

**Question for written answer E-011169/2011  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject:     Diagnosis code for Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) is a condition which is rendering growing numbers of people unfit for work. Those who are seriously oversensitive to chemicals or perfumes suffer, inter alia, headaches, nausea and symptoms affecting the airways even if chemicals are present in the air only in small quantities, and many new research projects have shown that the condition is a physical disease.

However, national diagnosis codes are not in use in all countries, and without one, people who fall ill are not entitled to social security, for example sickness benefit and supported housing. Although MCS cannot be medically cured given the present state of knowledge, it has been shown that the condition can be prevented from becoming disabling by means of early exposure.

In various countries, including Germany and Austria, MCS has been assigned a national diagnosis code, which helps to prevent deterioration of the patient's condition. In other countries, such as Finland, there is no such code. In Finland it has been estimated that some 20 000 people are permanently unfit for work because of serious MCS.

If the World Health Organisation (WHO) were to insert a diagnosis code for MCS in its international classification of diseases (either the ICD-10 or the next version, ICD-11, which is currently being prepared), a diagnosis code would also come into use in those countries where there is no national diagnosis code.

Is the Commission aware of the problems arising from the fact that there is no diagnosis code for MCS in the WHO's classification of diseases? Will it seek, through its representation at the WHO, to have a diagnosis code for it added to the international classification of diseases?