set by the pharmaceuticals companies is extraordinarily high. This makes it impossible for most of the people who need them to purchase them, while it is also difficult for publicly-financed health systems to afford them. Although the European Medicines Agency has authorised the marketing of the drugs, their use is limited to the most serious cases, owing to their high cost.

1. What steps can the Commission take to ensure that pharmaceuticals companies, while still being able to return a profit from their research and development of a drug, reduce the extremely high prices they charge for drugs that are essential to thousands of patients?
2. What types of measure can the Commission take to encourage governments to facilitate access to treatment for all patients, at no personal cost to each patient?
3. What form of joint action is the Commission planning to take in order to reduce the high price of these drugs?