

**Question for written answer E-009771/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Mireille D'Ornano (ENF)

Subject: Presence of titanium dioxide nanoparticles in sweets

In October 2016, research by the NGO 'Agir pour l'environnement' revealed that around a hundred types of sweet containing the food colouring E171 also contained titanium dioxide nanoparticles. Children are said to ingest four times as much of these substances, because of their high sweet consumption.

Due to the size of the particles – 50 000 times smaller than a hair – they can pass through the barrier of the intestines, the brain or the kidney. Their toxic effects can then cause DNA dysfunction, inflammatory reactions, cell death and oxidative stress, which in turn cause such chronic conditions as cataracts, cancer or diabetes.

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) has classified titanium dioxide as being probably carcinogenic by inhalation, assigning it to Group 2B, since 2006, and in 2014, the French Food Safety Agency classified it as hazardous. On the other hand, the EFSA renewed its authorisation in September 2016, not considering it to present any health risk.

1. How convinced is the Commission by the IARC's decision of 2006?
2. Why does the Commission not apply the precautionary principle and opt for a prudent approach to this substance?