

**Question for written answer E-003921/2018
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: The socio-economic impact of unattended hearing loss

In Europe, 10 % of the total population self-report experiencing hearing loss, but only 39 % of those receive professional hearing care and use hearing devices. Hearing loss is a huge health problem in the EU, threatening to put great pressure on health and social care systems if left untreated. Research shows that with current suboptimal use of hearing devices the socioeconomic costs to the EU of hearing loss exceed EUR 500 billion per year. Broader uptake of medical technology, such as hearing aids and cochlear implants, can alleviate this burden.

In this context, can the Commission answer the following questions:

What actions can the Commission take to foster exchange of best practice on high-quality hearing care, including early screening programmes for children and adults to diagnose and address hearing loss in the framework of principles 16 and 17 of the EU Pillar of Social Rights?

Does the Commission intend to support Member States' efforts in enhancing awareness of the benefits of hearing devices, i.e. cochlear implants, hearing aids and other assistive devices?

In the framework of the upcoming multiannual financial framework, does the Commission intend to boost research on hearing loss, its prevention, best rehabilitation methodologies and innovations and to share relevant studies?