

**Question for written answer P-012061/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Problems for European SMEs with obtaining iodine biocide raw materials

The EU places great emphasis on SMEs, which are the driving force of Europe's economy and employ by far the largest number of people, and provides every possible support to improve their competitiveness. The EU's flagship projects, such as the Lisbon Strategy or the 2020 Strategy, lay great stress on supporting SMEs.

Many European SMEs have serious financial problems when it comes to obtaining the active substance iodine needed for biocide production. In order to obtain it, they must purchase a letter of access from the legal representative of the Iodine Registration Group, which is the European licence-holder. According to the SMEs concerned, the representative charges hundreds of thousands of euros for such letters, which they clearly cannot afford.

1. What is the Commission doing to prevent this unethical practice, which makes it impossible for SMEs producing biocidal products to function?
2. Given that there is no European producer of iodine, is the Commission willing to make the iodine file open, freely accessible and user friendly for biocidal product licensing?
3. Will the Commission grant an exemption from the 1 September deadline to SMEs enabling them to obtain iodine by current means?