Question for written answer E-000065/2011
to the Commission
Rule 117
Cristiana Muscardini (PPE)

Subject: Nutraceuticals and food supplements

There is currently some confusion and excessive permissiveness with regard to so-called food supplements, products that are important to consumers/patients and are used as dietary supplements without medical prescription.

Dietary supplements also include 'nutraceuticals' which, unlike normal food supplements, help prevent or reduce the risk of disease, especially degenerative diseases concerning a specific part or function of the body.

In Europe there is no direct supervision of manufacturers of nutraceuticals and their production systems (source materials, systems for selecting suppliers of raw materials and qualification of suppliers, suitability of working environment, production standards in line with Good Manufacturing Practice - GMF - and issuing of ISO certification).

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. Would it be possible to set up a working group that can monitor the production of nutraceuticals in accordance with ISO standards?

3. Can the Commission say whether appropriate information is available for consumers/patients on the use of food or dietary supplements sold in Europe today?