

**Question for written answer E-004124/2012
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: EU ban on selling cosmetic products containing ingredients that have been tested on animals

In accordance with the timetable set out in Directive 2003/15/EC, the EU ban on selling cosmetic products containing ingredients tested on animals will enter into force on 11 March 2013, even though alternative methods of research are not available. This affects, in particular, the cosmetics industry, which is the only sector in the EU included in the aforementioned ban, and the only one that is financing the development of alternative methods which are then used in all other sectors (for example, project SEURAT-1). At the same time, Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 indicates that systemic toxicity data obtained from research using animals are vital when carrying out safety assessments of cosmetic products. The introduction of the ban means that, until alternative methods are developed in the EU, it will not be possible to introduce cosmetic products containing innovative ingredients. In my opinion, this raises a series of questions about competitiveness and the control of imported cosmetics. I fully support the introduction of a complete and global ban on testing the ingredients of cosmetic products on animals; however, the current strategy of phasing out animal testing seems to be inconsistent with the applicable requirements concerning the safety of cosmetic products, the state of science and the Europa 2020 strategy.

In view of the above, I would like to put the following questions to the Commission:

1. Does the ban not pose a risk to consumer safety?
2. Will the ban not weaken competitiveness in the EU?
3. Is the ban consistent with the Europa 2020 growth strategy? Is it not detrimental to innovation, which is a key pillar of this strategy?
4. Given that the scale of research on animals conducted by the cosmetics industry is significantly smaller than in other sectors, and – at the same time – that the cosmetics industry is the only sector that is investing in the development of alternative methods, will the introduction in the EU of the ban on selling cosmetic products containing ingredients which have been tested on animals, in spite of the absence of alternative methods, constitute – in the Commission's opinion – a real and significant benefit in terms of animal welfare, including the number of animals spared in research?
5. Taking account of the fact that the ban is not global and applies only to the European market, how does the European Commission intend to supervise the importing of cosmetic products to ensure that no products containing ingredients tested on animals enter the EU market after 11 March 2013?