

**Question for written answer E-013483/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Ivan Jakovčić (ALDE)

Subject: Autism and social stigmatisation of children and their families

Autism is a developmental disorder characterised by disturbance in language, perception and socialisation. It is one of a group of developmental disorders known as autism spectrum disorders (ASDs). At present, autism is still largely unknown and no specific treatment is available.

At a medical level, the information available on autism is the result of varying diagnoses, lack of agreement on case definition and different case selection methods. At a social and institutional level the knowledge gap is even greater, and its negative consequences can hit the families involved hard.

Although the EU-funded European Autism Information System (EAIS) aims at improving the medical and institutional knowledge of the problem in the long run, in the short term the unreliability and inconsistency of epidemiological figures often translates into social exclusion and stigmatisation.

With regard to the above, what can the EU do to improve the social perception of the disorder and its consequences in order to help the families involved to feel understood and not rejected or blamed?