

**Question for written answer E-008278/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Marco Zanni (EFDD), Ignazio Corrao (EFDD) and Laura Agea (EFDD)

Subject: Hepatitis C virus

It has been estimated that there are 9 million people in the European Union who are suffering from hepatitis C, 70 % of whom are Italian. At the end of the 1970s, it was widespread practice in Italy to transfuse small amounts of blood to prematurely born, underweight and anaemic babies; however, this blood had been taken from compatible donors without any preventative checks in place. At the time, there were no ad hoc tests for strains of hepatitis and especially for hepatitis C, which had still not been discovered. According to recent studies, almost 50 % of the infants who underwent those blood transfusions are now hepatitis C positive. The vast majority of them are today unable to adapt their work schedule to their treatment and care needs, and in many instances have even been dismissed or not had their work contracts renewed.

The EU has always striven to guarantee the quality and safety of blood and haemoderivatives and, among other things, ensure that diseases are prevented from spreading, in order to protect both patients and donors alike, and has always fought for the rights of those infected. With respect to the case highlighted above, what measures could be put in place on a Europe-wide level to protect these infected patients? Is it conceivable that they could receive some sort of compensation even if they do not possess the clinical records that prove that these transfusions took place?