

**Question for written answer E-000499/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Ivan Jakovčić (ALDE)

Subject: Sanitary pads and feminine hygiene as a health issue: the case of detained women

Acknowledging the answers provided to the following questions:

E-006071/14 dated 25 July 2014

E-006707/14 dated 9 September 2014

E-004894/15 dated 30 March 2015 and

P-008948/15 dated 2 June 2015,

and that the VAT Directive 'makes no reference to the fact that goods or services are essential or not', while European acts in the field of taxation have to be adopted by unanimity by the Member States' Ministers of Finance,

Considering that detained women in most EU countries face serious humiliation because of the lack of adequate sanitary products during their menstruation and the extremely high cost of those products within the detention infrastructure,

Considering that, regardless of their socio-economic situation, at present many women during their period have no cheap alternative to sanitary products such as disposable tampons and pads, and

Acknowledging that sanitary products cannot be considered at the same level as 'admission to sporting events and use of sporting facilities',

Will the Commission seriously consider revising the principles of the VAT Directive in order to take account of the possibility of reserving free sanitary products and in the right amounts for menstruation for women who are in difficult socio-economic circumstances or in detention?