WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 123 of the Rules of Procedure

on hepatitis B and C

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Written declaration, under Rule 123 of Parliament’s Rules of Procedure, on hepatitis B and C¹

1. The World Health Organisation estimates that around 2 billion people worldwide have been infected with the hepatitis B virus, while around 150 million patients suffer from chronic hepatitis C, with more than 350 000 people dying every year from hepatitis C-related liver disease;

2. Each year in the countries of the European Union and the European Economic Area, over 14 000 diagnoses of hepatitis B and over 26 000 diagnoses of hepatitis C are reported;

3. Article 35 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and Articles 6 (a), 9 and 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union confer competences on the Union to ensure a high level of health protection;

4. The Commission is called upon to raise awareness on hepatitis B and C as an urgent public health issue and in close cooperation with the Member States, to take the initiative to promote equal access to quality care, and to coordinate initiatives aimed at early diagnosis and wider access to treatment and care;

5. The Council is called upon to recognise hepatitis B and C as an urgent public health issue and to identify priority actions in the programmes of future Council presidencies;

6. This declaration, together with the names of the signatories, is forwarded to the Council and the Commission.

¹ Under Rule 123(4) and (5) of Parliament’s Rules of Procedure, where a declaration is signed by a majority of Parliament’s component Members, it is published in the minutes with the names of its signatories and forwarded to the addressees, without however binding Parliament.